

## A Call to Action

**“We are convinced that the educational needs of disadvantaged groups in the developing nations of the world need much more attention in order to achieve the EFA and MDG goals”.**

Therefore, the Düsseldorf Conference "Call to Action" is being issued to:

- promote **quality education for all**, including all disadvantaged groups and persons
- support the EFA initiatives in order to **achieve the 2015 goals**
- feed concrete **recommendations** into the **Tenth Working Group on EFA (WGEFA)**, meeting 9-11 December 2009 and the **Ninth High-Level Group on EFA (HLG)**, meeting 23-25 February 2010 in Addis Ababa.

The “Call to Action” is addressed to those with the mandate to take action on the specific recommendations expressed by the participants of the International Conference “Reaching the marginalised – How to approach Inclusive Education”, which took place 10-11 September 2009 in Düsseldorf, Germany.

Within their mandate, the following key players in education policy and/or provision are requested to act: UNESCO, European Commission, World Bank, development partners, local/ regional/national parliaments and governments, social partners and NGOs.

### The issues identified by the conference

1. There is not enough information on the needs and characteristics of children and youth disadvantaged and excluded from and within education. Among others, politicians, researchers, practitioners and the public are not aware of the situation.
2. In the past, the education of disadvantaged groups had low priority in the implementation of Education for All policies in many countries as well as with bi- and multilateral partner agencies.
3. Likewise, there is no clear international agreed strategy on promoting, fostering and implementing inclusive education.
4. Many countries do not have the policies, frameworks and structures required to advance in Inclusive Education. Requirements include adjusted legislation, adequate financial support, appropriate institutional structures, effective administrative systems, quality frameworks and the conditions required to support effective partnerships and lobbying.

## Recommendations

1. Give **high priority to include all disadvantaged groups and persons into education initiatives and processes at all levels** from early childhood up to vocational and tertiary education including transition to the labour market and lifelong learning. Inclusive Education should be promoted and fostered at international, regional and national levels, through policy, budgets, implementation and monitoring.
2. Adjust **comprehensive local, regional and national statistical data collection systems** to include disadvantaged groups and persons in order to establish benchmarks, to undertake needs analyses, to plan, to monitor, to report on and to evaluate performance, and to undertake international comparative studies. It is important to build upon initiatives such as the one FTI-UIS.
3. Contribute to the **development of benchmarks and indicators**, a comprehensive inclusive education policy framework, models for adjustment of national education sector plans **as well as guidelines and strategies for realizing quality inclusive education** for all children and young people in cooperation with partner countries. These must be adaptable to the differing conditions in the various countries in order to guarantee relevant and quality education opportunities for all forms and at all levels of education.
4. Adjust current **funding strategies** in education cooperation in order to meet the additional needs for addressing inclusive education.
5. **Expand EFA-FTI to promote, plan, finance and implement inclusive education** in order to achieve quality education for all, e.g. through use and ongoing refinement of the equity and inclusion tool to ensure education sector plans are inclusive, ensuring civil society input to this process; and commitment from the FTI secretariat and donor partners, ensuring accessibility is built into support for teaching and learning materials and school infrastructure (i.e. buildings and books are accessible).
6. Develop **relevant inclusive flexible curricula and education programs**, allowing minorities to develop their own education alternatives, supporting distinct culture and languages as well as integration into mainstream culture, and supporting bi- and multilingual education.
7. Develop **educational materials and text books for inclusive teaching and learning**, e.g. ensure that teaching and learning materials are available on time in the classroom in accessible formats, such as Braille and large print, and include provision for accessible formats in textbook publishing contracts.
8. **Three pilot countries, one each from Africa, Latin America and Asia, shall be selected** by the HLG of EFA-FTI for a comprehensive development of their education systems based on recommendations drawn up at the conference and other initiatives currently underway. The PETER USTINOV FOUNDATION in cooperation with other partners announced its intention to support this initiative.