

MOBILIZING FOR PROGRESS

SECOND E-9 MINISTERIAL
REVIEW MEETING,
ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN
14-16 SEPTEMBER 1997

Bangladesh

Brazil

China

Egypt

India

Indonesia

Mexico

Nigeria

Pakistan



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**“IF WE INVEST IN
EDUCATION, WE WILL
MAKE DEMOCRACY LESS
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PROVIDE CITIZENS WITH
MORE SECURITY. WHEN
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INFLUENCE THE
DEMOCRATIC PROCESS.”**

FEDERICO MAYOR,
DIRECTOR-GENERAL, UNESCO

INTRODUCTION

For an initiative to grow, mature and yield results, an ongoing exchange of ideas and experience is required. It is a process of learning and listening, of drawing comparisons and re-evaluating actions. The Second E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting, held in Islamabad from 14 to 16 September, 1997, was precisely an opportunity for representatives of the world's nine most populous countries, along with United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to sit around the same table and chart progress, address shortcomings, present strategies and express concerns. Despite their vast ethnic, cultural, geographical and social differences, these nine countries share the same resolve: to provide universal primary education for all and drastically reduce adult illiteracy by 2000. All abide to the principles of the World Declaration on Education for All, signed at Jomtien, Thailand in 1990.

The Jomtien Conference is likely to remain a reference for policy-makers and educationists for more than a decade. It called for an expanded vision of education in order to meet the basic learning needs of all children, youth and adults. Such a vision requires a radical shift in traditional perceptions of education. It requires making education a national priority, designing innovative approaches to reach the excluded, especially girls and women, and overcoming poverty. Most importantly, it requires that education become the responsibility of all society: political leaders, members of parliament, the media, the private sector, local associations and parents.

This is why political and social mobilization was the main theme of this Second Ministerial Review Meeting. As this report shows, progress – in some cases impressive progress – is underway in all the E-9 countries. This progress is inseparable from political will at the highest level and mobilization in favour of education from the society at large. When these two forces are present, education can become the foundation of a veritably democratic process in the context of equitable social and economic development.

The E-9 countries agreed, in a Joint Communiqué attached to this report, to increase their political, social and financial investment for EFA. They also committed themselves to pay special attention to several key areas in which wide-sweeping action is required: education of girls and women; literacy and adult education; teacher training; street and working children. The Joint Communiqué will serve a triple purpose: to guide the nine countries in developing or implementing their national policies; to keep the exchange of experiences between countries focused on a selected list of items and, finally, to guide the agencies, banks and donors in their endeavour to collaborate closely with the E-9 countries. ■

**“CONTINUED
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EVEN MORE FORCEFUL
AND CONCERTED
ACTION, BASED ON
GOOD INFORMATION,
SOUND RESEARCH
AND CAREFUL
ANALYSIS AIMED AT
ACHIEVING CLEARLY
SPECIFIED RESULTS.”**

SARTAJ AZIZ, MINISTER
OF FINANCE, PAKISTAN

PROCEEDINGS

Upon opening the Experts' Meeting on 14 September 1997, the Federal Minister for Education recalled its specific objective, namely "to ensure political and social mobilization for EFA, with the ultimate objective of achieving full access to basic education for all members of society, to eliminate disparities and imbalances and to improve the quality and relevance of education." The four UN agencies present at the meeting — UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNDP — made interventions underlining the importance of mobilization and suggesting angles for discussing the subject. Each of the nine countries summarized the contents of their papers on Social and Political Mobilization, highlighting the most important commitments and initiatives taken to raise the profile of education, expand access and improve quality. One key element for conceiving and launching EFA campaigns is the availability of reliable data. In this spirit, Jim Irvine, UNICEF's Regional Educational Adviser for South Asia, presented a thought-provoking paper entitled: "Monitoring Progress Towards Education for All: Reflections on Data Issues in South Asia."

On the morning of 15 September, the main conclusions of the Experts' Meeting were presented. Senior Officers from UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP made brief statements about the future of the E-9 Initiative and the role of the Agencies. In the afternoon, Dr Mahbub ul Haq, President of the Human Development Centre, made a forceful intervention entitled: "Education Challenge for South Asia".

Following a brief discussion, UNESCO's Director-General Federico Mayor reported on the major E-9 initiatives since the First Ministerial Meeting held in Bali in September 1995. He called for improved national coordination among UN agencies at the national level, the theme of UNDP's H.C. von Sponeck's intervention entitled: "The UN System Support Programme to India in Primary Education." At the end of the day, the Joint Communiqué was further improved.

The Ministerial Meeting (16 September) was officially opened by the Finance Minister of Pakistan, representing the Prime Minister. Following official statements by the four UN agencies, each of the nine countries reported on progress and ongoing challenges. The Joint Communiqué was finalized and adopted, with an additional clause on street and working children put forward by Mr. Mayor. Brazil offered to become the host country of the next Ministerial Review Meeting, which is expected to be held in two years. Following brief remarks by UN agencies, President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari of Pakistan gave the concluding speech, in which he recognized his country's "flawed policies" in achieving EFA. The Ministers for Education of Pakistan and India, the other ministerial representatives and UNESCO's Director-General then attended a press conference to present the Joint Communiqué and answer questions. It should be noted that although no representative attended the Second Ministerial Review Meeting from China, a country paper was provided. ■

“WITH BETTER EDUCATION, WOMEN ARE EQUIPPED TO BE BETTER MOTHERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE LIKELY TO BE BOTH SMALLER AND HEALTHIER. IN ADDITION, BETTER EDUCATION EQUIPS A WOMAN FOR LIFE BEYOND THE FAMILY. IT BROADENS HER MIND AND HER HORIZONS, AND HELPS HER TO MAKE HER FULL CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY. AND YET, IN MANY OF THE E-9 COUNTRIES, THERE REMAINS A HUGE GAP BETWEEN THE ACCESS OF GIRLS AND BOYS TO BASIC EDUCATION. EVERY COUNTRY’S PROGRESS TOWARDS THE GOALS OF EFA DEPENDS UPON REMOVING THIS DISCREPANCY AND STRENGTHENING THESE ASPECTS OF WOMEN’S LIVES.”

**DR NAFIS SADIK,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNFPA**

THE E-9 INITIATIVE: FOUR YEARS ON

The Jomtien Conference launched a world-wide mobilization in favour of education. Since this landmark event, donors have reoriented their policies in favour of basic education. United Nations agencies have started to coordinate their actions more effectively. The majority of countries drew up national plans of action through a wide process of consultation. Most now have constitutional, legal or policy commitments making primary education free, compulsory and universal.

While Jomtien basic education needs as a central priority on the global agenda, it became the first in a succession of major UN conferences which have all reaffirmed education's role in achieving the goals of justice, equality, development and peace.

The E-9 initiative represents a visible and targeted cooperative effort between several of the world's largest countries, governments and multilateral organizations.

The leaders of the nine high-population countries came together in New Delhi in December 1993 where they reaffirmed their commitment to pursue the goals set in Jomtien and at the World Summit for Children.

In forming the E-9, leaders of the nine high-population countries recognized their collective weight and responsibility in improving the world's educational record. Together, these countries are home to half

the world's population and two-thirds of the world's adult illiterates, of whom sixty per cent are women. They all recognize education's strategic role in furthering national development and reducing population growth. All have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, making education a fundamental human right.

When the Ministers of Education met in Indonesia in September 1995 for the first Review Meeting since the Delhi Summit, they reiterated the need to implement long-term strategies that mobilize all sectors of society for the goals of EFA. The Ministers also

agreed to direct their efforts to the quality of learning and requested that the sponsoring agencies and banks improve their cooperation at national level.

Acting on these recommendations, UNESCO completed a study in the nine countries on external assistance to EFA. Figures revealed that despite an impressive vol-

ume of funds, donors currently provide disproportionate funding in favour of primary education, much to the detriment of adult education and literacy. In the realm of learning quality, UNDP and UNESCO implemented a year-long project to explore current in-service teacher training practices and to identify promising programmes. Finally, there has been an intensive and continued exchange at the highest political level between the nine countries since the Delhi Summit. ■

**IN FORMING THE E-9,
LEADERS OF THE NINE
HIGH-POPULATION
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RECORD.**

THE EXPERTS' MEETING:

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MOBILIZATION

I - GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

In opening the 14 September Experts' Meeting, Mr Safdar Mahmood, Secretary of Education (Pakistan), presented a conceptual framework for reflecting on political and social mobilization.

"In the past, the indifference of masses towards the expansion and provision of basic education has absolved politicians from showing any major concern

for education. Therefore, within our society, we have to build up an irresistible pressure for according top priority to basic education, whatever the obstacles." In ideal circumstances, political and social development act as complementary forces:

"On the one hand, the decision-makers and the political parties can create a culture for education sensitive to the responsibilities of society. On the other hand, social mobilization can facilitate social development," said Mr Mahmood.

The need to make education a societal responsibility came out of a growing realization that the sheer scale of achieving education for all entailed an entirely different way of conceiving and managing

learning, away from a top-heavy, centralised model toward a more decentralised, democratic one. "It's clear that you will not have effective educational programmes if you rely on central government alone. We have to look at what happens at the state, provincial and district levels and mobilize each one of these," said Colin Power, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Education.

All participants reiterated the importance of political will being expressed at the highest level in order to promote an overall vision and guide social mobilization. But to guarantee continuity, they insisted that this commitment had to be shared by all political parties. When education is enshrined in the constitution as a fundamental human right, when the president of a country is personally engaged in defining education as a national priority, when all sectors of society are made to feel responsible for contributing to educational advancement, a solid framework is established to forge strong and fruitful partnerships. When structures of governance become more flexible and responsive to local needs, opportunities arise for people to participate through organised and systematic actions.

"First, we need to get the basics right," stated Kul Gautam, UNICEF's representative in India. "Curricula must be relevant; teachers must have a minimum of training and motivation; students must find learning a joyful experience and governments must allocate adequate budgetary resources to education. These are the bedrock essentials."

“WITHIN OUR SOCIETY, WE HAVE TO BUILD UP AN IRRESISTIBLE PRESSURE FOR ACCORDING TOP PRIORITY TO BASIC EDUCATION, WHATEVER THE OBSTACLES.”

SAFDAR MAHMOOD,
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION,
PAKISTAN

But even when these basics are in place, Mr Gautam noted that progress is sometimes frustratingly slow. He outlined three basic convictions that provide a thrust to mobilization:

- ▷ the power of national laws and international conventions to demand action by legislators, policy makers and programme managers;
- ▷ the knowledge that investment in basic education yields one of the highest rates of return;
- ▷ the fact that motivating parents and children is the *sine qua non* for universalizing primary education.

Mobilizing parents in favour of education can begin before a child's birth. "The first opportunity generally comes when couples seeking prenatal care come in contact with health systems," said UNFPA's representative O.J. Sikes. "The next opportunities arise immediately after birth. Seizing these opportunities to help parents become better educators of their

children means encouraging both educators and healthcare providers to think in terms of life cycles."

Mr Power insisted on the importance of monitoring the effectiveness of mobilization campaigns and keeping in mind their end goal: "The objec-

tive is learning. We must ensure that learners receive the necessary knowledge and skills to make their way through life."

“THE OBJECTIVE IS LEARNING. WE MUST ENSURE THAT LEARNERS RECEIVE THE NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH LIFE.”

COLIN POWER, UNESCO

II - COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS

The E-9 country studies present an impressive array of measures taken over the past seven years to put education on top of the national agenda, expand access and reach the excluded. These summaries attempt to single out the most characteristic features of each presentation.

BANGLADESH

The sharp increase in primary school enrolments in Bangladesh has relied on massive social mobilization. A national social mobilization plan for education was drawn up. It is designed to generate and sustain awareness and commitment to EFA at all levels, promote motivation among teachers, parents and communities, and improve access, quality, achievement and completion of primary education. Communities are actively involved in local planning and more than 200 NGOs receive subsidies for delivering non-formal primary education.

Social mobilization activities in favour of primary education have included strengthening School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), organizing mothers' rallies, meetings, home visits and exchange visits for teachers and SMC members.

Special measures to encourage girls' education rely on community mobilization and participation. Some 1,260 satellite schools targeted at young children, especially girls, have been established. The Government plans to open 20,000 satellite schools in the next five years. Free education for girls in rural areas has been extended from Grade 8 to 12 and sixty per cent of recruited teachers must be women. Under the school attractiveness programme, poor students, especially girls, receive free uniforms, books and other supplies.

Advocacy and Media Support

Education is also enjoying higher national visibility through advocacy work and the media. A national logo for EFA features a young girl and boy reading the same book while stickers carrying the message "Education is not a privilege given to citizens, but a right" are illustrated with eye-catching, colourful pictures. Television and radio broadcasts also raise awareness about gender discrepancy in education.

Adult Literacy: The Total Literacy Movement

Extensive mass mobilization activities are organized in areas covered by the Total Literacy Movement, including processions, rallies and cultural shows.

The government has set up close to 1,000 rural libraries in 69 project areas staffed by a librarian. Other than helping neo-literates to select appropriate reading materials, each librarian has an additional responsibility to make ten people literate every year.

BRAZIL

Brazil has recently been the stage for an unprecedented mobilization in favour of education. At the beginning of his term of office in 1995, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso affirmed that the quest for quality in elementary schools and the guarantee of universal access to education would be his top priority. This has gone hand in hand with the design of a country-wide campaign to:

"AWAKEN BRAZIL.

IT'S TIME FOR SCHOOL!"

Lunched by the President himself, this mobilization campaign was the first appeal of the Fernando Henrique Cardoso administration to Brazilian society in defense of education. The programme's aim is to mobilize Brazilian society towards improving public schools and promoting education as a national priority.

To this end, the Ministry of Education and Sport adopted a strategy involving the intense use of instruments of social communications. Close and effective ties were developed with the press and advertising agencies were contracted to develop campaign materials.

The campaign operates on several levels:

- ① Internal mobilization through sharing the new focus on education throughout the Ministry itself.
- ② Lecture cycles: Regional management units organize lecture cycles for mayors, educational authorities, community leaders and business executives to spread and discuss the new philosophy in the field of social and political mobilization.

- ③ Stimulating the participation of State Governments: these initiatives include extension courses, such as teacher training programmes and the recycling and decentralization of textbook distribution.
- ④ The "Speak Brazil" toll free service allows anyone to request information and share their views on the Government's educational actions. Monitoring and analyzing these calls has provided important feedback on the Ministry's programmes and social mobilization efforts.
- ⑤ Database on Educational Action: in partnership with the University of Brasilia, thousands of innovative initiatives in the field of education are being catalogued and are now available over the Internet.
- ⑥ The "Awaken Brazil Bulletin" is a bi-monthly publication on the latest developments in the mobilization process.
- ⑦ Since the campaign's launch in 1995, 130 partnerships have been established. Besides intangible gains, these add up to more than R\$20 million in teaching materials, media advertising time, equipment, teacher-training and other services rendered.

- ▷ keep society informed about Federal Government actions in the educational field
- ▷ mobilize the population in order to make them agents of change in Brazilian education
- ▷ cultivate a new social outlook with respect to public education and stimulate a sense of participation and responsibility among citizens.

The "Awaken Brazil" campaign (see box) is one of the main instruments for fostering this mobilization at all levels of society. The President and Minister of Education are both on weekly radio talk shows to present government strategies and answer questions. Several television shows are devoted to educational issues. Press releases are sent out daily to television, radio and newspapers, and education coverage has significantly increased over the past year.

This communications effort requires high-level technical staff able to think in terms of social marketing techniques, from the planning stage to evaluating the outcome of campaigns. A relationship of trust must be established between education and communications experts. Above all, constant vigilance is required in order to correct campaigns during their course and improve the effectiveness of educational actions. According to the Brazilian delegation, "the idea that without education there can be no growth, either individually or for the country as a whole, has become a consensus among the population."

CHINA

The 1995 Education Law engages the state "to encourage enterprises, institutions, public organizations, other social groups as well as individual citizens to operate schools or other types of educational institutions."

Several projects aimed at helping disadvantaged children in poverty-stricken areas have received donations, gifts and other forms of support from enterprises, institutions and social organizations. The Hope Project for example, run by the China Children and Youth Development Fund, has led to the construction of at least one "hope primary school" in nearly 600 poverty-stricken counties.

Village councils are authorized to mobilize local resources in the form of donated building materials or voluntary labour.

In the field of adult literacy, half a million college students and one million secondary school students are mobilized every year to provide in-service training to 200,000 rural literacy teachers and workers. This should enable four million or so adults to receive literacy education and training in scientific and technical skills. Also, prizes are given to counties, schools and individuals which have done outstanding work in literacy. Funds for literacy awards are raised through donations.

EGYPT

President Hosni Mubarak regards education as a matter of national security and the strongest pillar of peace. Over the past six years, efforts have focused on strengthening the demand for education and improving the quality of learning.

Creating a Literate Environment: The Reading for All Festival

For the fourth consecutive year, the "Reading for All" festival was organized throughout the country this summer. Sponsored by several ministries, it aims to support and encourage reading at all ages by providing access to reading materials and organizing competitions. Spearheaded by the First Lady Suzanne Mubarak, the programme set out to establish a network of school libraries and a fleet of mobile units to reach remote districts and hamlets. Books were purchased and collected through charity campaigns. From a modest beginning of 500 libraries at the end of 1991, the programme grew steadily in scope to the current 8,753 libraries. To encourage reading, the libraries stay open during the school vacation.

Involving the Business Sector

On-the-job educational programmes are provided to workers, thus connecting literacy and vocational training. Setting reading and writing as a prerequisite for obtaining a driver's license or qualifying for

a government job has strengthened enrolment in literacy classes. University graduates are paid through a Social Fund to work as teachers in literacy programmes.

INDIA

The Elementary Education system in India is one of the world's largest with 151 million children in the 6 to 14 year age group enrolled in 1995-1996. But the country is also home to the largest number of illiterates and out-of-school children in the world: 37 per cent of the world's illiterates and 21.8 per cent of out-of-school children. Due to the magnitude of the problem, there has been a growing realization that education had to be conceived as a societal responsibility requiring alternate structures to facilitate participation.

The Total Literacy Campaign

Since its inception in 1989, the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) has extended to 430 of India's 520 districts. The campaign's most innovative aspect is the emphasis on creating a favourable environment for literacy. This phase involves mobilizing public opinion and encouraging the more educated sections of the community to come forward as literacy volunteers. Conventional and traditional folk media forms are all used with great effect. Political support from all parties is ensured by involving political leaders in organizational structures and events.

To date, an estimated 90 million learners have been enrolled in the programme and 64 million have been made literate. The strong emphasis on social mobilization has given women a sanction to participate in the campaigns without hindrance from their husbands and in-laws. The campaigns have not only made them feel a sense of empowerment, allowing them to voice grievances before district administrations and to denounce various social evils. They have also had a positive impact on the demand for primary education, with enrolment and retention levels increasing after a TLC. Each campaign is followed by a two-year post-literacy programme.

The Lok Jumbish Project

The core strategy of Lok Jumbish (LJ), which translates as a movement of the people, is to mobilize the village community to take responsibility for quality education. The Village Education Committees (VECs), Core Teams and Women's Groups are trained and involved in school-mapping, micro-planning and all educational activities of the village school (repairs, maintenance, school calendar, etc.). Significant outcomes of the project include:

- ▷ a 10 per cent annual increase in girls' enrolment, 7 per cent for boys
- ▷ an effective programme of non-formal education has been implemented offering equivalency with formal education
- ▷ a tremendous gain in learning achievement: 7 per cent annually in language and 9 per cent in mathematics.

The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)

DPEP is India's most ambitious primary education programme. Launched in 1994, it covers 122 districts in thirteen states. DPEP emphasizes decentralized management, community mobilization and district specific planning. Structures have been created at the grassroots level to encourage participation. Women and disadvantaged groups must be represented on Village Education Committees. The latter are increasingly mobilizing communities, motivating parents to send their children to school and raising voluntary contributions from the people.

INDONESIA

The President of Indonesia takes a personal stake in education, delivering messages on National Education Day and International Literacy Day that have an impact on mobilizing funds to reach targets set by the central government. Reflecting its broad vision of education, Indonesia refers to Compulsory Education as a movement involving several ministries and a range of private partners. Mobilization initiatives are also supported by an entrenched Indonesian value, the spirit of "gotong royong," or the mutual assistance social system.

Stating that "international pressures to 'show progress' have led to an over-reliance on estimates and too little attention to data quality and verification at all levels," Jim Irvine, UNICEF Regional Adviser for Education, explained the dangers of using aggregated estimates. These tend to mask substantial variability within countries, give no direction for planning or resource allocation and can lead to erroneous comparisons between and within countries.

- ▶ For allocation of resources and targeting of special initiatives, it is important to obtain, verify, map and analyze disaggregated data which highlight variability within a country.
- ▶ For purposes of comparisons among districts, states, countries or regions, and for comparing trends over time, it is important to have agreed and consistent definitions of indicators, and agreement among countries concerning criteria of competence to be applied. This is particularly important in the case of adult literacy, where different definitions or criteria lead to data that cannot be meaningfully compared.

- ▶ Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) data anomalies suggest the need to enumerate all children, and not just those who can be easily reached. In ascertaining 'NER', it is essential to locate all children of the relevant age group in a given administrative area and then enumerate and verify those who are enrolled in any form of basic education, no matter through what channel.
- ▶ The use of Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) as an indicator of schooling participation levels can lead to confusion because of the compounding of age-appropriate enrolment and the presence of under-age and over-age enrolments.
- ▶ Children, teachers, parents and community groups can be more comprehensively involved in the process of data collection and verification.
- ▶ The issue of monitoring learning achievements in regular and systematic ways must receive more urgent attention.
- ▶ As societies seek new visions for education, it is essential to develop and use indicators for monitoring components of education systems related to sustainability, quality and relevance.

Reaching the Unreached

To enable children who cannot afford to continue schooling in the formal system, the Government has developed equivalency programmes known as Packet A (for those leaving primary school before Grade 4) and Packet B (for those who cannot continue their Lower Secondary schooling).

The National Foster Parent Movement collects donations that are distributed to children from poor families. This has enabled some 600,000 students of primary and lower secondary schools to continue their education.

Partnerships to Eradicate Illiteracy: Working with the Armed Forces

Four ministries are directly involved in this programme, formed upon a Presidential appeal in 1994 to eradicate illiteracy by 2000: the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Armed Forces Ministry. Learners are identified by Armed Forces personnel, in co-operation with development project officials. When tutors from the same background as the learners cannot be found, Armed Forces personnel are recruited. Training emphasizes their role as tutors and agents of change.

Learners had input into the development of learning materials and literacy teaching has been integrated with income-generating activities. The programme teaches skills to improve learners' living standards and enable them to participate more effectively in their community. Post-literacy materials have also been developed and small rural libraries established to reinforce acquired reading habits.

Mobilizing Women: the Family Welfare Movement

Winner of several awards, including the International Literacy Prize in 1995, the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) is a national movement aimed at raising women's quality of life. Eradicating illiteracy is one of its priority actions. By organizing households into small units, development programmes have been better able to reach disadvantaged women and their families. Teaching methods make use of song, dance and other cultural traditions, and income-generating programmes are integrated into literacy classes.

IMPROVING AGENCY COORDINATION:

THE UN FOCUSES ON PRIMARY EDUCATION IN INDIA

Over the past eighteen months, UN agencies represented in India have developed a support programme for Community-Based Primary Education.

The programme aims to enhance capacity for community participation in school management, improve the performance of teachers working in multigrade classrooms and address social factors that adversely affect attendance and performance. By involving UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, UNESCO and UNFPA, the programme takes an integrated approach to learning. All agencies recognize the importance of lifelong education, of parents' participation and of providing an education relevant to the local environment. Joining forces has enabled agencies to interact at the highest political levels, namely with the Secretary of Education and the Minister of Human Resource Development. Besides striving for community-oriented school management, the programme will aim to transform schools into centres for community learning, or "lok

shalas" — people's schools. "We are targeting children, adolescents and parents," said Mr von Sponeck, the UN Resident Coordinator in India. "The real innovation is to link development to what is relevant in the development context at the community level."

UN agencies will contribute \$20 million to the programme, with an additional \$2 million from Norway. "The UN wants to concentrate as a system on community-based primary education and help to foster an enjoyable teaching and learning environment," said Mr von Sponeck. "The UN system must work very hard to harmonize its defused, cumbersome financial and administrative regulatory set-ups to facilitate joint initiatives of this kind."

The programme is slated to become operational in eight states: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh from 1998. Careful monitoring and assessing impact is an integral part of the approach.

MEXICO

Co-responsibility is a hallmark of Mexico's education development programme. Extreme poverty and social marginalization can only be alleviated through integrated strategies supplying basic services and promoting participation in activities that increase productivity and income. In this context, several inter-sectoral initiatives were cited:

- ▷ Launched in 1997, the *Programme for Nourishment, Health and Education* (PROGRESA) involves the sectors of Health, Social Development and Public Education. It aims to improve conditions in the most needy communities and works closely with mothers, encouraging them to send their children to school by providing financial resources, food and basic health attention. The programme has an in-built supervisory process involving local government and communities.
- ▷ In the region of Oaxaca, the Secretary of Public Education is working closely with Indian representatives from the Mixe people to systematize their experiences and design an educational model respecting their culture and responding to their needs.
- ▷ Every year, 230,000 young men have the chance to complete their primary or secondary education through a joint programme run by the Ministry of Public Education and the Ministry of Defence. Three hours a week, they are tutored by other recruits who have finished their schooling. The National Institute for Adult Education supplies the methodological resources for training the recruits as tutors.

The Media: Education for Society

The Ministry of Public Education is working with NGO experts and filmmakers to develop television programmes on such themes as education for democracy, health and sex education. A National Institute for Educational Technology will soon be set up to increase the transmission of educational programmes to primary and secondary schools, teacher colleges, higher education institutions and public libraries.

NIGERIA

At the institutional level, Nigeria has set up special national commissions to achieve the country's EFA goals. The Master Plan on Basic Education (1993) was published following a broad sensitization drive in the mass media.

Government is encouraging the mobilization of civil society to support educational goals and expand educational provision. The setting up of a *National Parent Teacher Association* marked a major step in involving parents more closely in the running of primary and secondary schools. PTAs provide academic support to children, supplement a teacher's income or build classrooms. Representatives attend government meetings at state and national level, allowing for an input on children's welfare and academic performance.

The *National Commission for Nomadic Education* (NC-NE) aims to provide the country's six million pastoral nomads and migrant fishermen with the opportunity for functional literacy and numeracy. Community leaders, chiefs and other important actors are involved in awareness campaigns directed at promoting education among this group. Although the end goal is to sedentarize these populations by teaching them alternative skills and improving their living standard, collapsible classrooms were designed in order to follow the community's movements.

Advocacy Drives

The National Primary Education Commission and the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education have embarked on a number of public awareness campaigns. A Community Theatre approach has been used to sensitize the grassroots to the importance of mass literacy. Some 35,000 university graduates have participated in mass literacy campaigns and primers and teachers' guides in over eleven indigenous languages have been produced. The Nigeria Book Development Foundation launched a national campaign to promote reading for all. The UNDP is supporting Nigeria's efforts towards eradicating illiteracy.

A TALE OF TWO ASIAS

A PRESENTATION BY MAHBUB UL HAQ, PRESIDENT OF THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

The leaders of South Asia often dream of converting their countries into East Asian industrial tigers. But they must confront the unpleasant truth that no illiterate society has ever become an industrial tiger of any stripe or colour. In 1960, many South and East Asian countries had similar per capita income. Today, East Asian per capita income is 27 times higher than South Asia's. What made such a dramatic difference in a period of less than four decades? Most analysts agree that the most critical factor was the huge investment in education and technology in East Asia. What is even more important than total investment in education is the strategy that lay behind it. First, East Asian countries spent most of their education budgets on basic education — as much as 70 per cent. In stark contrast, South Asia built an inverse pyramid of education, spending less than 50 per cent on primary education. Second, East Asia realized the importance of technical skills. As such, around 20 per cent of secondary school children in East Asia went on to technical schools, against less than 2 per cent in South Asia. Third, East Asian countries forged alliances with the private sector, NGOs, civil society organizations and many grassroots movements to spread education at a quicker pace and in a more cost-effective manner.

There is simply no doubt that the spread of basic education at a rapid pace is the most critical issue for South Asian development today. Despite the powerful evidence of the benefits of education South Asian societies are mired in a swamp of mass illiteracy. The central question is: is it possible for South Asia to move towards universal basic education over the next decade and to finance such a rapid transformation of their societies? The arithmetic on resources is fairly manageable. It is estimated that if the goal of universal basic education is to be achieved by the year 2010, it

would require an additional investment of about \$37 billion, which is around \$2.5 billion a year. This is a fairly modest investment and can be mobilized through a variety of initiatives. First, it is time that South Asian countries, particularly Pakistan and India, review the relative priority of investing in people versus investing in arms. If military spending is cut by only 5 per cent a year, it can yield a total peace dividend of \$125 billion over the next 15 years. Even a freeze on military spending could yield \$80 billion.

Second, if South Asian countries are willing to take courageous steps themselves, it is more than likely that the global community will support their efforts. Today, South Asia receives only 12 per cent of global official development assistance (ODA), even though it is home to nearly 50 per cent of the world's absolute poor. Third, South Asian countries can free themselves from the burden of expensive domestic debts by privatizing their public assets. These domestic debts are taking away 5 to 6 per cent of their GNP.

Fourth, South Asian education budgets need a critical scrutiny. Primary education must receive 70-80 per cent of the scarce resources allocated for education. Incentives and facilities must be provided for at least 20-30 per cent of secondary school children to opt for technical education. The recipe for a major educational breakthrough is fairly established by now: universal primary education plus widespread technical education. In addition, South Asian governments should form more partnerships with the non-formal sector so that their limited money can have much greater mileage.

South Asia was once the cradle of civilization and educational progress. It can rediscover its lost heritage once again. For this, investment in education will be the key.

THERE IS SIMPLY NO DOUBT THAT THE SPREAD OF BASIC EDUCATION AT A RAPID PACE IS THE MOST CRITICAL ISSUE FOR SOUTH ASIAN DEVELOPMENT TODAY.

Besides capacity building, staff training and developing teaching materials, resources are being used to design and produce electronic and print media materials for creating awareness about education. The nation-wide programme also includes post-literacy courses in health and nutrition, agriculture, accounting and other disciplines as well as the setting up of rural libraries.

PAKISTAN

Faced with an annual 2.8 per cent population growth and continually increasing demand for access to basic education, the Government of Pakistan started formulating policies in the late 1980s to attract private initiatives and capital.

The Education Policy 1992 took a leap forward in involving society through several measures:

- ❑ As a first step, Education Foundations were set up in the country's four provinces to promote basic education through non-formal means. These Foundations provide grants and loans to private NGOs and individuals for the establishment of educational institutions on a cost-sharing basis, with special preference for remote rural and under-privileged areas.
- ❑ Village Education Committees are the second component of the social mobilization strategy. These committees are responsible for providing land and free labour for constructing schools, sensitizing village women to the importance of education and ensuring the security of the school and teacher. In Balochistan, these committees have played a key role in setting up 380 community schools.

Partnerships with NGOs to provide basic education are being forged. The Agha Khan Foundation runs a large rural development programme in the Northern Areas with the participation of the Government. In the field of adult literacy, the Prime Minister's Literacy Commission collaborates with 22 NGOs and 280 community-based organizations (CBOs).

The Minister of Education recognized that despite efforts to improve educational access, the situation was not yet very encouraging: "Most schools are not functioning properly, there is a high drop-out rate and managing procedures have to be improved." A study commissioned by the Ministry of Education found that VEC members were not fully aware of their role and responsibility. The decentralization that was to have taken shape through these committees has not occurred because officials at the lower levels continue to exercise their statutory powers.

III - KEY STRATEGIES IDENTIFIED IN THE EXPERTS' MEETING

● *High-Level Commitment*

Political and social mobilization must begin at the highest level. While legislation provides a reference for demanding and taking action, the personal involvement of the president or prime minister in events such as International Literacy Day or the launching of an educational campaign heightens the visibility of education on the national agenda and promotes awareness at all levels, within and outside ministries. Besides this high-level commitment, a consensus must exist across the ideological spectrum with regard to the importance of basic education. This guarantees greater policy continuity and makes education a national, rather than a government concern.

● *Changing Mind-sets*

A social mobilization campaign will be all the more effective if actors and agents of change at all levels are aware of their responsibilities and share the same vision of education. Orientation programmes are required within education ministries at national, federal, district and local levels to understand EFA issues and learn the rules of working with communities, village education committees, school management committees and parent-teacher associations.

● *Defining Targets*

Clearly identifying the target population is one of the backbones of any mobilization strategy. People must be reached in their local settings, in their respective traditions and cultures. Involving communities in this process of defining the target population builds up a commitment to education before a programme actually gets off the ground.

● *Involving Parents, Listening to Needs*

Creating an environment in which parents, especially mothers, are encouraged to seek knowledge and information has a significant impact on education, especially on girls' education. The demand for education is often a result of a broader process of empowerment.

● *Creating a Literate Environment*

From producing posters to opening rural libraries and organizing reading festivals, ongoing efforts to develop an environment in which learning is valued are essential to creating awareness, interest and motivation for education.

● *Developing Linkages*

Education is not only the foundation of sustainable human development, it is also one of a constellation of basic social services required to eradicate poverty. Education must contribute to alleviate poverty through integrated programmes or alternative approaches at all levels to address health care, nutrition, and social and economic concerns.

● *Working with the Media*

Using traditional, print and electronic media to get educational messages across and create a literate environment is an essential aspect of mobilization. In many rural areas, dance, drama, songs, storytelling and other folk traditions can be very effective in carrying educational messages. The print and electronic media has the power to rally large numbers to the educational cause.

● *Changing the Profile of Education*

Marketing is a word that is not pronounced often in education ministries. But applying marketing techniques to campaigns in favour of education can create demand and motivate citizens to work towards a common goal. Such campaigns must be developed in co-operation with education experts and require careful monitoring and evaluating.

● *Evaluating and Sustaining Programmes*

The biggest challenge is how to sustain the community's motivation and interest in order for a sense of ownership to be felt. Accountability must be clearly defined and an efficient system of evaluating and monitoring developed. Several studies underlined the importance of capacity-building at the local level, notably to strengthen village education and school management committees. Plans for going to scale must be built into project designs.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Like any social, political or cultural movement, EFA requires strong mobilization at all levels and a shared vision of education as a transformative act to keep alive and grow in strength. "We should not take social demand for granted," said John Lawrence of UNDP. "We should have some form of social radar that is routinely scanned and constantly reinterpreted." Partnerships at all levels must be intensified for education to systematically integrate concerns about health, nutrition, population, the environment and sustainable livelihoods. All participants agreed that the rich experiences of the E-9 countries should be shared more broadly, both at an international and sub-national level. Several delegates called for more informal workshops inviting experts from the field to focus more comprehensively on specific issues: while the E-9 initiative requires commitment at the highest level, it must also reach the grassroots, those who are veritably the agents of change in their own communities. ■

THE MINISTERS' MEETING

“WE HAVE COME HERE WITHOUT MODELS, WITHOUT ANY CONDITIONS. WE COME HERE WITH THE ESSENCE OF JOMTIEN AND THE NEW DELHI DECLARATION. WE COME HERE TO LEARN AND TO LISTEN. WE WANT TO ASSIST THE E-9 IN IMPLEMENTING WHAT THEY CONSIDER MUST BE DONE TO ENHANCE AT ALL LEVELS THE EDUCATION OF THEIR PEOPLE THROUGHOUT LIFE.”

FEDERICO MAYOR
DIRECTOR-GENERAL, UNESCO

Welcoming guests to the Ministers' Meeting on 16 September, Syed Ghous Ali Shah, the Federal Education Minister, reaffirmed “that investment in human capital brings the highest return and has optimal payoff in its myriad forms.” The presence of the Minister of Finance, Mr Sartaj Aziz, appeared to symbolize Pakistan's commitment to addressing social sector development. “We are all aware that education is the key to change and progress, and covers the total spectrum of human life,” he said. “Unfortunately, this reality appears to have taken a long time to dawn upon us.” Commenting on achievements made in the last six years, the minister warned that there is “no room for complacency. Continued progress requires even more forceful and concerted action, based on good information, sound research and careful analysis aimed at achieving clearly specified results.”

Referring to limited resources, Mr Aziz urged that “international agencies seriously look at the implications of mounting debts and debt servicing and the impact these have had on human resource development in our countries, in the past as well as the present.” In the context of Pakistan, he called for more integration between different ministries concerned

with human development and a “massive mobilization of communities” to set up formal and non-formal schools “to rid the nation of the chronic malaise of illiteracy, backwardness and economic underdevelopment.”

As the country papers showed, participation rates in almost all the E-9 countries have increased and the number of out-of-school children is slowly beginning to decline. The focus on female education has sharpened. All E-9 countries are forming new partnerships and taking innovative measures to reach the most deprived, remote communities and disadvantaged groups, and to improve learning quality and relevance.

Bangladesh reported impressive progress since the passing of the Primary Education Compulsory Act in 1990. The country has surpassed the mid-decade (1995) target of 82 per cent gross enrolment as a result of legislative support, physical improvement, massive social mobilization and financial interventions. Net enrolment is estimated at 78 per cent. The drop-out rate has decreased from 60 per cent in 1990 to an estimated 37 per cent in 1996. Girls' participation has increased sharply and 60 per cent of primary school teaching posts are reserved for female candidates. The government has adopted innovative approaches and formed partnerships with the non-formal sector to expand access. Since 1991, 3,215 new community schools have been built and 1,200 satellite schools with local para-professional female teachers established. Important steps have also been taken to improve quality, namely a competency-based curriculum and a new series of textbooks and teachers' guides; a broad in-service training programme and better academic supervision.

During the E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting, the World Health Organization (WHO) appealed to UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP to join its Global School Health Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to increase the number of schools that can truly be called "health-promoting" schools, namely those that are constantly strengthening their capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working. A "health-promoting school" strives to improve the health of school personnel, families, community members and students; engages health and education officials, parents and community leaders in efforts to make the school a healthy place; provides school health education and services along with various outreach projects and counselling programmes. As Dr. Mohamed Ali Barzgar, WHO's Head of Mission in Pakistan explained, the premise of this initiative is simple: education influences health, and vice-versa. Mothers with only one year of schooling tend to take better care of their infants and are more likely to seek medical care for their children. Within a community, school-based interventions can play a vital role in promoting basic health care.

The country is casting its net wide to provide learning opportunities to young children, adolescents and adults who have either not followed primary schooling or dropped out at an early stage. The adult literacy rate has increased from 35.3 per cent in 1991 to an estimated 47.3 per cent in 1995 (25.8 to 38.1 for women). Fertility rates have decreased over this period, from 4.9 per cent in 1990 to 3.3 per cent in 1996. One-third of non-formal education programmes were implemented by the Government and two-thirds by private organizations, with financial support from the Government.

However, public investment in education as a share of GDP is still very low. Education expenditure represented 15.4 per cent of total government expenditure in FY 1996-97. The Government has proposed to allocate 65 percent of total educational resources to the primary and non-formal subsector for the current Fifth Plan (1997-2002), up from the previous 50 per cent.

In Brazil, the government of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso has defined education as one of its top priorities. Public expenditure on education represents 4.6 per cent of GDP. A Constitutional Amendment on sharing responsibilities for education among

the three levels of government and a redistribution mechanism to promote more equality "is the most comprehensive and innovative policy for basic education enacted by the present government," said Sônia Moreira, leader of Brazil's delegation.

Population growth is decreasing, from an annual 1.93 per cent in 1991 to 1.38 per cent in 1996. While net enrolment ratios (7-14 age group) rose from 86 to 91 per cent between 1991 and 1996, there are still approximately 2.7 million out-of-school children in this group. In response, the Federal Government has created an emergency programme to expand enrolment with the slogan: *No Child Out of School*. To tackle high repetition

rate in Grades One and Five (respectively 44 and 34 per cent), the Ministry has created the Learning Acceleration Programme. Illiteracy decreased from 20.1 per cent to 15.6 per cent in the 1991-1995 period but severe regional differences remain. Through partnerships with government, companies, universities and popular organizations, the Joint Literacy Programme works in disadvantaged rural areas. Different levels of government and society are rallying around a common objective of promoting a quality boost in the schooling system.

In China, net enrolment rate of primary school-age children reached 98.81 per cent in 1996. The illiteracy rate dropped from 10 per cent in 1990 to 6 per cent in 1996. Special attention is being paid to reaching poor and remote regions. The National Project for Supporting the Development of Compulsory Education in Poor Areas (1995-2000) was jointly initiated by the State Education Commission and the Ministry of Finance. The qualifications of teachers have markedly improved, with 90.9 per cent of full-time primary teachers meeting the minimum requirements, up 2 per cent from 1995. The Government is also focusing on the growing number of school-age children migrating with

their parents from rural to urban areas, in order to ensure that they do not cut short their education. Significant progress has also been made in the field of special needs education, with over 50 per cent of handicapped children of various categories now attending school.

Egypt views education as a matter of national security and as such, a national responsibility shared by all. Financial resources allocated to pre-university education represent 5 per cent of GNP. Enrolment in primary education rose from 75 per cent in 1992/93 to 81 per cent in 1996/97. Besides an extensive programme of school construction, Egypt is emphasizing the introduction of technology into schools. By 1998, over 6,000 schools will be equipped with computers. Advanced science laboratories have also been set up. Reforms of basic education curricula has boosted investment in teacher training programmes. In particular, a videoconference network enables teachers around the country to follow training without losing the benefits of interaction. Egypt also pays special attention to the education of girls and women, a field in which the First Lady Suzanne Mubarak takes a personal interest. Over 1,500 one-class schools in rural areas have drawn 24,000 girls. School nutrition programmes have also been significantly extended.

In India, 95 per cent of the rural population has a primary school within a walking distance of one kilometre and over 90 per cent of the country's three million teachers — of whom a third are women — are qualified and trained. About 91 per cent (150.74 million) of children in the 6-14 age group are enrolled in primary school. Retention rates have increased from 55.7 per cent in 1990-91 to 60.6 per cent in 1995-96. Impressive strides have been made in the field of adult literacy, notably through the Total Literacy Campaigns, which aim to reach 100 million non-literates by 1999. Local bodies in urban and rural areas are playing an increasing role in the planning, management and supervision of primary schools and adult education programmes. "And yet, our unfinished task is daunting," said Shri S.R. Bommai, Minister of Human Resource Development. "Our Government has taken a historic decision to amend

the Constitution of India to make education for children from 6 to 14 years of age a Fundamental Right. This imposes a fundamental duty on parents to provide opportunities for education to their children. Ours being a federal Government, our States and Union Territories would be required to enact laws for the enforcement of free and compulsory education within a year." He also announced the initiation of a National Advocacy and Media Campaign for Universalization of Elementary Education. This campaign would seek to influence policy and opinion makers, community leaders, parents and teachers in favour of EFA.

“OUR GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN A HISTORIC DECISION TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA TO MAKE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN FROM 6 TO 14 YEARS OF AGE A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT.”

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI
MINISTER OF HUMAN
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT,
INDIA

With a net enrolment rate of about 94.8 per cent and an adult literacy rate of 87 per cent, **Indonesia** is focusing on improving the quality and relevancy of education, emphasizing children's ability to learn "how to learn". Through distance education, thousands of teachers have improved their skills and obtained a "Diploma II", a certificate equivalent to a university-level education. In addition, key emphasis has also been placed on upgrading the quality of pre-service education, with some traditional teacher training institutions slowly attaining university status.

Besides increasing the number of textbooks per student, the government has launched several programmes to raise the quality and management of primary and secondary schools. Measures include rehabilitation of old school buildings, training of head teachers and supervisors, improving the national assessment system and promoting community participation. The LINK and MATCH policy is one of the most important initiatives to raise the quality of basic education. "With this policy, we are encouraging headmasters and teachers to make education relevant, and to assure

that the knowledge and skills of students MATCHES today's societal requirements. This in turn forces educators to LINK closely with the world outside the classroom, and to invite community participation on issues such as curriculum content, to a much larger degree than previously practiced," explained the Minister's representative. With regards to population growth, fertility rates have dropped from 2.9 (per 1,000 women) in 1993 to 2.6 in 1997.

In Mexico, education reforms have been aimed at fostering quality, equity and relevance. Progress can be observed in declining drop-out rates. Completion rate of primary and secondary education have increased to 83.3 and 79.3 per cent respectively (up from 70.3 and 73.9 per cent in 1990-1991). The adult literacy rate rose from 87.6 per cent in 1990 to 89.4 per cent in 1995 (75 to 87.4 per cent for women). Efforts to train teachers, supply learning materials, encourage strategies based on distance communications media, expand pre-school education and publish bilingual-bicultural textbooks are examples of measures that have yielded promising results. While gender parity has been achieved in primary education, a gap persists in rural zones. Through intersectoral strategies, the country is precisely seeking to reach small, remote villages, street children and indigenous populations. An important effort is also being made to integrate minors with special education needs into the mainstream school system. Over the last year, 17,000 disabled youth have been integrated into regular schools.

Despite impressive advances, the leader of Mexico's delegation reminded the audience that over 35 million Mexicans do not finish basic education and that 1.5 million children in the 6-14 age group do not attend school. "This makes us reflect on the necessities of involving and strengthening participation and commitment of all the social actors in the task of education", said the Minister's representative. With regard to demographics, the fertility rate has dropped from 3.31 in 1990 to 2.73 in 1996.

Nigeria expressed concern over the adverse effects of a depressed economy on education. With an estimated 25 per cent of the population under age

six, the country has strongly encouraged the expansion of early childhood education. In the formal sector, basic education is free for nine years, although Mr A.R. Yunusa, head of Nigeria's delegation, reported that parents often have to buy books, uniforms and sometimes provide desks and chairs. In 1991, 17.4 million children between 6 and 11 were enrolled in school (79 per cent), a figure that has dropped to 15.7 million. An estimated 50 per cent of the population is illiterate (61 per cent of women). "Our greatest concern is the decreasing public primary school net enrolment ratio in spite of an increase in enrolment in Primary

One each year," said Mr Yunusa. "Drop-out rates are also high and there are considerable regional disparities between urban and rural areas, and gender differences." Besides increasing the material costs of providing education, the recession is undervaluing the whole concept of learning." And yet, "experience has shown that communities are prepared to contribute collectively, often substantially and at some sacrifice to themselves, to support and sustain schools for their children."

Mr Yunusa expressed confidence in the Primary Education Improvement Programme, which has received a new impetus from World Bank loans. These cover the provision of textbooks, school rehabilitation and building, and teacher training. The programme also places emphasis on advocacy and mobilization of grassroots communities in the running and maintenance of local schools. "Nigeria's greatest resource is its people but their potential cannot be fulfilled without education. The nation's financial resources are crippled by a heavy burden of external debts and currency devaluation," said Mr Yunusa.

“EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT COMMUNITIES ARE PREPARED TO CONTRIBUTE COLLECTIVELY, OFTEN SUBSTANTIALLY AND AT SOME SACRIFICE TO THEMSELVES, TO SUPPORT AND SUSTAIN SCHOOLS FOR THEIR CHILDREN.”

A.R. YUNUSA, HEAD OF NIGERIA'S DELEGATION

Pakistan is committed to providing basic education to all children in the 5-9 age group and doubling the literacy rate to 70 per cent by 2002. The Minister of Education informed participants that the development budget for basic education had increased from Rs. 1.24 billion in 1990 to Rs. 8.9 billion in 1997. Education spending represents 2.56 per cent of GNP. He reported a 44 per cent increase in gross enrolment at the primary level and progress in female participation rates from 48 in 1990 to 63 per cent in 1997. Participation rates in primary school have increased 10.8 per cent since 1990.

To further encourage female enrolment, an incentive-tied package for rural women has been launched aiming to achieve higher enrolment, better retention and reduce drop-out. The Social Action Programme (SAP) has achieved a modest breakthrough in the rate of establishing primary schools (a 32 per cent increase since 1990), encouraged decentralization and fostered a greater awareness towards "the serious neglect of human development in the past." Population growth remains high: an estimated 2.7 per cent in 1996-97, down from 3.1 per cent in 1990-1991. ■

A PRESIDENT

FACES REALITIES

In his closing address, President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari of Pakistan underlined the link between declining population growth and education. "Today, we the nine nations constitute half of the world's population. The entire population of our nine nations is greater than the world population of 1950. Our nine countries account for over 70 per cent of the world's illiterates. It is estimated that over 70 million children in our nine countries are left out of the primary education system and that this number would grow to 83 million by the end of the century. In most of our nine countries, population growth rate is over 2.5 percent." Pointing to the positive links between education and slower population growth, Mr Leghari referred to illiteracy as "the root cause and mother of all social evils... Extremism, terrorism, intolerance, ethnicity and other destructive trends and attitudes emerge from the womb of illiteracy."

POLICIES ENFORCED FROM THE TOP WITHOUT PARTICIPATION CAN HARDLY ACHIEVE RESULTS.

Making reference to his own country's education record, President Leghari said he felt "ashamed" that Pakistan had "not done what it should have done for its people." "Our leaders are to blame more than anyone else for the fact that other countries that were more backward than Pakistan managed to forge ahead with scarce resources. Not only did we fail to provide sufficient resources, but we continue to do so. And the

scant resources we did provide continue to be misused," he stated. "Our policies have been flawed. We have not concentrated enough on women's education. There has hardly been any participation of the people. Policies enforced from the top without participation can hardly achieve results."

The problem is not one of demand. "Wherever we go, we are deluged by the demand for more schools. The involvement of people does not exist. Our schools do not have managing committees, there is no check on teachers, no authentic record of drop-out, fundamentally because there is no participation."

KEY MESSAGES

“We have been enlightened and other UN agencies now have the important task to reflect and make in-depth studies of what you have presented,” said UNESCO’s Director-General Federico Mayor. “We have done a good analysis of what has to be done. We must come to action, we must come from words to deeds. The reporting society is also a postponing society. We know and we come here to reaffirm that education is the solution to provide each individual with the capacity they have to create, to invent, to think by themselves, to say yes or no, according to their own thought.”

He drew special attention to Egypt’s regard for education as a matter of national security. “I fully consider that this is one aspect that we do not dare to discuss. We usually have the idea that security belongs to other facets of government and is not directly related to education. But if we invest in education, we will make democracy less vulnerable and provide citizens with more security. When citizens are educated, they are in a position to enhance and influence the democratic process.”

Mr Mayor underlined education’s strategic role in forging attitudes and values and drew attention to the vital triangle formed by democracy, development and peace. “We cannot have sustainable peace if we do not have sustainable development based on better sharing and better distribution of wealth. The context of sustainable development is a context of democracy so that all citizens can participate.” Parliaments and the media both have critical roles to play in creating necessity at the popular level: “The media must help us to mobilize the popular wing in gaining support for education.” The message is a straightforward one: “If you care about population, environment, health and nutrition, invest in education.”

UNFPA’s Executive Director Nafis Sadik welcomed a proposal made at the E-9 Ministers’ Meeting in Geneva last October calling for stronger links between the education and health sectors. “Successful schooling depends on healthy children and a healthy school environment. Children who are properly cared for, in infancy and early childhood, are more likely to do well in school,” said Dr Sadik. “While health systems will gain from collaborating with educators to bring knowledge to parents, education systems could be doing much more to promote health, particularly by educating students about practices that can improve, or undermine, their health, and that of their families, throughout their lives.”

**“SUCCESSFUL
SCHOOLING
DEPENDS ON
HEALTHY
CHILDREN AND
A HEALTHY
SCHOOL
ENVIRONMENT.”**

NAFIS SADIK,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
UNFPA

Priority to Women’s Education

As most global conferences have recognized, education is an essential element of women’s empowerment. Because with better education, women are equipped to be better mothers and their families are likely to be both smaller and healthier, there is an intricate link between slower population growth and higher education levels. “Every country’s progress towards the goals of EFA depends upon removing the huge gap between the access of girls and boys to basic education and strengthening these aspects of women’s lives,” said Dr Sadik.

● ***Education as a Human Right***

“Education is fundamental human right. Without education, we cannot ensure the dignity of all human beings. This dignity is our everyday mission, on behalf of

“OUR FIRST OBLIGATION IS NOT TO TECHNICAL EDUCATION, NEW CURRICULA OR EVEN QUALITY EDUCATION. OUR FIRST OBLIGATION IS TO THOSE CHILDREN WHOSE RIGHT TO EDUCATION IS BEING WITHHELD.”

STEPHEN UMEMOTO,
UNICEF

must ask: ‘Who is withholding this right, not necessarily intentionally, but through inaction, inadequate commitment and initiative! Our first obligation is not to technical education, new curricula or even quality education. Our first obligation is to those children whose right to education is being withheld.’”

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

The Joint Communiqué was drafted with a high level of consensus, resulting in a comprehensive document that encompasses a broad range of issues. Governments resolved “to give an added sense of urgency” to national efforts towards EFA. They committed themselves to developing effective long-term strategies for sustainable social and political mobilization, notably through the involvement of the entire political community, continued decentralization and a strong media alliance. The document places emphasis on reaching the unreached, often through non-formal educational approaches tailored to specific economic and cultural circumstances. Political measures and financial efforts are required to resolve the issue of street and working children, described as “a collective shame.” The education of girls and women remains a top priority, and ministers underlined the links between women’s education and improved use of micro-credit programmes for increasing family income. They also pledged to provide further resources to adult literacy and integrated education and care for young children. The communiqué reiterates that education has to address population issues and foster values and attitudes of tolerance and dignity. It also draws attention to improving data collection and

the UN system,” said Mr Mayor. Several participants underlined the significance of education as a human right. “We and others have not merely responsibilities but obligations to fulfill this right,” said UNICEF’s representative in Pakistan Stephen Umamoto. “In each case, we

analysis and further promoting various media to support distance education.

● *Enhancing Cooperation*

The need to strengthen coordination among UN agencies, also expressed in the Joint Communiqué, stems from the recognition that education must be considered as one of several basic social services composing any poverty alleviation strategy. Dr Sadik informed the audience about the recently established UN Development Group, formed as part of the Secretary-General’s Track 2 reform initiatives. The Group’s aim is to facilitate the functioning of the UN Funds and Programme in a more coherent framework, especially at the country level. The joint programme of support to basic primary education in India, the first of its kind, is one example of what is possible.

● *Future Directions*

Underlining the strength of the Joint Communiqué, Mr Mayor drew attention to the urgency of putting it into practice. “This communiqué reaffirms the commitment of all the E-9 countries to provide EFA. Let us provide access to education to all citizens throughout life. Let us forge attitudes of tolerance and comprehension.”

The E-9 countries pledged to work more closely with sponsoring agencies and donors in a number of key areas, including quality, relevance, and effectiveness of primary education; collection and analysis of educational data; teacher training; the fostering of a literate environment; health and nutrition of young children; distance education and the role of the media.

The Ministers proposed convening a second E-9 summit in 2000 to be held in conjunction with a “Jomtien II” Conference, preceded by a preparatory meeting in 1999. All participants agreed on the need to share the E-9 experiences more widely, notably by tapping the potential of new communication technologies. But sharing goes beyond learning from each other. “We must better share wealth and knowledge,” said Mr Mayor. “This is perhaps the best recommendation that we can give in this meeting: we must care and we must dare to share.” ■

THE JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

ISLAMABAD, 14-16 SEPTEMBER, 1997

Strengthening the Commitment for EFA

1 We, the Ministers of Education of the nine countries, have come together in Islamabad to review the progress and problems encountered in striving towards our shared goal of education for all, paying particular attention to the required political and social mobilization. We hereby reconfirm our commitment, as expressed in the Delhi Declaration, to pursue with the utmost zeal and determination the goals set in 1990 by the World Conference on Education for All, the Summit of the Nine High-Population Countries in 1993, and the first Ministerial Review Meeting of the E-9 countries in Bali, Indonesia (1995) to meet the basic learning needs of all our people. We remain convinced that Governments play a critically important role in the provision of Basic Education, both relevant and of quality to all, and renew our commitment to provide basic education for all in our countries, mobilize resources commensurate with our commitments, and work closely with parents and communities, as well as with the international community. The marked success achieved in increasing primary school enrolments in most E-9 countries since Jomtien provides incontrovertible evidence of both adherence to past commitment and increases the possibility of actually achieving the Jomtien goals in the near future. We regard basic education as a fundamental human right to which we are all committed, as a central factor in ensuring sustainable livelihood and eradication of poverty, and apt to break the cycle of gender inequity, marginalization and exclusion, as well as the foundation for equitable social and economic development.

Endorsing the Amman Affirmation

2 We fully endorse the Amman Affirmation for EFA, adopted at the Mid-Decade Meeting of the International Consultative Forum on EFA, held in Amman, Jordan, in June 1996, with its emphasis on the following priorities:

- ▷ 2.1. Affirmation of the right to education.
- ▷ 2.2. The priority placed on the education of women and girls.
- ▷ 2.3. The emphasis on the training, status, remuneration and motivation of teachers.
- ▷ 2.4. The role of parents, families and communities in improving provision of basic education, including early childhood development.
- ▷ 2.5. The need for partnerships which include parliaments, voluntary and community groups, the business sector and the media.
- ▷ 2.6. The efficient and effective use of resources.

Mobilizing for EFA

3 We recognize the fact that without the continuing mobilization of all segments of society, the goal of "Education for All" cannot be achieved. We, therefore, commit ourselves to developing effective long-term strategies for sustainable social and political mobilization for EFA. These strategies should include:

- ▷ 3.1. the effective involvement of political leaders, parliaments and political parties in each country, at all levels of government including the municipalities; a change of mind-set on the

part of administrators; enshrining EFA as a lasting commitment in national constitutions and in appropriate legislation; giving EFA a priority position in national and local budgets; defining clear and realistic objectives and targeting the most needy populations;

- ▷ 3.2. strengthening our efforts towards decentralization in order to better integrate civil society at the local level and giving an effective role in EFA programmes to all those who can contribute; the partnerships to be built or strengthened should include, in particular, the NGO community, the private sector, parents and local communities, as well as the learners themselves who should be encouraged to clearly articulate their learning needs;
- ▷ 3.3. raising awareness of the value of education and strengthening local demand for, as well as contributions to, education through social mobilization in ways which will reach both the illiterate and the literate. The media have a critical role to play in any effort of social and political mobilization. We, therefore, advocate a strong media alliance within and across countries, strengthening media participation in the mobilization process for EFA.

Reaching the Unreached

4 Our commitment to education for all entails an obligation to reach those whose learning needs may not be adequately addressed by conventional education: the poor in remote rural or semi-urban areas for whom basic education must be a key to overcome and eradicate poverty; indigenous populations for whom education serves as a means to preserve their identity and dignity; and disabled learners who require special but inclusive educational arrangements. For many of these, non-formal educational approaches tailored to specific economic and cultural circumstances and integrated with other complementary social services have proved to be relevant and cost-effective; such approaches provide, at the same

time, valuable opportunities to remove certain rigidities of formal school systems and to create pathways between learning within and outside the classroom. Intensive skills learning in the mother tongue, in order to improve conditions of life, is a good premise to further enhance learning and literacy.

Children Living on the Streets or Working to Support their Families

5 Street children, children forced to work so as to support their families, or children who are sexually exploited are a collective shame that cannot be considered as an irremediable outcome of economic development. In order to eliminate it, state pacts with all political parties, trade unions, NGOs, private and public sectors, religious organizations, the media etc. must be achieved, and particular financial efforts must be made as the solution lies in political measures and not charitable and humanitarian approaches, which must be transitional only.

Educating Girls and Women

6 The Delhi Declaration and the Amman Affirmation stressed the overall importance of educating girls and women particularly in view of the emphasis on basic education as a fundamental human right and as the foundation for all forms of development, including economic development, poverty eradication, and ways to address population issues. This remains a top priority and efforts must be intensified to achieve the stated objectives. Consequently, all E-9 initiatives will need to pay particular attention to the education of girls and women. Despite some progress in this area, we resolve, herewith, to accelerate our efforts to make education available to all girls and women, in particular ensuring that girls are able to complete the full cycle of basic education, and that curricula and teaching-learning materials include a gender perspective. In the context of efforts towards poverty eradication, we recognize the crucial economic role of rural women who must be given access to education so they may better utilize local

opportunities such as micro-credit systems which are successfully practised in several E-9 countries. Indeed, we emphasize that providing women equal access to education will facilitate improved utilization of micro-credit programmes for increase in the family income.

Integrated Education and Care for Young Children

7 We acknowledge the fact that integrated child development programmes, including adequate health care, nutrition, and psycho-social stimulation for young children and, at a later age, population education, environmental education, and education to prevent drug abuse, are basic elements of effective education for all. The E-9 countries will intensify action in these domains and will develop appropriate initiatives with a view to enlarging the scope of educational policies, particularly as regards early childhood development, by involving Ministries of Health and Education, local communities, and those NGOs and private organizations which can play a complementary role and create awareness among families, especially young parents.

Education and Values

8 Attitudes and values constitute an essential dimension of basic education. We affirm our commitment to fostering values through education, including education for peace and democracy education for sustainable development, education for human dignity, education for tolerance and education for reproductive health as a way of valuing life and reducing population growth.

Education, Population, and Development

9 Recognizing that education can be neither relevant nor complete without addressing population issues, we resolve to take into account the linkages between education, population, and development, as endorsed by all our countries at the International Conference on Population and

Development (Cairo, 1994), in all future Review Meetings, country reports, and other relevant E-9 activities. Our common goal of Education for All requires an integrated, multi-sectoral approach.

Literacy and Continuing Education for Adults

10 Following the International Conference on Adult Education, held in Hamburg, Germany (July 1997), and knowing that vast numbers of young people and adults are denied access to basic education, we stress the importance of accelerating progress in the area of literacy and continuing education for adults. In this respect we reaffirm our determination to provide further resources to adult literacy through formal and non-formal means, with particular reference to functional literacy programmes, and acknowledge the essential, but not exclusive role of NGOs and communities as partners in literacy work and adult education. The E-9 countries need to benefit from a more active exchange of national experiences, notably in respect of mass literacy strategies and campaigns. We also recognize the potential of 'Reading for All' campaigns as a means of creating a literate environment and establishing the habit of reading in communities where limited access to reading materials is a major obstacle to EFA.

Effective Planning and Monitoring through Improved Data and Statistics

11 In recognition of the fact that long-term EFA policies cannot be effectively planned and monitored without the availability of reliable, timely, and internationally comparable education data and indicators, we will strengthen our efforts to build the capacity of local and national bodies charged with collecting and analyzing educational data as a precondition for effective educational planning, monitoring and evaluation. Such data should not only be geared to national policy concerns, but also highlight the considerable variations in quantity and quality of educational provision within each country. We also request the sponsoring agencies and other

organizations or NGOs to provide technical inputs and support whenever needed, and welcome the establishment by UNESCO of a new International Institute of Statistics.

Using Distance

Education

12 We confirm our commitment to developing the concept of Learning Without Frontiers further by promoting new modes of access to learning, in particular the various media used to support distance education. These modes of teaching and learning should find effective application in all areas of basic education, in-service teacher training, adult education and literacy, and formal and non-formal approaches to reach out to those yet unreached. Recent joint E-9 studies have shown the existence of promising new strategies in the field of in-service teacher training. Not only will we increase attention and support to this crucial aspect of EFA, but we will also determine its effectiveness in terms of learning results. We call on international agencies to join us in this effort, to help promote cooperation and experience exchange in line with the Distance Education Initiative adopted at the E-9 Summit in Delhi, 1993, and contribute to the funding required.

International Collaboration

13 We, the E-9 countries, are aware of the role we must play in the context of the global mobilization for EFA. We confirm our willingness to develop, together with the sponsoring agencies UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP and other agencies, such as the World Bank and regional development banks, bilateral and multilateral donors and NGOs, intensive action programmes in each of our countries to accelerate the momentum of the E-9 Initiative. We pledge to work together with emphasis on the following key areas: quality, relevance, and effectiveness of primary education as the cutting edge of EFA; collection and analysis of educational data for improved planning and monitoring; research concerning the effects on

learning outcomes of better training and working conditions for teachers; reading for all and creating a literate environment; health and nutrition of young children; developing effective strategies of mobilization for universal, free, and compulsory primary education, literacy and continuing adult education especially for women; and reinforcing distance education and the role of the media. In all these areas, we intend to share relevant experiences more widely with other countries, using Internet wherever appropriate, as well as intensifying the dialogue between centre, states, and districts within our own countries. We are particularly looking forward to stronger and better coordinated programmes of UN agencies and donors at national level, and we call on them to actively contribute to the joint E-9 activities as outlined above.

Future E-9

Activities

14 Four years after the Delhi Summit, and having achieved visible progress in many areas, we resolve to give an added sense of urgency to our national efforts towards the common goal of EFA, in particular by retaining EFA as a concern of society as a whole. While looking forward to the results of the joint activities mentioned above, we propose to convene a second E-9 Summit in the year 2000. This will be preceded by a preparatory meeting in 1999, in Brazil, to be held in conjunction with a 'Jomtien II' Conference which will be organized by the international community. On that historic occasion, we hope to be able to confirm the present trends of progress for EFA and report on concrete achievements in every area of EFA, thus contributing in a significant manner to the global struggle for EFA. We call on the sponsoring agencies, and particularly on UNESCO, to collaborate with us in the careful preparation of the Summit Meeting in the year 2000, which will decide on the future orientations of our joint initiative. ■

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