

Critical issues in Education for All:  
gender parity, emergencies



# **Critical issues in Education for All: gender parity, emergencies**

A report from the IWGE

*International Working Group on Education (IWGE)  
Tuusula-Helsinki, Finland, 23-25 June 2003*

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This document is the summary of discussions of the 2003 International Working Group on Education (IWGE) meeting. The views and opinions expressed in this volume are those of the individual participants in the meeting and should in no way be attributed to UNESCO, IIEP or to any of the agencies that are members of the Working Group.

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## Preface

IWGE meetings are one of the better parts of working on the problems in expanding educational opportunity. They offer the space and encouragement for explaining, questioning and exploring – not as spokespersons, but as committed individuals who want the challenge to think more clearly and more cogently. Yet there is no denying the demands and necessities of the kitchen. Several of the participants at the 2003 meeting in Finland had to leave early to take part in other, more routine business meetings elsewhere. That is perhaps part of the price of working in a field that more and more of the world's leaders appreciate is crucial for the kinds of political, social and economic development that will assure, rather than threaten world peace.

Education for All (EFA) continued as the major substantive focus of IWGE's exchanges – and so it should. The *EFA global monitoring report* for 2002 showed only too clearly that many countries were still too far off track and likely to remain so, if they and their partners failed to take remedial action. Exacerbating these shortfalls were the reports on the millions of children, whose education has been disrupted by emergencies, civil war and other conflicts. But all was not gloomy. Many countries have narrowed their gender gaps, mainly in reach and enrolments, and also in attainments: this report contains an example from Ghana. The world is also learning how to offset – in part at any rate – the damage done to children by conflict. At least there is enough effort and enough progress to warrant encouragement rather than hopelessness, and balanced optimism rather than cynicism.

As international and bilateral agencies form IWGE, implementing development co-operation is another natural focus. From the reports we heard, the slowly evolving Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAp) and the more rapidly moving Fast Track Initiative (FTI),

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plus pooled and basket funding, do seem to be helping to make development co-operation less burdensome and more helpful to the countries and people who are supposed to benefit from it.

Finally, the fact that UNESCO, its Institute for Statistics (UIS) and the Global EFA Monitoring Report team have been able to make so much progress in improving the data and information available, despite the cautions about reliability and overall quality, constitutes another strand of encouragement and a further antidote to despair.

John Oxenham drafted this report on behalf of the Secretariat and then circulated it for comment to the members of the Planning Committee before publication. As with its predecessors, the report reflects only the personal perceptions and views of the participants themselves, not the views or policies of the institutions for which they work, or the views or policies of either IIEP or UNESCO.

Gudmund Hernes  
Director, IIEP

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## Composition of the Planning Committee

The International Working Group on Education (IWGE) is an informal group of aid agencies and foundations that come together at regular intervals to discuss issues of common interest relating to international co-operation in the field of education. At present, the Planning Committee of IWGE is composed of representatives of the following agencies:

- Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)
- Department for International Development (DfID), United Kingdom
- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD or World Bank)
- Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

The Secretariat of the International Working Group on Education is provided by the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP).

## List of abbreviations

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AFD	<i>Agence française de développement</i> (France)
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
BMZ	<i>Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung</i> (German Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development)
CBO	Community based organization
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
DfID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
ECD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA	Education for All
ESAC	Education Sector Adjustment Credit
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FAWE	Federation of African Women Educators
FTI	Fast Track Initiative in Education for All
G8	Group of Eight (largest industrialized countries: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom, United States)

*List of abbreviations*

GDA	Global Development Alliances
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GRE	Gross enrolment ratio
GTZ	<i>Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit</i> (Society for Technical Co-operation, Germany)
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative for debt reduction
IBE	International Bureau of Education
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IDA	International Development Association, (concessionary loan window of the World Bank Group for countries with less than US\$925 per capita annual income)
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO)
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
InWEnt	<i>Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung</i> (Capacity Building International, Germany)
IWGE	International Working Group on Education
JICA	Japanese International Co-operation Agency
NER	Net enrolment ratio
NGO	Non-governmental organization

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NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PASEG	<i>Programme d'aide du système éducatif de la Guinée-Bissau</i> (Programme of Aid for the Education System of Guinea-Bissau)
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SADCC	Southern Africa Development Co-operation Community
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approaches (to assistance for education and other sectors)
TA	Technical assistance
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPC	Universal primary completion
UPE	Universal primary education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## Introduction

The International Working Group on Education (IWGE) met in Tuusula, near Helsinki, Finland, from 23 to 25 June 2003, hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Finland. Participants came from a total of 27 institutions, one more than at the previous meeting in Lisbon in 2001. Represented in Helsinki were six international agencies or institutions, two foundations, and 15 bilateral agencies, most of which had been represented also in Lisbon.

IWGE organizes informal discussions between the key representatives concerned with the development of education policies in the donor agencies. The group meets about every 18 months to two years for an intensive professional interchange on current policy issues, and the informality of the sessions ensures that wide-ranging discussions take place in which the participants express their own personal views, as well as those of their agencies. A list of those who participated in the 2003 meeting appears in *Appendix 1*.

IWGE has been meeting since the early 1980s, when it took over the functions of the earlier Bellagio Group, which also acted as a forum for high-level discussions of policies in aid to education. Its meetings are organized and supported professionally by IIEP in Paris, which acts as the secretariat of the Working Group and is responsible, with the Group's Ad Hoc Planning Committee, for the production of this report.

*Appendix 2* provides a detailed programme of the discussions. After the opening addresses by Mr Pertti Majanen (Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and the Director of IIEP, *Theme 1* gave the representatives of the various institutions the opportunity to brief the meeting on any significant developments, actual or prospective, in policy, practice and key personnel since the previous meeting.

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*Theme 2* focused on measures to increase girls' participation in education. A panel first reviewed the evolving situation from an international perspective, after which a panel reported experiences from specific countries.

*Theme 3* considered the challenges of rebuilding and developing education in situations of emergency and post-conflict.

In *Theme 4*, the meeting took up its earlier and ongoing monitoring of progress in improving the modalities of development co-operation. It discussed experiences in utilizing sector-wide approaches to planning education (SWAp), in integrating education into the development and implementation of poverty reduction strategies (PRS) and in the Fast Track Initiative (FTI) in pursuit of the goals of Education for All (EFA).

Finally, in *Theme 5*, IWGE was brought up to date on progress since the Dakar Forum on steps to achieve the international targets for EFA by 2005 and 2015, and was briefed on the progress by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics in improving the collection of educational statistics.

In concluding its discussions, IWGE as usual considered topics, dates and venues for its next meeting: the two latter points were provisionally set for October/November 2004 in Washington DC, with the World Bank acting as host.

The discussions are summarized in the body of the main text. Except where the name of the presenter already appears on the programme in *Appendix 2*, statements are not assigned to specific, named individuals, nor are the discussions necessarily presented in the order in which they took place. The report attempts to draw out main issues and themes in an order that is logical rather than chronological, using the presentations and discussions to provide a source of information for the general reader as well as for those who attended the meeting and their agency colleagues.

## *Introduction*

The text of this report is also available on the IIEP web site ([www.unesco.org/iiep](http://www.unesco.org/iiep)) with links to copies of the papers presented at the meeting. The titles of these appear against the names of their presenters in *Appendix 2*.





## Welcome and keynote addresses

Pertti Majanen  
*Under-Secretary of State  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
Finland*

Pertti Majanen expressed his government's appreciation to UNESCO and IIEP for sustaining processes and forums of exchange such as the International Working Group on Education. After welcoming

the participants to Finland and wishing them a productive set of discussions, he offered a briefing on the current status of Finnish co-operation in development and particularly in education. The economic recession that Finland suffered during the 1990s had forced the government to reduce its allocations for development co-operation by half from its 1990 level of 0.7 per cent of the country's GDP to its current level of approximately 0.35 per cent. However, improving conditions have enabled the government to commit itself to the goal of regaining the 0.7 per cent level by 2010.

OECD/DAC had completed its peer review of Finnish development co-operation during the previous week and noted that the quality had improved. Indeed, the education programme, which accounts for 8-9 per cent of the total co-operation budget, was one of the particular strengths. Even so, a more comprehensive evaluation of support to education over the past ten years is currently under way and is expected to report in November. There is a particular interest in evaluating the 'disability' dimension, as education is clearly a key instrument for enabling disabled people to make more of their lives than earlier conditions had allowed. (These fresh evaluations follow those of eight country programmes during 2001-2002 and a partner review in 2002.)

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Currently, the Government of Finland is preparing a new white paper on its future policies in development co-operation. The main emphasis will be on poverty reduction, with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) as the guiding frame. The broad approach will move from support for particular projects to support for more comprehensive sector programmes. There will be priority support for rural development, education and health, with serious attention to the Millennium Development Goals, Education for All and the Fast Track Initiative in education.

As Finland is a small country, it will focus most of its efforts on just five 'long-term' partner countries that have developed a sound education sector strategy and set of programmes. However, it will also work to a more limited degree with other countries, with the main emphasis again on poverty reduction, system reform and priority themes. Currently, there are education sector support projects in 13 countries altogether.

Also as a small country, Finland takes seriously efforts to harmonize development aid in its partner countries and will ensure that all the work it supports is fully part of a partner's strategies and reforms. In this connection, it is moving towards budget support in some countries and, where that is less feasible, to 'pooled funding' with other donors. Finland is trying to promote fresh partnership processes through the 'Helsinki approaches', a new, more democratic forum to stimulate more equal exchanges that reflect a variety of values, and give partner countries more voice.

The themes that Finnish policy advocates for education are, currently, teacher education, education management, bilingual education, assessment of attainments and evaluation of performance. It accords priority to girls' education, gender equality, education for the disabled and human rights.

As regards organization, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recently transformed its geographical divisions into geographical departments that are

in charge of the operations, while the Department for International Development Co-operation has been renamed the Department for Development Policy. Even after restructuring, the ministry structures remain slim. Therefore, parallel with Finland's approach as a small country, the education programme needs to develop and rely on its networks and partnerships with NGOs and partner countries, as well as with the Ministry of Education and the National Education Board.

As remarked earlier, the recent OECD review had concluded that the overall status of Finland's development co-operation programme was satisfactory, but of course improvement was always possible and would be pursued.

Gudmund Hernes, Director,  
*International Institute for  
Educational Planning (IIEP)*  
*Opening address*

A brief *tour d'horizon* of developments since the last meeting of IWGE in Lisbon at the end of 2001 will serve to place education in its global economic and political context.

A major fact is that, in 2002, in the opening years of the new millennium, ODA was at a historical low, indeed the lowest point since 1970. Only the Scandinavian countries and Luxembourg had fulfilled the United Nations target of allocating 0.7 per cent of their GNP to development assistance. Nevertheless, some countries had at least increased their allocations, the United Kingdom by the largest margin.

The economic climate was poor, bear markets prevailed so that equities lost substantial value, confidence fell, the Boeing corporation saw a 43 per cent drop in its profits and began cutting its workforce and adding to the rising rates of unemployment, while the miracles of high technology and the information revolution seemed to be fading. The leading economies – Germany, Japan, United States – feared deflation, budget surpluses regressed to deficits, trade deficits widened, the United States dollar declined in value, a banking

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crisis loomed, while the reduction of interest rates to virtually zero per cent left the European and other central banks with little leeway to stimulate economies, as they had lost their chief instrument of economic control. In this negative atmosphere, the global allocations for ODA were cut by 10 per cent.

A total of US\$50 billion for ODA contrasted with subsidies for agriculture in the United States and Europe. While the World Trade Organization had the reform of agricultural trade at the top of its agenda, the United States increased its farming subsidies by 80 per cent, and with the European Union allocated £300 billion to their farmers, six times as much as they and the rest of OECD offered for development assistance. On top of this, despite their overt efforts to reduce poverty in developing countries, these countries were pursuing a bogus globalization that liberalized markets for the products of the industrial countries, but not for those – either agricultural or industrial – of the developing countries.

From the demographic perspective, all countries face the issue of ageing populations. In the donor countries, the issue is more acute, for their populations have larger proportions of older people, who not only work fewer years, demand adequate pensions, pushing up retirement costs, and absorb a disproportionate share of health services, but are also very vocal and well organized. France and Austria have already faced strikes over the level of pensions, while in the year 2000 pensioners constituted one in every ten persons in Norway. Such pressures on the domestic front in countries where elections are genuine make it more difficult for governments to be more generous on the international front.

Currently, as the recent war and occupation of Iraq signal, security is at the top of the international agenda, whatever its cost. Inevitably, it diverts funds from development. But the small silver lining here may be possible extra help for education as an instrument for promoting peace.

But education for peace will mean moving well beyond basic education and achieving much better quality at all levels of education. What will be the cost? The World Bank estimates that UPE will require at least US\$2.5 billion annually in ODA to begin with, steadily increasing to a peak of US\$4.5 billion in 2015. That is for primary education only. Against that, the current net allocation of ODA for education of all levels stands at US\$5.6 billion. If the HIV/AIDS factor is taken into account, more and more money will be needed, until we could see requirements of US\$10 to 20 billion by 2010.

Balancing the needs of sick grandmothers against helping people in other countries to climb out of poverty presages larger problems of this nature and more competition for the resources available, making the accountability of governments more acute and raising the pressures on aid. They will also increase the demands on capacity, and generate needs for greater efforts at capacity building.

Progress in weighing these competing needs, ordering them into equitable priorities and mobilizing the support of people for the right solutions depends on education in its very broadest sense and not simply on universal primary completion.



*Theme 1*  
Recent trends in education aid policies  
and practices

‘Show and tell’ session where participating agencies present  
their most recent developments: commentary

Association for the Development  
of Education in Africa  
(ADEA)

Founded in 1988, ADEA exists to help improve and co-ordinate educational policy in Africa and to promote the accountability of African governments

for their efforts in education. At this stage, it has taken on additional responsibility for encouraging new partnerships to develop leadership and local capacity to undertake the reforms necessary to attain universal access to education of good quality. The most important among the activities it organizes is the biennial meeting of ministers of education. Each biennial considers a single theme: for the 2003 Biennial in Mauritius, the focus was ‘Access with quality’.

To foster and sustain the important dimension of political dialogue on educational issues, ADEA has formed 12 working groups, each with a different focus and charged with gathering and developing relevant data, networking with African experts, enhancing capacities, and lobbying for reform. In addition, it has formed partnerships with 28 agencies with which it works in the cause of Education For All. ADEA’s publication, *Visions for the future*, provides more information and analysis of key themes that ministers need to take into account, as they strive to improve education.

Aga Khan Foundation  
(AKF)

The Aga Khan Foundation continues its well-established work in education and social development but, thanks to co-funding from other agencies, is widening its geographical focus to include Mozambique and Tajikistan in addition to its traditional parishes in East Africa and South Asia. It devotes half its educational work to early childhood development and the other half to primary education and the basic cycle. In response to pressure from its clients and other stakeholders, AKF is currently considering initiatives in post-primary education, but has not yet decided the issue.

Agence intergouvernementale  
de la francophonie

The Intergovernmental Agency for 'Francophonie' represents a partnership of 50 states that aims to support the refinement of language policy, the development of audio-visual materials to aid language teaching, and the continuous improvement of vocational and technical education. As an agency for multilateral co-operation, 'Francophonie' works in close co-ordination with the 'Conference of education ministers of countries that use French as a main working language'. Since the Dakar forum, the agency has focused on achieving the goals of Education For All through working with all stakeholders to buttress education systems. It accords absolute priority to developing integrated approaches to basic education that will enable children to learn the skills they require to participate fully in social and economic life. Such approaches necessitate emphasizing the importance of working on-site and on the ground to ensure that education and training programmes maintain their relevance to their environments.

Among the partner countries of 'Francophonie', 28 have French as an official language, which means that access to learning French is key to the life chances of young people. 'Francophonie' therefore collaborates in improving the teaching of French and in developing schoolbooks with global application. Also, in regard to vocational and technical education, the recommendations



of the 1998 Bamako Conference in Mali are gradually coming into effect, especially in regard to the development of international policies for regional approaches for sharing information through the World Wide Web.

Belgium  
Directorate General for Development  
Co-operation  
(DGDC)

In 1999, internal reorganizations coupled with crises in Belgium's main partner countries, Burundi and the Congo, reduced its actual ODA disbursements from 0.38 of GNP to about 0.3 per

cent. Since then, however, disbursements have recovered and have now exceeded the former level to reach 0.5 per cent of the GNP. Belgium's overall policy in international development co-operation is to contribute to poverty reduction through supporting the drive to reach the Millennium Development Goals and concentrating its bilateral assistance on fewer than 25 partner countries. It aims to maintain coherence with Poverty Reduction Strategies through dialogue with partner governments and international organizations and through collaborating in the harmonization of procedures.

Since the IWGE meeting in Lisbon in late 2001, the agency responsible for Belgium's international aid policies and programmes has divided into two. The policy-making arm that negotiates with partner governments and organizations is now part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The implementation arm is now an autonomous agency that, like the German GTZ, is responsible for implementing the projects agreed.

The federal structure of Belgium's constitution has resulted in three strands to its development assistance that affect the realization of policy. First, it offers direct bilateral aid to the education sector of partner countries, providing support in the implementation of projects and programmes, as well as for SWAs, EFA and FTI. Second, it provides indirect bilateral aid through Belgian non-governmental – and heavily subsidized – organizations, such as

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the Inter-University Councils of the French and Flemish Communities (CIUF and VLIR) for tertiary-level co-operation, APEFE and VVOB for support to other levels of education, as well as to a range of other NGOs, which are all expected to operate in-built education / training / skills transfer components. The third strand is multilateral co-operation through the United Nations and other institutions.

Belgium's assistance in education has moved through phases of programme aid to school systems (especially in Burundi, the Congo and Rwanda) in the 1960s and 1970s to project cycle management in the 1980s and 1990s, to the current participation in education SWAps through specific budget support, basket/pooled funding and participation in FTI. The education sector receives the largest single allocation of the total ODA budget, approximately 7 per cent. Of this, some 4 per cent is allocated to tertiary education and 3 per cent to other levels.

Canada  
Canadian International  
Development Agency  
(CIDA)

After several years of cuts due to fiscal constraints, the Government of Canada increased its international development assistance budget by 8 per cent for 3 years (2002-2005) with a commitment to double it by 2010. At least half of the planned increase is going to Canada's support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the G8 Action Plan for Africa. As part of this commitment, CIDA will increase its investment in basic education in sub-Saharan Africa to reach an annual expenditure of US\$100 million by 2005.

CIDA is moving away from multiple project-oriented contracts to increased programme-type interventions. This will give more weight to country-focused initiatives, particularly through SWAps. To this end, Canada will be increasing its aid investments in a select number of priority sectors in nine

developing countries: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania.

CIDA is currently reviewing its partnerships with NGOs with a view to finding more effective ways to support its partner countries. It is also supporting research on the role of civil society in planning and implementing education. In addition, CIDA is participating in a multi-donor review of external donor support in basic education and is keenly interested in the findings on process and impact.

Internally, CIDA is making an effort to keep in-country staff informed of the state of play in the education sector. These efforts include a series of guides on priority education themes, such as the education of girls and gender parity. (The guides or handbooks are also publicly available and obtainable from CIDA's Education Group.)

#### Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth Secretariat is no exception to the law of change. A recasting of its corporate strategy to reduce poverty and to meet the Millennium Development Goals required a direct response in the form of a structural reorganization. Merging several departments into one body under the title 'Social Transformation' with responsibilities for gender issues, education and health has proved to be very productive for mainstreaming gender. Given the Secretariat's 'zero-growth' budget, however, the new strategic plan needed to think in terms of partnerships with other agencies concerned with gender disparity and Universal Primary Completion. For its part in such partnerships, the Secretariat has kept its staff constant in numbers. A deputy head for education has a team of three chief programme officers working on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, with a further two dedicated to assisting ADEA.

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In addition to arranging and providing technical assistance, the Secretariat fosters the sharing of best practices and catalyzing new initiatives. Part of that role is embodied in a publications programme that specializes in very practical, 'how to' products. A more proactive part is advocating better policies and practices among the 54 governments of the Commonwealth and brokering new arrangements and partnerships, particularly at the regular ministerial meetings. For instance, the 15th meeting of Commonwealth Education Ministers will be taking place in October, and the Secretariat will work to ensure that the discussions on the themes of access, inclusion and achievement are equipped with the latest and best information and are conducted thoroughly. Alongside these main concerns, the Secretariat will be raising the questions of children in difficult circumstances, the retention of teachers, the 'Savannah accord', the brain drain and the need for an education development fund for small states.

Denmark  
Danish International  
Development Assistance  
(DANIDA)

Despite the most recent cuts, Denmark is still in the lead in the percentage of the GNP allocated for development purposes and there are intimations of an expansion of assistance for the education sector. It

is concerned that its overall development thrust should be in complete tune with the Millennium Development Goals, so that within education, Denmark is placing the emphasis on the completion of primary education. The degree to which the broader EFA definition of basic education, including early childhood development and adult literacy, can be promoted through Danish development assistance has not yet been clarified. There is, however, a strategy for support to vocational education, and some interest in secondary education is under development. As regards priority countries, those in sub-Saharan Africa have so far featured most prominently. Nepal is a major partner in Asia. Plans are well advanced for partnerships in Afghanistan and Bhutan.

Further expansion of Danish support to education is under consideration in Africa and Latin America.

DANIDA is working to promote closer co-ordination and joint organization among the donors in each country. In Nepal, for example, the government is developing a national plan for EFA, which should come into effect in 2004. This will provide a core document that all donors will be expected to adopt. The general understanding is, therefore, that they will regard themselves as bound to operate within the terms of this plan. There are differences in approach among the donors on how best to support the plan, caused mainly by differences in procedural requirements in regard to such modalities as basket or budget support, but all donors are determined to favour strong and close co-ordination. Other issues that need to be settled, not only in Nepal but in general, include the question of the modalities of technical assistance. DANIDA supports a strategy of institutional linkages at the national, regional and international levels as an effective means to help build national institutional capacity. Capacity development of this kind is essential for defining the education sector with its complex set of interdependent institutions at central and decentralized levels, and includes the capacity to undertake educational research.

France  
Agence française de développement  
(AFD)

Since the last meeting of IWGE in Lisbon towards the end of 2001, France has undertaken a substantial reform and reorganization of its development assistance efforts and now has two bodies responsible for its external relations, the International Affairs Agency and the Development Agency. It has laid down an orientation plan that establishes the values and structures that guide its development co-operation and has determined its objectives and strategies in the light of the Millennium Development Goals. To implement the strategies, a matrix organization has been established with regional bureaux.

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One strand of action is aimed at promoting economic growth and competitiveness, with the provision of grants and loans through the World Bank featuring as a main instrument. Four main foci guide the range of activities under this rubric: they are private sector development, water development and environmental development, with human development featuring as the fourth major focus. These four foci take the long-term view in their expectations for results. As a consequence, the portfolio of each partner co-operating with France is undergoing a restructuring that may last between two and three years.

In the education sector, France now stresses two areas: basic education and vocational education. It supports basic education through either through direct subsidies and grants or through debt relief. Vocational education, on the other hand, attracts loans, as for example in Morocco and Viet Nam, to finance mechanisms like student loans for advanced private training. Assistance for basic education is focused mainly on 11 to 12 countries in francophone Africa and Madagascar, but also includes Palestine and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Until recently, the main approach in development assistance has been through projects within sectoral programmes. However, during 2002 and 2003, France has been moving to more widely cast approaches, more harmonized with the overall development plans of its partners. Recent work with the United Republic of Tanzania provides a good example. Following agreements at the G8 meeting, traditional forms of technical assistance are being reduced in favour of stronger efforts at capacity building. In preparing country and sectoral reports, France is now making more use of the expertise available in UNESCO and the World Bank.

Germany  
Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche  
Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ)  
(Federal Ministry for Economic  
Co-operation and Development)

Despite slow economic growth and a tight public budget over recent years, the Federal Government of Germany has managed to increase in absolute terms its allocations for

development co-operation. In order to achieve greater effectiveness with the funds at its disposal, the Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ) has undertaken an overall reform in focusing on fewer activities and fewer partner countries that now number 70 instead of the former 118. It has requested each partner to select one to three thematic areas from a possible 10 on which to focus German aid. Education is one of these focal areas. This policy for concentration is binding on all the German agencies covered by the bilateral co-operation programmes established for each of the 70 countries.

BMZ aims to set time frames of several years for its programmes, in order to provide transparency, and to facilitate planning by its partners. Sector programmes are linked with appropriate monitoring systems and closely coordinated with the partner and other donors. BMZ is also working on more coherent linkages, where appropriate, between its financial (support grants for construction and infrastructure) and technical co-operation. While BMZ is still cautious in its approach to pooled or basket funding by groups of donors, these are increasingly part of social sector support strategies. BMZ emphasizes the fact that pooled funding or direct budgetary support strategies need to be grounded in sound sector strategies under national ownership, and supported by technical assistance for adequate capacity building in the partner government.

Within education, BMZ has shifted priorities: in 2000, basic education received about 28 per cent of the budget, but now attracts 39 per cent, while

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the allocation for vocational education has risen from 21 to 33 per cent. In the shift from project to programme mode, support to education systems in general (DAC key 111) is also becoming more important. Higher education, on the other hand, has seen its share of BMZ support decline. However, within the German federal system, the states (*Länder*) traditionally provide considerable support to tertiary education in development co-operation. With regard to vocational education and training, the BMZ increasingly tries to link training with support to small and medium enterprise development, e.g. in the form of start-up grants or micro-credits for graduates.

The chief challenge that BMZ sees is ensuring that all children receive at least five to six years of a basic education that includes adequate life skills. It fully supports the concept of FTI to assist countries that have made the necessary effort to achieve Universal Primary Completion. Under FTI, Germany at present focuses its bilateral support on four countries, Guinea, Honduras, Mozambique and Yemen.

Germany  
Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit  
(Society for Technical Co-operation)  
(GTZ)

The Society for Technical Co-operation (GTZ) acts as an agent in the field for the German Federal Government's Ministry for Co-operation (BMZ). It

undertakes projects in a range of products and services: they include educational projects, in-service training for a range of educational functionaries, as well as basic education and training for community leaders in the support and management of schools.

Germany  
Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung  
(Capacity Building International)  
(InWEnt)

InWEnt is an organization formed from the merger of two well-known bodies in international development,



the German Development Foundation (DSE or Deutsche Stiftung für Entwicklung) and the Carl Duisburg Society/Gesellschaft (CDG). It focuses on capacity development for both individuals and institutions operating in education, legislation, trade, employment promotion, health care, rural development and other fields important to social, economic and political development. Within education, InWEnt emphasizes ‘peace education’. Geographically, InWEnt focuses on Africa and Central America.

International Institute  
for Educational Planning  
(IIEP)

IIEP continues with its three main lines of work: capacity building, institutional development and research in planning and implementing education. In capacity building, it offers a variety of programmes, ranging from workshops and seminars through short online courses to degree level studies. In institutional development, it is working with several institutions in Asia, Latin America, Southern Africa (through SADCC) and West Africa.

IIEP’s research programme encompasses the entire range of education, but has current emphases on basic education for all, including children in emergencies and difficult situations, HIV/AIDS and financing education. As regards HIV/AIDS, IIEP also acts as the co-ordinator of all UNESCO activities in operations to combat the pandemic through education, and maintains a clearing-house to ensure the accessibility of relevant information on the impact of HIV/AIDS on educational systems. The institute is concerned that the outcomes of its research should have wide dissemination, and to that end maintains a substantial publishing programme.

Ireland  
Department of Foreign Affairs

Ireland is committed to reaching the United Nations target for ODA of 0.7 per cent of its GDP by 2007 and, although the recent economic downturn is making progress more difficult, remains hopeful that it will fulfil that commitment. It has been increasing its

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allocations to education over the past five years, so the sector now accounts for 14 per cent of the total ODA budget. Almost three-quarters of this allocation is dedicated to six priority countries in Africa. Education to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic is a priority subject.

As a small country, Ireland finds it important to network and form partnerships with other bilateral and multilateral agencies, to be active in donor groups working on education and to use a range of modalities to maximize the effectiveness of its assistance. It is currently updating its policy guidelines, particularly for work in post-conflict situations.

A recent review of Ireland's ODA policy and operations led to a reorganization of development work within the Department of Foreign Affairs and to considering the establishment of a new agency. In the event, that option was dropped in favour of strengthening the existing arrangements.

Italy  
General Directorate for  
Development Co-operation  
(DGCS)  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Italy has not decreased – and will not be decreasing – its allocations for development co-operation. However, it is increasing the priority it accords to Education For All (EFA) and will therefore be reorganizing its allocations within the social sectors. An increasing proportion of assistance will go to support EFA, while higher education will attract proportionately less.

Italy advocates sector-wide co-operative approaches globally, and during 2003 has strengthened its co-operation with the United Nations in education. It has signed a joint declaration with UNESCO in support of EFA, initiated four projects in Africa and in post-conflict situations and has undertaken the leadership of the EFA flagship programme, 'Education for rural people'.

Extending the approach through co-operation and partnerships, the government is also working with a number of NGOs in education and rural development.

Japan  
International Co-operation Agency  
(JICA)

In terms of assistance to areas of education, Japan currently emphasizes basic education. The term ‘basic’ denotes the full course of primary school, that part of secondary school that is often known as ‘junior secondary’ and non-formal programmes aimed at imparting basic literacy and life-skills. Geographically, Japan has usually given most of its assistance to countries in Asia, but is now focusing more on Africa. It is likely to commit itself to more co-operation in education.

As in other countries, the continuing unfavourable economic situation has led to cuts in the overall budget for development assistance, but notably not in the allocations for assistance to education. To achieve higher efficiency and effectiveness, there have been some administrative changes and restructuring in JICA, accompanied by a greater degree of autonomy. The agency now operates in 23 thematic networks within 62 guidelines for identifying, designing and implementing programmes: in education, some of the themes are ‘basic education’, ‘higher education’ and ‘gender mainstreaming and women in development (WID)’.

JICA is also giving attention to education in post-conflict situations: in Afghanistan, for example, it is supporting girls’ education and training. It will be developing new programmes to deal with the challenges that the drives for Education For All and the Millennium Development Goals are throwing up. As part of that effort, JICA is now drafting guidelines for ‘Non-formal education’ and ‘Peace building’.

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Norway  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Norwegian Agency for Development  
Co-operation

In Norway, the minister responsible for international development co-operation is requiring a heavy focus on education as the government's number one priority. As part of this, Norway supports FTI for Education For All and, with France, is hosting a meeting in Oslo for the lead agencies to determine the implications. The ministry is also seeking a new strategy for delivering more effective support to Norway's partner countries. To promote dialogue, a paper has been published setting out the ministry's thinking and offering a framework of approaches to implementation. It adopts a stance based on human rights to support its approach to poverty reduction. The paper envisages increased efforts at institutional development, stronger support for weak and marginalized groups, more effective vocational education and educational research.

Norway aims to allocate 15 per cent of its ODA to education by 2005 and is reviewing how to channel the funds most effectively. Currently, education attracts 14.6 per cent of that part of ODA that is applied through bilateral channels. An evaluation found using multilateral channels was satisfactory. Partly as a result, the Norwegian Trust Fund with the World Bank is scheduled to be increased during the next fiscal year.

Open Society Institution  
(OSI)  
Soros Foundations

The Open Society Institution (OSI) is part of a network of Soros foundations operating in 30 countries, most (but not all) of them in the former Soviet bloc. It promotes educational change that is founded on evidence, aims for systemic impact, adopts participatory approaches to managing change, focuses on the development of human resources and capacity building and seeks sustainable solutions. The OSI is interested in the entire spectrum of educational effort – although the degree of interest is less for vocational

education – at all levels and including all agencies. It is particularly strong in developing non-governmental organizations for the reinforcement and expansion of civil society.

Decreases in funding coupled with high demands for help in devising sustainable solutions to educational issues have led OSI to spin off some existing programmes, while at the same time developing modes of co-funding and partnerships with the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, UNICEF and some bilateral agencies.

OSI is helping to found and foster regional and professional networks. It has already established a database for a virtual network across south-eastern European countries, and is in process of setting up similar networks for Asia and the regions within Russia. The networks aim to improve access to information on education, disseminate lessons learned and function as virtual resource banks for evaluation, assessment, policy and financing.

As regards capacity building, OSI organizes some seminars and workshops, but is emphasizing online courses in priority topics at both short-course and degree level.

United Kingdom  
British Council

The British Council's work in the information area focuses on making more material available through the World Wide Web and making the web itself more accessible through a network of knowledge and learning centres. With globalization in mind, the Council is pursuing an agenda of mutuality between communities in the United Kingdom and its work internationally. It is striving to have each 'half' contribute to, enrich and influence the work of the other.

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From developing countries, demand for the Council's assistance is currently strong in the areas of school self-evaluation and the assessment of students' performance and learning attainments.

From the donors, there are demands for more vocational education that is relevant to local labour markets, for work on designing education programmes, and on monitoring and evaluating external education programmes. There is continuing strong interest in programmes aimed at expanding access to education, as for example in Pakistan and Nigeria.

United Kingdom  
Department for International Development,  
(DfID)

In the past few weeks, DfID has received a new and enlarged ministerial team, with the cabinet minister now assisted by two junior ministers, one with special responsibilities for Africa and the Middle East, the other for Asia and other non-Africa concerns.

Policy work undertaken by DfID has moved away from being organized by sectors to thematic working groups, including, for example, 'Education for All', 'Human Capital' and 'Service Delivery'. The Chief Education Adviser has been replaced by a Chief Human Development Adviser, Julian Lob-Levyt, with Desmond Bermingham as Head of Profession for Education.

A further important change is that the department has now entered into public service agreements with the Treasury. In these agreements, the department has undertaken to achieve specified goals in a number of priority countries, using specified modalities. The goals and modalities are closely related to the Millennium Development Goals and funding is dependent on progress towards them.

Britain's ODA through DfID's budget will grow to nearly £4.6 billion a year by 2005-2006, a 93 per cent increase in real terms since 1997 and

representing 0.40 per cent of national income. This includes a £1 billion annual bilateral programme for Africa.

United States  
United States Agency for International  
Development  
(USAID)

In 1970, the United States Government's share of total American assistance to developing countries – Official Development Assistance (ODA) – stood

at 70 per cent. Today, it stands at less than 15 per cent. The reason is not that the total of ODA dollars has declined – on the contrary, it has increased – but rather that the private sector of the United States is contributing more. When we speak of the 'private sector', we include not just business and investment interests, but also the universities and colleges – the academic sector – the foundations, faith-based communities and other charitable organizations, which we might term 'civil society'. In addition, we include private contributions, such as remittances, which currently constitute some 25 per cent of the total.

We believe this is, in part, a result of the 'capitalist' style economy. For example, in the mid-1990s, United States corporations began to accelerate the expansion of the production of a range of commodities overseas and invested more in economic development. Also, for United States colleges and universities, the post-Reagan era saw support from the federal and state governments drop substantially, so that they now need to compete much more in the market place, both to recruit students and to sell their services in training, research, experimentation and evaluation. USAID has created a development instrument that now reaches 100 per cent of America's institutions of higher education. Indeed, for every 50 cents that USAID puts forth in partnerships, it generates US\$1.03 from its partner colleges and universities.

USAID believes that the formation of Global Development Alliances (GDA), which couple ODA with private sector resources, offers a model that

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other donors and developing countries alike would do well to study and perhaps adapt. To date, USAID has created 70 GDA that between them leverage more than US\$130 million in private sector matching funds. For instance, the American business community is multiplying its production centres in a range of countries and needs educated and skilled labour for the purpose. An example of how USAID can help the interests of both business and education in developing countries is a youth employment scheme in Nigeria. But the private sector is more than just business. Many foundations are working on global development systems, while the American church-going population contributes in many ways, including education, to developing countries and finds it helpful to partner with USAID. So does the higher education community, which has responded to domestic funding cuts by 'going global' and cultivating overseas markets and clientele. USAID was working out how to facilitate such movements by being less dictatorial and more nimble.

It is worth noting that USAID does not restrict these GDA to American corporations – some are with European partners. In the education sector alone, more than US\$5 million has been raised from private sources to match ODA.

Currently, the United States Government gives US\$11 billion in ODA annually: that sum constitutes 14 per cent of the current total pool of ODA from the OECD countries. In 2001, when IWGE met in Lisbon, the share of education in American ODA was US\$113 million. In 2003, as we meet in Helsinki, the total for education is US\$216 million, and will be increasing. Further, at the Monterrey conference, a Millennium Challenge Account was created and is set to increase progressively until it reaches US\$5 billion by 2006, after which it will be sustained.

There will be more money for the fight against HIV/AIDS, for EFA in co-operation with UNESCO, for further work on FTI, for improving the quality and quantity of data and for closing policy gaps.



World Bank

Since the Lisbon meeting at the end of 2001, when the atmosphere of crisis created by the events of 11 September was still strong, the World Bank has been positioning itself to be more responsive to changing situations and demands. The Millennium Development Goals and the resolve expressed first at Dakar, then at Monterey and at the G8 meetings have all served to establish the business case for education. The World Bank has been working to capitalize on this by pressing the follow-up on Dakar, launching FTI, assembling a toolkit to support the formulation of poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSP) and promoting additional emphases on HIV/AIDS and the expansion of secondary education. It has also initiated studies and discussions on the participation of women in tertiary education, brain drain and the loss of capacity, and approaches to retaining capacity; and has brought them together in the 'World development report'.

The lending programme for education has reflected the Bank's concern for EFA by increasing the loan from US\$700 million in 2001 to US\$2.3 billion in the current fiscal year, while more studies and pilot activities have been supported through the Development Grant Facility – an example is the grant in early June to Kenya for work on family education. The World Bank understands that to bring about development at the household level, for example in infant mortality, effective integrators of knowledge, values and behaviour are necessary, which means that something must happen both in the classroom and in the family. Multi-sector planning then is a necessity – indeed, co-targeting will be vital to achieving MDG. Therefore, some US\$800 million of the education lending programme supports multi-sector projects. Such projects, of course, have to be very careful to avoid the pitfalls of earlier 'Christmas tree' efforts that also aimed at integrated development. Concerns about this risk reinforce the Bank's insistence that the education sector must put more emphasis on monitoring outcomes, in terms of both short-term attainments in learning and long-term effects on poverty reduction and social and political improvements.

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In 1998 the World Bank's education sector lost some 20 per cent of its staff and has since then been rebuilding itself. It has striven to attract educationists who are both broad in view and deep in expertise and who can deal with the economic aspects of education confidently and on equal terms with economists, both 'macro' and 'micro'.

Open forum on recent  
developments in the participating  
agencies

Some participants were concerned at the volume and rate of changes, reorganizations and emergence of new strategies in UNESCO and most other partner organizations: are the members of IWGE keeping each other and other partners properly informed of these changes and shifts? Are they able to capitalize on these changes to their mutual benefit?

The discussion noted that, despite the economic downturn, budgetary cut-backs and gloomy financial prospects, aid for basic education had actually increased by 50 per cent from US\$600 million in 1999 to US\$900 million in 2001. Indeed, between 1998 and the present, the percentage of ODA allocated to basic education had nearly doubled. This was positive and encouraging and could be viewed as 'a glass half full'. On the other hand, what made the 'glass half empty' was the still small percentage of ODA for basic education and the actual decrease in bilateral ODA.

Further, the options for expanded or fresh programmes were constrained by several new problems. The increase in the numbers of children affected by HIV/AIDS from 10 to 30 million, with the associated costs of treatment and nutrition would drain off part of the new available funds. New emergencies and conflicts would mean that business could not be as usual. Additional strains on domestic budgets would lead to more demands for accountability, better governance and ascertainable outputs.

To put the matter of finance into a larger perspective, the point had often been cogently made that more important than additional money is the need for the reform of educational systems. Despite this, not many agencies, bilateral or multilateral, are supporting efforts at reform. For instance, certain African states are trying – on the basis of evidence from research and experiments – to promote bilingual education to improve retention and attainment in primary schools, particularly of poor children, and to implement curriculum reform for local needs, such as apprenticeships adapted to local contexts. These efforts are very promising, especially as they tend to bring into productive play local resources that would otherwise remain hidden and unused. Unfortunately, these governments attract little support from donors, who instead seem to be dragging their heels.

While the increasing focus on Africa and on marginalized groups, such as people with disabilities and HIV/AIDS orphans, was encouraging, there must be concern on the other hand both about the progress that is actually being made and the tendency for the international emphasis on the Millennium Development Goals to pare down the concept of basic education to just Universal Primary Completion. This tends to militate against the efforts of some governments to think in terms of alternative modes of education and possible new approaches to marginalized groups. Further, it tends to diminish attention to adult education, although indeed MDG for infant and child mortality necessarily imply at the very least education for mothers. In fact, none of MDG is attainable without education, as each one of them has educational implications. Also, while the needs of higher education tend not to feature in current discussions, a number of the agencies present had declared an increasing focus on vocational and post-primary education. In addition, the education sector had committed itself to developing and promoting an intersectoral approach to education. These lines of thinking were more in tune with the adoption of a more inclusive, sector-wide approach to education than a blinkered focus on the Millennium Development Goals.<sup>1</sup>

1. It was suggested that this widening focus might serve as a theme for a future meeting of IWGE.

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The discussion also touched on, but was not able to pursue, the following issues:

- Continually reviewing progress was good, but there remained a tension between review and devising modalities to secure resources commensurate with the actual, perhaps increasing, scale of the problems.
- In regard to focus countries, as in FTI, what criteria were appropriate for identifying and selecting them?
- The education community has recognized that universal access to education without universal access to education of good quality is meaningless, yet there does not appear to be a strong concern for quality in current discussions. Are the efforts that ADEA is making to place quality at the centre of the agenda attracting sufficient attention?

## *Theme 2*

### Increasing girls' participation

#### Introduction

Françoise Caillods  
IIEP

At the Dakar forum of 2000, the world's governments jointly resolved to improve schooling for girls and eventually to ensure that the quality and effectiveness of their education would be equal to that of the boys. They agreed that the necessary first step towards that goal was to bring about parity of enrolments no later than 2005. Beyond that, there was wide consensus on the importance of a number of measures to ensure retention, completion and satisfactory attainments. The purpose of this session is to go into the practical details of setting about the task.

IIEP has produced a small book reviewing the experiences of countries that have nearly achieved parity between boys and girls: Bangladesh, Mauritania, Senegal, Tunisia and, in India, the state of Uttar Pradesh. It discusses the impact of policies targeted on the supply and quality of education through large increases in the number of schools and teachers, multi-grade teaching, promoting better curricula, use of local languages and better teaching/learning materials. Some countries, Bangladesh and India for example, have tried to respond to the need to encourage demand through mitigating the costs and other constraints. There are examples of grants and scholarships, free uniforms, free meals, pre-school arrangements for the children of young mothers who need schooling, the abolition of fees and other charges –with safeguards against their re-introduction by parent-teacher bodies! These examples show that measures aiming at implementing EFA in general favour increased access of girls to education in particular. All this news is encouraging, but it is still not enough. Retention remains an issue and strong cultural barriers persist in several countries.

In this session, we shall be looking at some examples at what is actually working on the ground, even though we shall bear in mind that situations are not the same from country to country, let alone from continent to continent. After a general review by Koto Kanno from UNESCO, we shall hear accounts from Afghanistan, Arab countries, Ghana, Pakistan and some former members of the Soviet bloc. We shall, of course, conclude this part of our meeting with a general discussion of the papers.

### **Gender in national EFA plans<sup>2</sup>**

Koto Kanno  
UNESCO

Target No. 4 of the Millennium Development Goals aims to 'Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels of education no later than 2015'. The fifth goal of the Dakar World Education Forum strengthens the target by dropping the word 'preferably' before the date of 2005 and by moving beyond 'disparity' to 'equality': '... achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.' In pursuit of these targets, governments undertook to draw up national plans for Education For All, originally by 2002, and now by 2003 at the latest. These can reasonably be expected to include indications of gender responsiveness, along with specific measures to achieve both parity between girls and boys in enrolments and completion and equality in learning attainments. To assess whether this was in fact happening, UNESCO surveyed 62 national plans that were in various stages of preparation early in 2003. The survey examined not only whether specific actions were planned to achieve the fifth Dakar goal, but also whether plans were gender responsive, in the sense of awareness of the range of biases that may be operating to the disadvantage of girls or even boys.

2. Koto Kanno, 'Review and Analysis of Gender Responsiveness in National EFA Plans' (paper presented to IWGE, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

Countries in Africa supplied 30 of the plans analysed –almost half. Asian countries supplied 15 plans, most of them from South Asia, while nine and eight came respectively from Arab and Latin American and Caribbean countries. The following paragraphs summarize the broad findings of the review.

*The 2005 deadline.* None of the plans highlight the target of gender parity in primary and secondary schooling by 2005.

*Variation of emphasis.* Almost all the plans from African countries took explicit account of the fifth Dakar goal – possibly due at least in part to the influence of FAWE – whereas among the Arab and Asian plans there was rather less interest overall, although indeed countries did vary on the issue, with a couple of countries showing strong commitment to girls' education independent of their EFA plans. Interest was also variable among the Latin American and Caribbean countries. In some, there were concerns over the situation of boys, a special feature of this region. (No plans were available from countries in the Pacific.)

*Quality of the plans.* In some of the EFA plans, the sections that covered gender and Dakar Goal 5 were comprehensive and carefully elaborated, whereas in others they were sketchy or weak in analysis. In some cases, the strategies and measures proposed to overcome identified challenges did not properly match the analyses of the actual situations.

*Awareness of usage of data.* Awareness of the need for data disaggregated by gender is clearly strong, even though the actual data available are not always complete and their analysis rather weak. Quite apart from gender, significant variations exist among social groups, urban and rural populations and geographical regions. Micro-level surveys, research and multivariate analysis are needed to tease out the implications of these differences for planning and programming. Indices that are too simple could be misleading. For example, Benin displays perfect gender parity in early

childhood education, but parity here applies to only 5 per cent of the children in the relevant age groups. Capacity building in the collection, compilation, analysis and utilization of gender disaggregated data for policy development and programming is very clearly an urgent need.

*Definition of gender.* Most plans interpret gender parity to be the equivalent of gender equality and discuss it in the context of access to education for girls, universal primary education and literacy for adult women. Enrolment and retention ratios feature, while curricular emphases, differential attainments in different subjects and the like do not. There is a clear need to promote understanding of the full implications of gender equality and to develop tools to measure progress towards the 2015 target.

*Neglect of secondary and higher education.* In general, EFA plans tend to overlook that part of the Dakar Goal 5 that aims for gender parity in secondary education. Goal 5 does appear to have been reduced to gender parity in primary education. Even in middle-income Asian countries, where the challenges are more at the secondary level and in mathematics, science and technology, there is little mention of the issue. Target 4 of MDG requires parity at all levels of education by 2015, but the plans neglect almost completely any mention of gender parity and equality in higher education, the inclusion of gender perspectives in curricula, or women's participation in policy and decision-making in education.

*Status quo education.* Some plans did note the social and cultural barriers to girls' schooling, as well as the need for gender sensitivity in curricula, textbooks and teacher training to eliminate stereotypes in the roles of men and women. However, an overall orientation towards the gender equal society was missing and the aspects of girls' own self-awareness, self-confidence and self-esteem are conspicuously absent. There are no real challenges to education as it is currently oriented and run.



*Budget.* In general, the plans did not stress or make provision for specific budgets for girls' and women's education. In one country, Egypt, where commitment to girls' education came from the very highest level, the budget came not from the ministry of education, but from a special allocation through the ministry of finance.

*Innovative programmes and incentives.* Since Jomtien in 1990, governments and their development partners have launched numbers of innovative programmes for girls' education. However, the EFA plans appear to make little provision for assessing and incorporating the lessons of such programmes into general practice. Similarly, a number of possible incentives have been discussed: scholarships or free access to school, school lunches, improved school environments, measures to increase the numbers of female teachers are among the most frequently cited. However, their implementation seems to occur in only a few countries.

*Changes of views, attitudes and behaviour.* Most plans omit, or discuss only very briefly, issues and actions relating to socialization, gender perspectives in family and early childhood education, or the attitudes and behaviour of teachers and parents. Pockets of resistance to promoting girls' education and to parity or equality in education seem to persist in some quarters, on the ground that these are 'Western' or foreign ideas.

*Quality versus access.* The plans of some countries give the impression that they continue to give access (i.e. quantity) priority over quality. Some for instance plan to increase the numbers of female teachers by relaxing age limits and minimum qualifications. There are a number of cases where quality is misunderstood as the kind of education that requires highly advanced and sophisticated methods and technically advanced laboratories and equipment, and is then set aside as unaffordable.

*Overall.* The overriding impression from the 62 plans is that they see gender equality only in terms of gender parity and overlook the issues of

gender bias and discrimination. In so far as these plans are representative of all the other countries that aim for EFA and Dakar Goal 5, they indicate that true and full gender equality remains a global challenge.

*UNESCO's programme for 2004-2005.* To promote gender parity and equality, UNESCO will pursue a four-strand strategy with appropriate activities. The first strand is advocacy. It will use partnerships, networks and linking the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative with the United Nations Literacy Decade to keep the issues in view, to strive for more complete understanding of what is involved and to stimulate more comprehensive action to deal with the issues. In particular, it will work in support of UNICEF's campaign to accelerate progress towards gender parity in 25 countries.

The second strand is research and analysis. UNESCO will support research into the root causes of gender inequality in education, review and improve the methodologies for measuring and analysing gender parity and equality, and use the products to illuminate education policy and practice.

Third is the provision of gender-responsive services. These can include guidance and counselling for school-age girls, re-orienting and training teachers, assessing and promoting girl-friendly environments, and encouraging the production of appropriate learning materials, guides and kindred resources.

The fourth strand is promoting wider options for girls and women in further and higher education, for example, in mathematics, science, engineering and technology.

### ***Discussion***

In the discussion that followed, participants observed that the statistics that appear in the national EFA plans for African countries are quite favourable and, in the context of girls' education, offer grounds for optimism. On the one hand, they reflect real progress, and on the other, acknowledge the need to ensure that girls do have access to education, along with the necessity to

mobilize the wherewithal to finance that education. However, actual strategies to implement the intent are almost non-existent. The governments and planners still need to consider what to do on the ground concretely in terms of finance and other measures to realize what they say they aim for. Two issues will serve as examples.

First, governments recognize that early marriages militate against the education of girls, particularly amongst the poorer groups: some effort is needed to discourage and stop the custom. However, none of the plans attempts to specify what measures will be put in hand, how they will be implemented and what resources they will require. The second example concerns school safety: the lack of security both on school premises and on journeys between school and home is often adduced as a partial explanation of poor enrolments, irregular attendance and drop-out on the part of girls, particularly after they reach puberty. However, most of the plans that do mention security simply propose increases in the number of female teachers. No other concrete measures are mentioned.

Participants also put a number of questions about the nature of the national EFA plans. Do any of the national plans specify particular levels for which girls' education must be assured? Do any discuss what stance a government should adopt in designing legislation or finance? Or what roles should be allocated respectively to civil society or to local communities? None of the plans discuss these matters in any depth. Also, the plans do not give the impression that there was widespread popular participation in drawing them up. It appears also that most African national plans have overlooked the criteria that FAWE proposed for monitoring and evaluating progress in expanding and improving girls' education. Where the matter is mentioned, its treatment is weak.

In a discussion of what comes after 'access', participants noted that the policies of some countries to increase access has resulted in establishing rural schools and community schools, which have indeed resulted to increasing

enrolments. But there seems to be a need for governments and other education agencies to go further and create what might be called 'balanced' schools, where girls do as well as boys and stay as long as boys. Currently, girls tend to leave earlier, either through dropping out before they complete a course or through stopping at the end of one level, instead of going on to the next. Special efforts are needed to keep the girls in school. Issues of quality do of course arise. However, the sequence is necessarily 'access first, quality next', although ideally access and quality should be simultaneous, since deficient quality engenders ineffective learning and premature dropout: 'access without quality is meaningless'.

Participants also raised the issue of community attitudes and customs. In parts of South Asia for instance there are schools available, but no girls attend them, let alone complete their courses. Governments, civil society and community leaders must work with families to help change mentalities about the need to educate girls and about how much education girls should enjoy.

Finally, it was recalled that the fourth goal of the Dakar World Education Forum envisages a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults. The reason behind that goal is that not far short of a billion adults remain illiterate around the world and two-thirds of them are women, who of course did not have their right to education respected. Yet adult literacy scarcely features in the national EFA plans, although the plans from Mauritania and Yemen are exceptions.

In sum, while the national EFA plans are indeed to be welcomed, in their current form they show considerable scope for improvement.

### **Gender education in Eastern Europe<sup>3</sup>**

Jana Huttova  
Open Society Institute

The Open Society Institute has undertaken a review of gender aspects in education in the countries of central and south-eastern Europe and members of the former Soviet Union. The stimulus for the review was the perception that, during the period of transition from socialist to more mixed forms of polity and economy, gender gaps and stereotypes have re-emerged, some disadvantaging men, others disadvantaging women. For instance, life-expectancy for men has declined, while social benefits for women have shrunk. The review therefore aimed to identify and document precisely what was happening, the causes and what might be done to restore a greater gender balance at policy and school levels. To do this, the review process examined the usual indicators of educational equity, the content of curricula, actual practices in schools, along with educational policies, legal frameworks, capacities to implement and monitor policies and the role of non-governmental organizations in influencing and implementing policy.

The review found that boys and girls enrol equally at the basic and compulsory level of education. However, in the non-compulsory levels of pre-school, upper secondary and tertiary education gaps were indeed emerging in some countries, but inconsistently. For example, tertiary gross enrolments in Georgia and the Czech Republic showed parity between boys and girls, while Albania and Kazakhstan enrolled more girls than boys and Tajikistan in contrast enrolled many more boys than girls. Further, there were gaps in attendance rates that were larger than the enrolment rates might suggest, while drop-out rates were increasing, due mainly to the costs of education and low family incomes. As regards academic achievement, the picture was mixed across the region, with no differences between boys and girls in the fourth grade, but perceptible differences opening up at the eighth and final

3. Jana Huttova, 'Gender education in former Soviet bloc countries: OSI's regional review' (paper presented at the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

grades of secondary school. In short, gender does not affect participation in a uniform way: it depends on local circumstances.

However, the evidence clearly showed that economic and social disadvantage affects girls' participation in education disproportionately. Not surprisingly, the three strongest factors associated with such disadvantage proved to be poverty, rural residence and minority status.

Within schools and universities, the review found that textbooks and other teaching materials frequently propagated gender-based stereotypes and rigid gender roles, while curricula did not address gender equity issues. Sex education as such is a taboo subject in the majority of the countries of the region.

For their part, teachers tended to treat boys and girls differently and to expect different standards of behaviour from each sex. Some even harbour stereotypes about the relative intelligence and aptitudes of boys and girls and make gender-based assumptions about their different career options. These tendencies were observed, even as the teaching profession as a whole was becoming 'feminized' in the sense that the percentage of female teachers has been increasing during the last ten years. Indeed, teachers are now mostly women, while the majority of men occupy the positions of administrators and managers. In effect, one part of the 'hidden curriculum' of the education system breeds the assumption that leadership roles are male, while routine labour falls to women.

At the policy level, all the countries surveyed are signatories to the international human rights treaties that guarantee equal education rights for boys and girls and these agreements are reflected in new education laws to ensure equal rights and to outlaw all forms of gender discrimination. In specific policy agendas, however, gender considerations seem to drop out of sight and

the resultant apparently gender-neutral policies can in practice affect equity detrimentally.

Monitoring the implementation of policies and reforms is an area of weakness, since the statistics available on enrolments, attendance, education spending, access to resources and academic outcomes are not generally disaggregated by gender. Further, most countries appeared to lack the skills to analyse the likely impact of policy measures.

Policies on teacher training make no provisions for courses on gender or for training in gender sensitivity. However, universities in eleven of the countries have introduced courses on gender equity, and three countries now have interdisciplinary gender programmes.

The non-governmental sector has been vital in raising public awareness about the growing gender inequities in the countries studied. Individual organizations launched the first research studies of educational policies, classroom practices and the attitudes of parents and teachers, and have played a crucial role in providing professional assistance to colleges and universities. These organizations have also taken the initiative in devising and offering new professional development opportunities for teachers themselves and school administrators.

The observations above about the re-emergence of gender gaps in the region need to be balanced by the recognition that there are differences between the individual countries, so that country specific needs have to be clearly identified for the basis of appropriate policy and action. Understanding the reasons for the general feminization of higher education and for the various gender gaps in secondary school is crucial and crucial in turn to that is the collection of data disaggregated by gender on access, participation and achievement for all grades.

The review concludes with eight key recommendations:

1. Pre-school enrolments for girls and boys across the region should be increased to ensure equal opportunities for girls and boys on entry to basic education.
2. Policy-makers should analyze the probable effects of new education policies on gender equity. They should consider re-structuring the school system, particularly at upper secondary level and introducing new financial arrangements to promote and support children's access to education.
3. Effective programmes to improve the participation of girls and boys from disadvantaged minorities should be developed and supported. Where they are already in place, they should be scaled up.
4. Gender-sensitive curricula, textbooks and teaching materials, free from stereotypes and supportive of gender equality should be developed and disseminated.
5. In-service teacher-training programmes should be introduced to raise the gender awareness of teachers.
6. The numbers of women in management positions within the educational system should be increased.
7. Efforts should be instituted to create a gender-sensitive school culture.
8. The involvement of parents and communities in education issues should be encouraged and strengthened, as it is crucial in addressing questions about the education of girls.



## **Female illiteracy in Arab countries<sup>4</sup>**

Digby Swift  
Department for International Development  
(DfID)

The 2002 Arab Development Report highlighted adult female illiteracy as one of the obstacles to political, social and economic development. This paper explores reasons for the persistence of this problem and looks at possible ways forward. It suggests that government-run, community-oriented, needs-based literacy programmes are both feasible and a key to solving the problem.

### ***General situation in Arab countries***

There is a widespread belief that the religion of Islam, dominant in the Arab states, is a major impediment to the education of girls and women. This is wholly mistaken: Islam most categorically commands the faithful to educate their daughters. What has happened is that older, patriarchal and male-dominated cultures among the Arab peoples have set aside this aspect of Islam: there has been an unfortunate triumph of custom over religious precept. It has been reinforced by a culture that, on the nobler side, continues to cherish a view of women as naïve, passive, self-sacrificing heroines in constant need of protection. On the less noble side, it regards daughters as providers of short-term labour to their parents, a potential risk to the family's social standing and, with early marriage, a poor long-term investment.

This cultural bias against educating girls and women is, as elsewhere, exacerbated by poverty, 'girl-unfriendly' schools and the neglect of arrangements to ensure the safety of female pupils. The resulting high rates of illiteracy among women are perpetuated by the exiguous provision for adult education and literacy courses for women.

4. Digby Swift, 'Tackling female illiteracy in Arab countries' (paper prepared for the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

### ***Initiatives in Egypt***

The Government of Egypt has, since 1990, re-launched its efforts to reduce illiteracy among adults, and in 1992 established the General Authority on Literacy and Adult Education. Further, in 2003, it announced a five-year presidential initiative that will include the recruitment of 100,000 university graduates to train as literacy instructors. In view of disappointing drop-out rates, relatively low learning achievements, post-course relapses into illiteracy and rather small take-up of opportunities for continuing education, the General Authority in 1995 requested DfID to support two pilot projects to try out a different approach to determining curricula, recruiting and training instructors, and generating learning materials.

The projects were very successful in demonstrating the value of these approaches with a significant improvement in student outcomes within the pilot classes. However, mainstreaming the approach was hindered by the fact that the pilots had operated largely outside the main system, even though the General Authority itself had sponsored them. Also, they had progressed only partially towards the community-based, learner-driven approach, so that the deficiencies in ownership within the General Authority and in the pilot communities meant that a further project was needed to pave the way for mainstreaming the process sustainably.

The new project, Capacity Enhancement for Lifelong Literacy (CELL), aims specifically to enhance the capacities of the General Authority at its headquarters and in six pilot governorates in adopting and implementing a community-based, learner-centred approach with an emphasis on tackling female illiteracy. It also goes much further in terms of community ownership. In 22 villages 'community facilitators' have been trained to set up community committees that are now full partners in taking forward literacy provision. Using an exercise in Participatory Rural Appraisal, the General Authority identified the characteristics and literacy-related needs of each village and

was able to attract volunteers to establish the committees; these, in turn, are setting up literacy classes that will help identify teachers, who will be funded by the General Authority and trained in relation to local needs. Most importantly, the curriculum will be modified for the pilot classes, and will include three options: (a) for young adults who wish to enter or return to formal education; (b) for those with a vocational interest in literacy; and (c) for those with a more general motivation for becoming literate.

There is a major emphasis on the General Authority monitoring the pilot and evaluating all its aspects. That includes a careful comparison with control villages, something that was not undertaken during the preceding pilot. The reformed classes are due to commence in August 2003 with the new curriculum, there will be formative evaluation alongside the classes and an impact evaluation of the pilot in 2005.

#### ***Concluding remarks***

In view of the persisting high rates of female illiteracy in Arab countries, and the increasing number of illiterate women, it is a major cause for concern that donor efforts are so weak in this area. For example, DfID is the only major donor assisting Egypt's General Authority for Literacy and Adult Education, even though some 42 per cent of Egypt's women are illiterate. There is a challenge to Arab governments and to the donor community to work to prove the 2002 Arab Human Development Report wrong in its prediction that the problem of female illiteracy will still be with us in 2040, instead of eliminated by 2015.

## Girls, science and mathematics in Ghana<sup>5</sup>

Yumiko Yokozeki  
Japan International Co-operation  
Agency (JICA)

In Ghana, achievement in science and mathematics is generally low. Many teachers, parents and even some girls themselves believe that girls tend not to do well in these subjects, so that low expectations prevail and studies of teaching practice reveal that teachers do tend to involve boys more than girls. However, examination results show that the differences between boys and girls are narrower than commonly supposed, are not always statistically significant and are sometimes reversed (see *Table 1*).

**Table 1. Ghana: achievement test results in science and mathematics – data from the mid-term review of the STM project (average percentage attained)**

Subject	Male	Female
Primary mathematics	34.7	33.4
Primary science	26.0	25.9
Junior secondary mathematics	24.2	23.9
Junior secondary science	19.4	21.5

Therefore, changing the presuppositions, attitudes and expectations of teachers, parents and girls might be the key to improving the attainments of girls in these important subjects. On the assumption that in-service training programmes for the teachers would prove a very effective tool, a course was designed and run for the purpose. It focused on promoting child-centred and activity-oriented learning, developing positive attitudes about the abilities of girls and encouraging them to participate in activities and answering questions,

5. Yumiko Yokozeki, 'Increasing girls' participation in science and mathematics – evidence from Ghana' (slide presentation prepared for the IWGE meeting in Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

how to include all students in class activities and how to prepare lessons well to reinforce the teacher's own confidence.

Each of the participating teachers did a 'pre-test' presentation of a science lesson, before the course began, and a 'post-test' at the end. Their scores at the end of the course showed substantial advances on their pre-course efforts on the following dimensions: subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, quality of presentation, learners' activities, professional attributes.

Encouraging as this might be, such training would need to be supported by measures to increase the numbers and ratios of female teachers, particularly in teaching mathematics and science in the junior secondary grades and even more particularly in the northern regions of the country.

### **Girls' education in northern Pakistan<sup>6</sup>**

Zahra Jabeen  
British Council

This is a description of a programme to expand the education of girls in the extreme north of Pakistan, a mountainous, relatively inaccessible and isolated region. Three agencies act as financing sponsors: the Government of Pakistan, the British DfID and the World Bank provide, respectively, 29, 25 and 46 per cent of the funding. Work began in March 1998 and is due for completion at the end of December 2003. It aims to benefit, directly or indirectly, over 1 million children through a comprehensive combination of improvements in school quality and access.

An important objective is to provide secondary education to girls in areas that are under-served. Part of the response to the shortage of girls' secondary schools includes using distance education, relying in the main on the pattern employed for university level studies, but at the same time piloting

6. Zahra Jabeen, 'Supporting the education of girls in northern areas, Pakistan' (paper presented at the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

a model that aims to be more cost effective. The project is also attempting to train more female teachers for primary schools, to involve more mothers in the community governance of schools and to recruit and train more female managers for the education service. At the same time, it has to deal with pockets of resistance in some communities and has enlisted the support of religious and other leaders in the matter.

The scarcity of educated women in the region has, not surprisingly, resulted in gender imbalances in engaging staff. Of 32 tutors for the conventional distance education centres, 29 are male; of 16 co-ordinators for the centres, 15 are male; in the pilot centres, of the 8 teachers, 7 are male. Redressing such imbalances will clearly be a long term task. However, in the matter of community governance of schools, mothers now make up some 20 to 30 per cent of the local school management committees.

As regards appointing more female managers in the education service, the government has agreed to a 30 per cent quota for management posts to be filled by women. The first appointments under the agreement were of headmistresses of schools. However, their paths have not been smooth, as they have found themselves heavily outnumbered and resented by male managers and accorded less support for fulfilling their functions. None the less, most accept and deal with the struggle.

Despite the difficulties, the outcomes in terms of enrolling students and their success at different levels has been very encouraging. Between 1998/99 and 2001/02 the number of female students in junior and senior secondary classes has risen by some 50 per cent, while the number of trained female teachers has increased by about 7 per cent. The chief lessons learned so far in securing the success of the programme have concerned the importance of (a) engaging with community and religious leaders in establishing educational initiatives, particularly in the appointment of staff; (b) negotiating the location and timing of classes; (c) securing the recruitment of female teachers;

(d) involving mothers in school management; (e) avoiding a high profile for the external agencies, i.e. the British Council as the contractor for DfID and the World Bank; and (f) respecting local conventions even in apparently minor matters such as dress, as well as the more important matter of behaviour.

As the current programme is due for completion at the end of 2003, options for continuing the work and for replicating it other areas are being negotiated.

### **Girls in rural Afghanistan<sup>7</sup>**

Marilyn Blaeser  
Aga Khan Foundation  
(AKF)

Afghanistan currently finds itself in a situation of pervasive mutual distrust among its constituents. The government has little confidence in other agents and one of its ministers has gone on record with an accusation that NGOs were irresponsible in the way they were spending their money and establishing schools. The social fabric has collapsed, so that distrust reigns between the communities and the authorities and indeed between – and even within – the country's several communities, while security problems prevail throughout. Within education, the schools have been laid to waste, literacy rates are extremely low and the gaps between the genders are extremely wide on every dimension. Further, reconstructing the education system is hindered by the lack of realistic incentives for teachers to return to teaching.

Despite these negative factors, the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is strongly motivated to help in rebuilding the education system, simply because of an almost universal desire among the communities for their children to go to school. AKF's revived programme in Afghanistan aims to assist the

7. Marilyn Blaeser, 'Improving basic education for girls in rural Afghanistan: Are we making a difference?' (slide presentation at the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

*Critical issues in Education for All:  
gender parity, emergencies*

government in three provinces of the north and central regions to improve the quality of basic education and to increase gender equity substantially. The three specific objectives are to improve the quality of teaching, to promote support for primary schools through local institutions and structures, and to ensure a safe and healthy environment for the students.

The challenges cover the educational spectrum. They demand clear policy guidelines, a reformed curriculum, supporting materials, retrained teachers, properly oriented and trained local authorities, informed and involved communities and adequate, supportive school environments. To help respond to these challenges, the foundation has developed a plan and programme for its work in the three provinces, to which the authorities have agreed. It has begun constructing schools, developing an improved curriculum in consultation with the authorities and communities and training teachers. In addition, it has established base-lines and a system to monitor progress. The foundation has also introduced the idea of mentoring for teachers, officials and community leaders concerned with education.

*Table 2* shows the current status of basic education in the three provinces compared with the AKF proposals for the four-year period, 2003-2007. The foundation will be assisting some 30 per cent of the schools in the three provinces along with 25 per cent of their teaching and administrative staff and 30 per cent of their pupils.



**Table 2. Current status of basic education in the three provinces**

	Province	District	Schools	Education staff	Pupils
Current status	3	46	647	10,892	291,733
AKF anticipated support 2003-2007	3	10	194	2,674	91,806

At the end of the first year, the foundation can claim to have established its credibility with the Ministry of Education, and to have got its staff into place in the three provinces. It has been able to help and co-operate with a number of partners, which have in turn assisted it to implement its proposals. Although a little behind schedule, it has recruited a good number of women, as well as men, to train as teachers and has enrolled a good number of girls, as well as boys, in school. Teacher training has run into the difficulty that, whereas the official minimum education to qualify for training is Grade 14 of secondary school, most of the people available for training have completed only Grades 4 to 6 of primary school. Working with local authorities and communities has been hampered because the government's policy guidelines have not filtered through and are simply not known locally. Nevertheless, a number of schools have been repaired and brought back into use and have children learning in them, while a start has been made with forming parent/teacher committees.

The indicators of eventual success will include the number of teachers trained, both pre-service and in-service, as well as an improvement in the gender parity ratio for teachers in the three provinces: it currently stands at 0.20 or five male teachers for every female. They will also include increases the numbers of children enrolled in school, as well as improvements in the Gender Parity Ratio, which currently stands at 0.29 or more than three boys for every girl. Alongside these indicators, the foundation will be monitoring the degree to which communities are involved in the schools: the concrete aim is to establish parent/teacher committees and revolving funds in at least 102 schools over the next five years.

Accomplishing these aims will depend on the larger environment of the country. The foundation has to assume that the Ministry of Education will have its policies finalized and disseminated to the local authorities along with resources to implement them, that the wider systems of the government will be strengthened and functioning and that peace and security will have been improved to a degree that permits work to continue.

### **General discussion of education for girls**

The discussion of the six papers on girls' education broadly followed four themes: (a) using knowledge to influence policy and accelerate action; (b) the interaction between women's education and girls' education; (c) the role of the community in girls' education; and (d) girls' enrolments and attainments in mathematics, science and technology. A final concern was monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in primary and secondary education in 2005: Were current efforts sufficient to assure its achievement?

#### ***Using knowledge to influence policy and accelerate action***

Much of the information produced by the six papers seemed to reproduce and confirm information that was already fairly well known and established, and yet had not had an appreciable effect on policies and programmes in education. How long does it take for information from statistics, experiments and research to make a difference to educational quality, processes or outcomes? Would it take a further 30 years to lead to large proportions of women seeking tertiary education? What explained this lag and need for repetition? There was clearly much good work under way, but its elements were possibly too small, scattered and unreported to develop a cumulative effect that could have an impact on policy. There seemed to be no coming together of all the findings and insights to create the kind of momentum for reform that was evident in other fields. This was the most disappointing aspect of educational work over the past decade.

The thought was voiced that the donor community and generators of knowledge, like IIEP, should be doing more to ensure that the information was disseminated sufficiently thoroughly and to push countries and their governments harder to take account of the new knowledge and incorporate it appropriately into plans and programmes.

***The interaction between women's education and girls' education***

One piece of knowledge that had become clearer and firmer is that the education of girls is quite strongly dependent on the education of their mothers and that even the experience of a literacy programme is sufficient to move many women to insist on enrolling their girls in school and on supporting their attendance and perseverance. Another piece of knowledge that is being more widely confirmed is that many adult literacy programmes are enrolling not only wholly unschooled women, but also many who have had two, three or four years of primary school and who are already semi-literate. Examples could be given from Bangladesh, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Peru, Senegal and Uganda, to name only a few countries. The import of these two bits of information is that donors are not paying sufficient attention to the education of adult women: more investment could yield a pay-off for both the women and their daughters.

Further, the experience of the first project reported from Egypt contrasted with that of its successor and with the experience in Senegal, where local, community-based bodies undertake contracts to run adult basic education projects, point to the wisdom of moving away from preconceived and generalized programmes to those that are based on ascertained needs. Such approaches would help ensure that the pursuit of literacy connected not only with MDG for education, but also with those for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, empowering women, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality and combating a range of prevalent diseases, among which HIV/AIDS is the most pressing.

The experiences reported from Egypt also point to the continuing need for practical advice on determining criteria for levels of learning that give some assurance that the literacy skills and knowledge attained are usable in daily life and will be retained at a usable level. This of course also involves practical advice on how to assure quality in the design and delivery of adult education programmes.

### ***The role of the community in girls' education***

The reports from Afghanistan, the Arab countries, Eastern and Central Europe, Ghana and Pakistan all underline how vital the community is in facilitating and supporting the education of girls. The school in effect needs the co-operation of the community to fulfil its mission to educate all the children in its catchment area. The experience of the AKF in Afghanistan shows that the school can reinforce that co-operation and support, if it reciprocates in two ways. First, it should take the lead in sustaining and intensifying communication between itself and the community. Having a female teacher serve as the lead is especially helpful. Second, it should serve as a resource for the community by helping to promote cross-sectoral approaches to local social and economic development.

### ***Girls' enrolments and attainments in mathematics, science and technology***

The issue of stereotyping school subjects as either boys' or girls' subjects is virtually universal and still current and needs to be challenged. The perceptions among teachers and the general public in Ghana that girls do not do as well as boys in science and mathematics have their counterparts elsewhere. However, some teachers in Ghana contend that the difference is not gender-based but is brought about by factors in the classroom. They have suggested that the national pattern of mixed classes in the final Grades 7 to 9 of elementary school works to the disadvantage of girls, and advocate separate classes for

girls and boys. Large-scale empirical evidence has not so far been available, as the West African Examinations Council does not disaggregate examination results by gender. However, as all the good senior secondary schools in the country are single-sex, the Council has undertaken an analysis by school.

A comparative study in Norway and Uganda showed that identical factors were hindering girls' learning in both those countries, too, while a European working group has confirmed that girls indeed do better in single-sex schools. Meanwhile, in pursuit of more conclusive information on the issue, ADEA has sponsored a project in two phases over six years in teaching mathematics and science to girls. For its part, in the conviction that enough evidence is already available to settle the issue, FAWE has carried out an 'advocacy' project in 12 African countries demonstrating that girls can do as well as boys in science, technology and mathematics.

#### ***Monitoring gender parity in primary and secondary education in 2005***

Although the report on progress in girls' education in the Arab countries was disappointing, not to say depressing, the EFA Global Monitoring Report does suggest that there have been advances in a number of countries. Nevertheless, some means of more reliable monitoring remains to be devised to ensure that the reports due in 2005 on gender parity in primary and secondary education are accurate. The figures currently given by school systems and the estimates derived from sample household surveys are inadequate for the purpose. A proposal from the Royal Statistical Society offered one option: an analogue to the usual periodic population census could be a similar school census, undertaken not by the education authorities but by the agency usually entrusted with taking and analyzing the population census.



*Theme 3*  
Rebuilding and developing education  
in situations of emergency

**Education in conflict, emergencies and reconstruction<sup>8</sup>**

Christopher Talbot  
IIEP

Very hard facts produce the need for special provisions for education in emergencies, conflict and reconstruction. During 2001, there were no fewer than 37 armed conflicts raging around the world. They involved some 12 million refugees and more than double that number of internally displaced persons – about 25 million all told. In addition, fewer than half a million people were in the process of returning home after a conflict had been settled. A very large proportion of these people comprised children of school age who would have had no schools to attend were it not for the efforts of the United Nations and other organizations active in the protection and relief of such people.

The framework that emerged from the Dakar forum in 2000 reaffirmed the commitment of the international community to ‘meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, national calamities and instability and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and help to prevent violence and conflict’. So far, unfortunately, only three countries – Canada, Norway and Sweden – have made firm commitments to education for emergencies and declared that in such situations, ‘education will be a major priority’. Nevertheless, the reaffirmation at Dakar recognized that, whatever the calamity that befell them, children retained their right to education – and that education is a fundamental tool of protection

8. Christopher Talbot, ‘Education in conflict, emergencies and reconstruction’ (slide presentation to the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

for children. Indeed, education organized and delivered by international agencies has the scope to protect girls and young women by helping to overcome gender disparities.

However, the education that children in these circumstances experience has to be somewhat different from the ordinary primary and secondary school. Although it must, of course, cover the foundation general skills of literacy and numeracy, it needs to take into account the traumatic experiences these children have suffered and address their out-of-the-ordinary psychosocial needs. It needs also to teach them about health, hygiene and disease prevention in very crowded, possibly unsanitary conditions, about preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS, about the dangers of landmines and about human rights. Education for these children has in addition to endeavour to promote economic and social reintegration and reconstruction. In a word, education in such emergencies has to work to be both life-saving and life-sustaining.

The challenges to ministries of education, of course, cover the spectrum from organizing safe, structured activities for the displaced children immediately and creating the infrastructure to accommodate them, through to delivering the right sort of curriculum with the appropriate supporting materials and appropriately trained teachers. Similar challenges confront ministries of education, when conditions after a conflict allow the reconstruction of the education sector.

Because most governments have difficulty in coping with the range of challenges, agencies experienced in working in emergencies have established the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. In turn, the Network has formed a working group to develop guidelines for minimum standards in education in emergencies. Indeed, emergencies and displacements have become such a regular feature of international society that those who work on education in such situations need to be recognized as a profession, with regular posts and deployments. There is in fact an emerging sub-discipline of 'Education



in conflict, emergencies and reconstruction', which draws from studies in four distinct areas: education, psychology, humanitarian relief and social, economic and political development.

In recognition of the special nature of education in emergencies, UNESCO's IIEP has taken a lead in creating an accessible body of information and advice. In 1993, it published a state of the art review, along with a number of studies of country cases and thematic policies. IIEP now offers guidance to governments, as well as training and real capacity building for government ministries, United Nations agencies and NGOs and support to professional networks and academia.

Eight countries – Burundi, Honduras, Kosovo, Palestine, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Timor-Leste – have supplied the material for the country case studies. A few of their lessons can be briefly summarized:

- Anticipating and managing the tension between the need to resume schooling with the existing resources, institutions and curricula and the urge to reform and modernize the education system to avoid reproducing the shortcomings of the past (Kosovo).
- Anticipating and managing the ambiguity regarding authority, when an outside agency assumes the leadership and moves boldly to institute reforms, and then hands over control to local officials, who may be at odds with the central government (Kosovo).
- Supporting Ministry of Education leadership as the decisive factor in rapidly reopening schools (Rwanda).
- As early as possible emphasizing teacher orientation to the basic curriculum teachers know well, rather than introducing new kits or confusing innovations that will create dependence on external agencies (Rwanda).

- Managing the balance between necessary school rehabilitation, distribution of supplies, conflict-related programme inputs and teacher support to deliver the basic curriculum.

The thematic policy studies cover issues such as: education for the reintegration of youth who are at risk, once the conflict is resolved; co-ordinating education in emergencies and reconstruction; accreditation, certification and validation of the attainments and qualifications of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons; teacher management in emergencies.

### **Education and post-conflict reconstruction<sup>9</sup>**

Peter Buckland  
World Bank

The paper attempts to analyze the interrelationships between poverty, education and conflict and to offer some lessons from experiences in reconstructing education systems in post-conflict situations dating back to the 1950s and 1970s. Although there are some methodological problems in precisely identifying countries as ‘conflict affected’ – Would most people readily class Malaysia or Turkey as ‘conflict countries’? – the Uppsala Dataset has been tracking conflicts and conflict-related deaths since 1990. A further early warning is in order: generalizations are difficult and unsafe, for each conflict is unique in its constellation of causes and processes. But they all generate dire consequences for the men, women and children caught up in them.

#### ***The correlates of conflict***

Currently, 52 countries are considered ‘conflict countries’. If they are set against the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI), they exhibit

9. Peter Buckland, ‘Education and post-conflict reconstruction: Preliminary lessons and promising directions’ (slide presentation prepared for the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

a strong correlation between their status in human development and the propensity for conflict. For instance, 60 per cent of countries that rank low on the HDI suffer serious conflict, whereas only 24 per cent of the medium ranking countries do so. Admittedly, conflict affects countries at all levels of development, but it disproportionately affects the least developed. The association of poverty with conflict shows through the tendencies for per capita incomes to be not only low, but also either stagnant or declining, and for economies to depend heavily of the export of primary commodities. However, there are also non-economic variables associated with conflict. From the perspective of social composition, conflicted populations tend to have one or two dominant ethnic groups, rather than diversity with several groups relatively evenly balanced in numbers. They also tend to have had a history of recent conflict. For the purposes of this meeting, the most salient association is that 68 per cent of the ‘conflict countries’ are assessed to be ‘off-track’ in their trajectory to meet the EFA goals.

This is perhaps not surprising, since conflicts tend to involve the destruction, damage or neglect of schools and classrooms – between 45 and 95 per cent in some countries – the slaughter, dispersal or unemployment of teachers and the loss of equipment, textbooks and other supplies, along with rapid, steep declines in enrolments, as children flee or are otherwise displaced with their families. In the longer term, these disruptions produce backlogs in all the components that keep an education system running and developing, not least in the children who survive and have to make up for lost time. They also retard progress on the gender issues, since displacements and refugee camps generate extra roles and tasks for the women and girls, with the latter often being forced into acting as porters and ‘wives’ for combatants and also into prostitution simply to keep themselves alive.

### ***Opportunities and constraints***

On the other hand, the resilience and adaptability of people show through in the relatively rapid recovery of enrolments – certainly in primary schools, perhaps less readily at the secondary level – once a conflict is settled. Indeed, this causes a perplexing situation combining opportunity and constraint. The opportunities consist in the new political ‘space’ for change and reform, with a public that actually expects change, with a sudden influx of resources to support change and reduced resistance to it from bureaucratic quarters. The constraints consist in weakened and often conflicted authorities with an ineffective administration, a civil society that cannot offset that ineffectiveness, because it is itself in disarray, and sometimes unpredictable financial flows. Each of these elements of constraint needs to be reconstructed along a continuum of gradually increasing capacity to full functioning.

The process of reconstruction should include an analysis of education both as a possible contributor to conflict and as a constituent of reconciliation. The pre-conflict education system may have permitted unequal access and unequal quality of treatment between rich and poor, urban and rural, between different ethnic groups or between different religious groups. Poor quality in treatment for the disadvantaged groups may have generated frustration, unemployment and resentment, while distorted or biased curricula may have sown or exacerbated stereotypes, divisions and discord. The process of reconstruction will need to identify and steadily eliminate such inequities.

### ***Priority ingredients***

Reconstruction needs to operate simultaneously at both ends of the spectrum, rebuilding local communities’ ability to support their children’s education at one end and, at the other, rehabilitating capacities at the centre to manage and develop the education system as a whole. While a sector-wide approach to the system will be necessary, focusing first on the basic cycle of education will be a priority. Building on the strengths of the past and forming

partnerships for effective co-ordination will be important. So, too, will be the need to demonstrate early impact to help consolidate the peace. In this connection, expanding access will serve both this purpose and the need to begin dealing with previous inequities. As unequal quality is more than likely to have been a part of inequity, quality improvement as a system-wide process should be introduced from the outset.

Key to access and to quality are of course the teachers. After a conflict, they are likely to be in short supply and their average level of qualification and experience are likely to have declined. This means that the teachers who are available will need upgrading through training: frequent short courses based on the actual materials they will be using in their classes are likely to have the greatest early impact.

Issues about the curriculum and textbooks should be handled in the early stages by using existing materials – sanitized, if necessary – and interim arrangements should be negotiated on key matters such as language of instruction and history and other textbooks that may affect social attitudes. Developing new curricula and materials will, of course, necessitate early capacity building and technical work.

Assessing the needs of the education sector should be handled as an iterative and co-operative process. Joint missions should help to consolidate existing data sources, and at the same time generate more up-to-date and detailed information through surveys and forms of rapid appraisal.

In re-establishing the governance of the education system, balancing re-centralization and decentralization will be an important requirement, for the centre's capacity and authority to manage the system needs to be restored, but the community involvement and participation that are likely to have developed during the period when the centre lost control, should be carefully protected. Abiding concerns will be maintaining the transparency of the system's operations and avoiding various forms of corruption.

### ***Financing***

In financing the reconstruction of the education system, a major priority must be keeping household costs to a minimum and, if at all possible, phasing out direct costs, such as school fees for basic education. To give the schools an interest in increasing enrolments, capitation grants might be introduced. Mobilizing the finance is best done through multiplying the mechanisms and channels and using sources like social funds, so as to maintain flexibility and manage what might be called the 'relief bubble' – keeping expectations from the 'peace dividend' modest would be prudent.

### ***Partnerships, networking***

No government and certainly no single external agency can undertake the tasks of reconstruction on its own. Partnerships and co-ordination between partners are indispensable. In delimited areas, the 'lead agency' model, in which one agency accepts responsibility for co-ordinating the efforts of all, has potential. Unfortunately, the human factor and institutional incompatibilities mean that the model also has its risks. Nevertheless, ensuring that the effort for education maintains its linkages with the humanitarian relief community, as well as with the development community is one of the keys to successful reconstruction. Networking and sharing knowledge through INEE is part of those linkages.

### ***End thoughts***

The burdens that a post-conflict situation imposes on education are many and must not be underestimated. The people affected include refugees and returnees, child soldiers and war-affected youth, numbers of orphans and of people physically disabled by the hostilities. They will all need forms of psychosocial support over and above simple schooling to readjust to normal life. And part of their curriculum must be education for peace.

The final counsels are:

1. First, do no harm!
2. Do not 'ghetto-ize' conflict – conflict prevention is a concern of all countries.
3. Do not overburden the education system with unreasonable expectations.
4. Acknowledge the limitations of official policy interventions (and aid) in a debilitated system.
5. The usual business, unusual business, unusual business conditions, *not* business as usual.
6. Education is a key, but not the only key.

### **Educational reconstruction in Guinea-Bissau<sup>10</sup>**

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Guinea-Bissau is an example of an extremely poor country trying to recover its stability and to reconstruct itself. With a per capita income of only

US\$173, 87 per cent of the population live below the line of absolute poverty and the country is able to allocate only 1.7 per cent of its GNP to education. While it is commonly claimed that significant programmes of development co-operation necessitate substantial financing, in situations faced by Guinea-Bissau the lack of absorptive capacity makes the management of financial support more important than its volume. Indeed, it is more truthful to talk in terms of 'support for development' than of 'development co-operation'.

In the education sector, Guinea-Bissau faces acute limitations of access to education, especially for girls, due to the inadequate numbers and distribution of schools. This is compounded by the inability of rural schools to offer the full course of basic education and by the poor quality of instruction afforded

10. María Angélica Ribeiro, 'Le changement dans la continuité – le cas de la Guinée-Bissau' (paper prepared for the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

by insufficiently trained teachers, lack of teaching materials, deficient curricula and bad conditions of work for the teachers. In addition, the country retains Portuguese as its official language and as the language of instruction in its schools. However, only 11 per cent of the population speak Portuguese, which means that most teachers cannot teach it well and their students emerge with an inadequate mastery of the language.

The gross enrolment rate in secondary schools is currently 20.2 per cent. As trainee teachers for primary schools are drawn from this level, focusing development support on it makes sense. But since there is no guarantee of the availability of training for teacher trainers, who would in turn guarantee sustainable development in this field, another model became necessary – recruiting young Portuguese teachers who are seeking their first employment and professional fulfilment, to fill this gap in the sector's human resources. From this basic idea grew PASEG, the Programme of Aid to the Education Sector of Guinea-Bissau. It has three main vectors.

1. *Support for the secondary schools of Bissau.* Young Portuguese teachers ensure the teaching of Portuguese in several classes, as well as organizing several Portuguese language workshops duly equipped with books and computers. These young people also organize computer courses in the secondary schools, and courses in Portuguese in the surrounding suburbs (linked with work already developed by an NGO). In addition, they develop extracurricular activities like radio programmes and courses in drama.
2. *Support for a training school for primary teachers.* This component has been undertaken with the collaboration of a training school in Portugal. It uses short missions to run training of trainer courses on site.
3. *Literacy for adults and unschooled young people.* This component plans to form a group of literacy instructors among teachers in the community schools in one of the peri-urban quarters of Bissau, then to adapt teaching materials to the interests of a population that consists almost exclusively



of women and unschooled young girls. These people have expressed a strong demand for literacy in Portuguese, after having experienced unsuccessful attempts at literacy in Creole.

Although it is too early to offer precise evaluations, the early signs of success are good in terms of the increasing numbers of activities outside the classrooms and beyond the secondary schools themselves, the active collaboration of the secondary school personnel in devising solutions to difficulties, the expressed wish of the local authorities for an expansion of PASEG, the care taken with the materials supplied (scarcely any loss of materials or damage to the computers has been reported).

The key factors for success have been:

1. The constant communication between the financing and operational arms of Portuguese aid.
2. Launching the project at the level of the people and education officials concerned.
3. The youth, dynamism and adaptability of the Portuguese teachers in less than favourable circumstances.
4. Having an official from the Ministry of Education in Portugal co-ordinate the Portuguese teachers through periodic visits to the field.
5. The 'magical' attraction of computers has served to foster a network of communication between different projects in the country and between NGOs, churches and schools.

The case of Guinea-Bissau seems to confirm that the success of aid depends not only on the amount of money laid out, but much more on the commitment of the agents of co-operation and on the imagination brought to bear on creating partnerships with a range of very different actors in the local society.

## **General discussion of education in conflict, emergencies and reconstruction**

The general discussion of the three papers touched so many issues and experiences that, at its conclusion, the Chair recalled Lord Palmerston's remarks on the most difficult Schleswig-Holstein problem: 'Only three people knew the problem in all its intricacy. One is now dead, one has gone mad, and I have forgotten the details.' The unique nature of each conflict, emergency or challenge to reconstruction makes it hazardous to attempt generalizations, so that, as one participant put it, 'There is no nice system to roll out.' The complexities seem to lead to a 'mystification of commonsense', and it was depressing that, after so many decades of dealing with so many conflicts and so much reconstruction, the international community and its agencies still seemed to do things wrong, instead of right. Yet the evaluations of reconstruction after conflict in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua did yield a list of 'Dos' and 'Don'ts' and it would seem possible to develop a list of 'What works'. These broad observations tend to support the plea for more science and professionalism in the field of conflict and reconstruction, so that the international community can be made more aware of what is involved and equip itself to handle such situations more competently.

### ***Education in conflict and reconstruction***

As regards education in conflict and reconstruction, the Dakar Forum had explicitly recognized conflict as a substantive obstacle to Education for All, strikingly on a par with the ravages of HIV/AIDS. So many countries and so many people were affected, that they do collectively constitute a threat to the attainment of EFA and MDG. However, the Monterey compact led to 'conflict' countries being excluded from the development agenda. Yet the three papers argue powerfully for their continued inclusion. Indeed, they show that the reconstruction of 'post-conflict' countries could actually offer opportunities for accelerated progress towards EFA and hence towards MDG.

From a less positive perspective, the two strongest lessons from the experiences with refugees on the United Republic of Tanzania/Zaire borders were (a) the necessity to develop a local policy for education rapidly and (b) the necessity of a global education policy on the part of UNHCR to guide work in particular situations. The tendency to overlook education was reflected in the units of the World Bank that worked on conflict prevention and reconstruction: although they had developed some tools to use in both situations, these did not fit the requirements of education closely enough.

One useful tool to prevent education from ‘dropping off the plate’, so to speak, could be Maslow’s hierarchy of needs to show that the psychological aspects of conflict and post-conflict situations are as important to deal with as the physical requirements of shelter and so on. It is not a matter of neglecting other needs, but of insisting on the importance of education as an instrument for protection. It may also be necessary to counter preconceptions that organizing education will siphon off excessive resources in building schools, purchasing expensive furniture, paying high salaries to teachers and administrators and the like. It has to be brought home that, on the contrary, sound education can be cheaply organized and will generate disproportionate benefits in terms of human understanding, welfare and reconstruction.

#### *Co-ordination issues*

An equally important lesson was the need for international agencies to work harder at co-ordinating initiatives among themselves. While co-ordination at the regional level was good, translating that into national and local efforts too often proved too complicated. On the actual ground, agencies failed to co-ordinate, to surrender control or to build local capacity. While the overt declaration was to co-ordinate and co-operate, the propensity to compete often proved too strong under the pressure of the need for ‘visibility’ in work and effectiveness. The period of the ‘feeding frenzy’ just after the end of a conflict, when resources for humanitarian relief and reconstruction tend to

flood in, often exacerbated such competitiveness. On the other hand, it was also true that more recent situations, for example in Kosovo and Timor-Leste, had seen improvements in the degree and effectiveness of both co-ordination and co-operation. In this regard, the lead agency model offered value, despite its risks. Indeed, in Kosovo the model was extended by assigning sub-sectors, like curriculum development and teacher training, to different lead agencies. The implementation was unfortunately somewhat flawed by failures of co-ordination between agencies and of consultation with the Kosovar beneficiaries; but lessons from the experience did at least enable a better, if still not perfect, implementation in Timor-Leste.

It goes almost without saying that even more important is co-ordination with the national government, however weakened, and with the range of local bodies – NGOs, churches, CBOs – that were typified in the Guinea-Bissau case. Where a government and its ministry of education take increasing control, as they recover and issue guidance to the international community, the situation is workable and permits long-term relationships to be established.

However, where the national government has not gained wide legitimacy, the political dimension becomes a critical factor, as arrangements may have to be made almost community by community. The fact of the matter is that reconstruction requires dealing with those who are actually influential on the ground and those who would help reconstruction must avoid unnecessary friction. One of the mistakes in Kosovo, for example, was dismissing the Kosovar authorities as so unworthy as to necessitate new structures. For educational agencies, quite as important as their technical expertise is their skill at dealing with people and possibly competing interests.

Linked with this issue are the questions of priorities in education and who sets them. The four-stage continuum from humanitarian relief through to reconstruction in fact requires a fifth line that deals with settling the 'intervention priorities', so as to maintain momentum in moving along the

continuum. An associated question concerns who determines the priorities for education, bearing in mind that any step in education will have political consequences. Should it be the refugees or returnees as a whole, only the parents who have children to be educated, a wider group of leaders, the relief and reconstruction agencies or some combination of all these stakeholders? Refugees certainly regard education as a major priority, while returnees see it as an essential component of reconstruction. Complicating the issue is the possibility of tension between re-establishing a previous system and the demands of particular minority groups for special new provisions to meet their specific needs.

Equally important is the question of who plays the pivotal role of ensuring that the voices of society and of the people, who will be doing the actual work, are brought to the table in deciding what would be desirable change? Where a sufficiently legitimated ministry of education can take up the role, there is, of course, less of a problem. Where that is lacking, the international community will need to negotiate a solution acceptable to all the stakeholders.

### ***Negotiating the curriculum***

Within education, the major issue is the curriculum. In post-conflict situations, the biggest risk is a resumption of conflict, so that whatever curriculum is adopted needs to have among its aims the prevention of conflict and an avoidance of the kinds of divisive material that country studies have uncovered in some texts. At the same time, too much must not be expected of education in terms of conflict prevention. True, where aspects of education can be clearly identified as exacerbating the causes of conflict, modifications will be essential. On the other hand, helping people to learn and understand the causes of conflict does not necessarily involve addressing or solving those causes. It may well be that dependence on a single commodity like oil or diamonds is strongly associated with conflict, but education *per se* cannot be expected to deal with that dependence. Again, education may be able to make

young people in schools aware of the ten indicators of vulnerability to conflict, but it should not be expected to train all of them in mitigating them.

Overall, studies of curriculum change to foster social cohesion do not point to general solutions, but hints on how to respond to particular situations can be drawn from the country cases. The more prudent stance seems to be one of ‘contingency planning’ rather than ‘preparation’. (To keep this point in perspective, however, it is worth bearing in mind the experience of UNICEF in Kosovo, where the collaborative development of a curriculum framework, capacity building and deliberate efforts to widen world views had a stronger impact than sanitizing existing texts.) There is real value in using what happened in a conflict to build understanding of how to prevent further conflict – as has been done in Afghanistan in the post-Taliban era – but success will depend on judiciously balancing the political and technical dimensions.

The preceding discussion indicates clearly that a process of adequate consultation on curriculum reform has to be instituted with all the stakeholders, so that agencies, both national and international, would be wise to avoid any form of ‘pre-packaging’ a curriculum. That said, it is worth keeping in mind that IBE does have well-grounded suggestions and excellent resources to support curriculum reform and that there exist curriculum development institutes with experience in assisting the process. Avoiding ready-made curricula may be more easily advised than implemented, for in the post-conflict rush by several agencies of different kinds to get things back to normal, projects tend to proliferate almost autonomously and to use whatever materials happen to be at hand. That could complicate policy-making and undermine longer term reconstruction.

### ***Capacity for curriculum development***

Rather than inventing a new curriculum, then, an occupying power should work at developing a country’s capacities for the task and handing back control. The experience of Cambodia provides an example of what should be avoided.

After 20 years of conflict, the country needed 15 years of reconstruction to regain control over its curriculum because of the competition between several donors in the 'education market'. A rather better model was developed in South Africa in the early 1990s, when the international community helped South Africans train themselves for leadership. Categorizing and quantifying the capacities actually available among populations of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons would be helpful in assessing what more needed to be done. Serious studies of the skills to be found are probably lacking, but there is anecdotal evidence of returnees bringing back new and highly relevant skills, as some Somali returnees showed: they had learned how to design and deliver 'peace education' and wished to teach peace on their return home.

Of course, it has to be recognized that capacity building itself is not simply a technical issue: the choices of what capacities and whose capacities needed to be built had political implications also. None the less, if the tasks of reconstruction attracted attention early enough, these questions could be sorted out in time to help create capacity to develop adequate information and management systems to support the processes of reconstruction.

### ***Language policy***

The choice of the language or languages of instruction can be highly politicized. Where a national government does not enjoy general legitimacy, co-operating with its policies in language could risk perpetuating or re-creating the pre-conflict situation. Again, it is not possible to advance general solutions, except to point out that Mali, with 15 national languages, demonstrated that what was vital was the way the matter was handled, and not the languages themselves. Thus, the particular situation of each country needs to be carefully analysed to ensure that all interests and their interplay are taken into account.

### ***Beneficiaries, hosts and societies***

The discussion touched a couple of issues regarding the beneficiaries of education. One concerned the conditions of education for refugees and

returnees *vis à vis* those for their host populations, while the other focused on disaffected youth. There had been incidents where the host populations had noticed that refugees and returnees enjoyed rather better educational facilities than they did and had taken hostile action, including burning down schools. The international standards governing situations with a potential for jealousy and antagonism to arise between refugees and their hosts actually stipulate that local populations must receive the same level of treatment as the refugees. However, as often happens, local conditions and the actual resources available can affect the implementation of the ideal. Where local populations are sparse, as in north-eastern Kenya, the problem may not arise at all.

The second set of beneficiaries discussed were ‘disaffected youth’, young people whose experiences as refugees or ‘child soldiers’ had disconnected and even alienated them from the norms of their parent societies – ‘child soldiers’ seem to form some 2-3 per cent of their age groups in conflict countries. Although these young people need not just ordinary schooling but an entire process of re-education, they tend to be ignored by ministries of education and taken up by NGOs instead. This means that any lessons about handling them effectively remain within the NGOs, simply because the latter focus on action and not on disseminating experience. Integrating these young people into their social systems – *not* reintegrating them! – is a real problem, for their societies can actually resist having them integrated. An example is Sierra Leone, where many of the young men concerned had actually attacked schools. At a multi-sectoral conference on their education and reintegration, there was opposition to their participation on the ground that they had not yet paid for the damage they had done. It took some negotiation to have them admitted. Where schemes to educate and reintegrate such youth are launched, flexible thinking is required to devise arrangements that will suit both the beneficiaries and conventional standards of academic and social attainment. In Liberia, for example, the aim has been to compress the normal primary curriculum plus ‘integration education’ into three years instead of the usual six allotted for the ordinary primary cycle.



### ***Costs***

One of the gaps in current information on reconstruction is a quantification of the costs, especially in countries that are not in the international public's eye. The quality of the data is in general poor and, although a few countries do have good information, they are so exceptional as not to provide much in the way of pointers for other countries. In managing resources and costs, one of the drawbacks of the 'relief bubble' at the immediate end of a conflict, when resources are plentiful, is that the next emergency elsewhere deflates the bubble and shuts off the flow, before plans can be fully costed and resourced. To protect initiatives in education from such contingencies, it may be wise to devise mechanisms like the trust funds that were established in Timor-Leste.

### ***Benefiting from creative solutions***

Emergencies and conflict situations can stimulate ingenious and creative responses to deal with emerging problems, such as the recruitment and training of teachers for refugees and returnees. However, there is always the risk that these responses will 'evaporate' or be forgotten, once situations return to normal and the old regulations and procedures reassert themselves. People, who create such solutions, or who are at least in a position to note them for future use, should be encouraged to develop them and share them widely. Of course, it is always necessary to take care not to apply apparent solutions to inappropriate situations, as happened to attempts to transfer solutions from Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania wholesale to Rwanda.

### ***Education for the international community***

It is clear that providing education in situations of emergency, conflict and reconstruction remains substantially dependent on resources from the international community. Most of those resources come from countries whose governments depend on electoral support from their publics. Support for measures that might help defuse or at least not exacerbate potential conflicts,

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as well as for emergency humanitarian relief and longer term aid thus depends on public understanding of and sympathy for the emergency situations. To build constituencies of understanding, sympathy and support, the governments in question should encourage their education systems to include some study of the conflicts around the globe, their underlying causes and the wider interests that foment them. The German Federal Republic operates one model for its educational institutions and there may be others.

## *Theme 4*

### Modalities of development co-operation

#### SWAp in education – United Republic of Tanzania

Berit Rylander Sida
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#### *History*

Movement towards a sector-wide approach to planning in education is already eight years old in the United Republic of Tanzania. The process began in 1995, when the government announced an Education Sector Development Programme that would cover the entire sector. The division of responsibilities within the sector has complicated progress. The delivery of primary education is the responsibility of local government councils under the President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government, while the Ministry of Education and Culture provides the general framework, policies and technical oversight. General secondary education is in the hands of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Secondary vocational education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Youth Development, while tertiary and higher education is under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education. An Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office ensures consistency across the sector.

Thus, it was only in July 2001 that the Minister of Education and Culture launched the first sub-sector plan to become operational, the Primary Education Development Plan for the period 2002-2006. Plans for the other sub-sectors are still under preparation. A large part of the reason for the apparently slow progress was that the first period of planning, 1997-1999, enjoyed little ownership by the government. A special secretariat had been set up in the Ministry of Education and Culture, quite separate from normal government operations and was in the main led by the donor community, which used a

succession of temporary external consultants. A joint government/donor review in March 1999 was followed by a long and difficult period of government reorganization that put the SWAp process on hold.

Five factors led to a revival towards the end of 2000. The first was the opportunity for additional resources through the HIPC initiative. Second was the requirement for a PRSP to qualify for HIPC funds. The consultation process for the PRSP demonstrated that improving education was the most important development priority among the population. President Mpaka reflected this in his 2000 re-election campaign. Third, several NGOs were increasingly active in pressing for change and improvement in education. Fourth, the World Bank agreed to provide a soft loan of US\$150 million over three years to support the SWAp. Finally, fifth, the government's commitment strengthened through shifting the leadership for the SWAp process from the Ministry of Education and Culture to the Prime Minister's Office.

Consistent with the PRSP, the basic education sub-sector attracted strong priority, so that the plan for primary education emerged quite quickly. In addition to the HIPC and World Bank's support, eight bilateral donors and the EU have agreed with the government a Pooled Fund Mechanism for the allocation and management of funds, along with a Basic Education Development Committee to oversee the process. As a means of control, all donors contributing to the Pooled Fund have to agree to each disbursement.

### ***Harmonizing the donors***

To ensure consistency between themselves, the nine donors have abandoned the 'lead agency' concept and have instead set up a secretariat run by a co-ordinator appointed from among their own staff. The co-ordinator maintains a constant consultative process with all the donors, so that any statements from the secretariat can be made on behalf of the whole group. The members have also agreed a division of roles and responsibilities on the basis of the comparative advantage of each representative in the network. In

addition, they are about to agree a code of conduct on how best to address differences of views on supporting the Primary Education Development Plan, as and when differences occur. The only drawback that has emerged from this arrangement is that some donor staff rely too much on the co-ordinator and neglect to do their own homework.

### ***Stock-taking***

Towards the end of the first year of the plan, in July 2002, the President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government carried out a countrywide performance monitoring exercise. At the end of that month, 100 stakeholders from central, regional and district governments, civil society and donors held a workshop to consider the findings. The main conclusion was that progress had been remarkable, with all the ambitious quantitative targets met or exceeded. Enrolments in Grade 1 had risen by 45.5 per cent, 7,000 new teachers had been recruited and 16,000 new classrooms had been built. The funds for recurrent expenditures had for the most part been reaching the schools' bank accounts and making a difference to the quality of teaching and learning.

On the debit side, skills in school and financial management were still deficient, information flows to communities were poor, provisions for over-age children and those with special needs were lacking, there were shortages of housing for teachers and a lack of funds and facilities to enable regional offices to monitor implementation.

### ***Future prospects***

For the future, the indicators of the government's commitment to the plan are good. However, practices within the civil service, such as the rapid rotation of personnel, sometimes lead to contradictory messages and instructions from the centre that lead to confusion in the schools and their communities. On the donors' side, there does need to be firmer assurances that funding and other support will be sufficient for the immediate and long terms.

As regards capacity, there is a broad risk of failure at a number of points. Disbursing funds to reach schools in time, managing the delivery of quality education, schools, school committees and communities responding to the needs of overall and financial management, sustaining two-way channels of communication between government and communities are aspects where weakness may show up. Capacity development takes time and will probably proceed at a slower pace than the quantitative progress of the reform. However, the increasing role taken by NGOs in providing information, promoting transparency and fostering public participation enhances citizen engagement and government accountability. Closer to the heart of education, the quantity and quality of the teaching force and of its teaching will need stronger support to be able to handle the strain of enrolments that are rapidly rising with the abolition of school fees and other charges. The point is especially acute under the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The management of a SWAp – by both national and agency staff – demands a fresh range of skills, different from those used for project cycle management. It requires knowledge of a sector as a whole, of ongoing reform processes in other areas, of cross-cutting issues like gender and HIV/AIDS, of needs assessment and capacity development, about macro-economic development, budget processes and financing, public service and institutional arrangements, and procurement procedures. In addition to all this knowledge, SWAp management requires socio-cultural competence and skills in dialogue and negotiation.

### ***Summary***

In summary, the lessons so far from the United Republic of Tanzania's move to a SWAp for education are:

1. A stronger focus is needed on capacity building in the initial stages of introducing a SWAp.

2. Re-orientation and changes in mind-set take time: haste has to be deliberate.
3. The shift in thinking from 'project cycle management' to 'budget cycle management' has to be purposefully encouraged.
4. Governments are already 'over-committed', so that change requires careful management.
5. Trust and empathy between donors' personnel and the personnel of their partner governments are indispensable.

### **SWAp in education – Cambodia<sup>11</sup>**

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IIEP

#### ***Background***

Cambodia needed nearly twenty years to recover from the conflicts and instability of the 1970s and 1980s. During that period, most of the emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction had been led by a number of donors and NGOs, often in collaboration with local communities. By the middle of the 1990s, the country had regained stability and the government was working to effect systematic reform and development. It was disappointed with the poor impact of the fragmented support from the international community in all sectors and declared its intention to move from 'donorship' to 'partnership', an intent formally stated at the Consultative Group Meeting of 2000 in Paris.

#### ***Milestones to SWAp***

Within education, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports had already in 1999 initiated a comprehensive review of the sector in consultation with

11. Gabriel Carron, 'Moving toward SWAp: The Cambodian case' (slide presentation to the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003). See also Sar Nak, Desiree M. Jongasma and Mike Ratcliffe, 'Evolving sector-wide approach to education in Cambodia and the role of strategic planning processes' (paper prepared for the Workshop on recent issues in educational planning, UNESCO/IIEP, Paris, 4-6 December 2002).

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the donors, discussed priorities and agreed to hold monthly consultative meetings that would include government, donors and NGOs. Later that same year, the ministry established the Education Sector Working Group, along with an Education Sector Support Programme for the donors. By early 2000 the Council of Ministers had officially endorsed the critical priorities identified for the education sector, while a few donors had signed a statement of intent to support actively the process of a comprehensive sector review. Later that year, a series of seminars for the staff of both the ministry and the donors educated them about SWAp and its implications, while a process of consultation and the establishment of a National Parents and Teachers Conference did the same for the decentralized levels of the administration, local community representatives and the general public.

The preparation of the Education Strategic Plan 2001-2005 and of the Education Sector Support Programme followed, along with the creation of an NGO Education Partnership Network and the adoption of a set of agreed Principles for Education Partnership by the ministry, the donors and the NGOs. By mid-2002, the partners had jointly prepared a policy implementation matrix with key indicators that furnished the data for two joint annual reviews in September 2002 and May 2003.

### ***Situation today***

The education sector has in effect led the way for the country in building partnerships for reform and improvement. It has used its partnerships with donors and NGOs to develop a clear government policy with corresponding detailed implementation plans. It has also set in motion a real process of reform encompassing poverty reduction, decentralization and community involvement. The political stratum and the top levels of the public administration exhibit good ownership of the reform process, while the lower levels and civil society are increasingly sharing that sense. The maintenance of good co-ordination between the government and its partners and between the two sets



of partners, donors and NGOs, continues to generate a positive climate and a willingness to support reform.

As the ministry's structures and procedures strengthen in capacity and grow more reliable, the donors are increasingly able to implement programmes through them and to monitor implementation jointly. They are also showing interest in replacing the current pattern of programme support with budget support. The Asian Development Bank for instance negotiated a sector development loan in 2001, while the European Community has provided targeted budget support in 2003, and Sida is considering a similar step.

#### ***Factors for success***

It is remarkable that such a positive assessment is possible, despite the facts that Cambodia's government is a relatively weak coalition of not always harmonious political parties, has what is still fragile administrative capacity and is afflicted with a quite strong degree of corruption. Identifying the factors that have enabled such success would clearly be valuable.

The prime factor seems to be a combination of political commitment coupled with stability. The Minister of Education has been in place since 1998 – an unusually long tenure for a cabinet minister – and has retained his senior civil service team, as well as his external advisers. He has committed himself consistently to the agreed sector priorities of equity, efficiency, quality and decentralization. His determination and effectiveness have earned him a high and public level of support from the Prime Minister, who leads a different political party.

The main factor supporting such commitment and stability is likely to have been the strong, concerted and consistent advocacy by a few donors – the Asian Development Bank, UNICEF and Sida – who both maintained pressure and ensured the availability and consistency of technical support.

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They did not adopt the 'lead agency' model, but worked together to promote understanding of what SWAp entailed. They helped the ministry move from an initial reluctance to accept the concept to an understanding that now makes more demands in implementing it. In addition, they provided first class technical assistance at the top level, so that the ministry was able to produce policy documents of the highest quality.

Third, the ministry had developed an excellent management information system, which was certainly crucial for decision-making and planning, but which also served to create transparency and build trust. Fourth, to that source of information was added an impressive stream of research and studies of good quality and insight, mainly by donors, but also by some NGOs and a few national institutions. They played an important part in helping the stakeholders to reach agreement on key strategies.

### ***Problems***

No success comes totally free of problems. For education in Cambodia, there are five, of which the chief is likely to be financial sustainability. Currently, foreign aid accounts for 40 per cent of the education budget, a proportion that is clearly too high. Its counterpart is the very low level of national investment in education, which currently stands at 1.5 per cent of the GDP, and which is explained by the government's inability to mobilize more than 8-9 per cent of the GDP for public expenditure. As a proportion of the national budget, education receives 18.2 per cent, which is reasonable, even generous, from that perspective. Indeed, the budgetary allocation for education is scheduled to rise to 20 per cent in 2005, when the government plans to mobilize some 12 per cent of the GDP for public expenditure. Even so, the increase is unlikely to equal the current level of external support, so that the dependence on donors and NGOs will remain high and risky.

Associated with financial dependence is the problem that salaries in the public service are widely regarded as being below a level that can support a decent standard of living. This has led donors to supplement official salaries in ways that are not transparent and to offer a range of financial incentives to encourage officials to devote the expected amounts of time to fulfilling their functions. If these supplements and incentives were to be withdrawn in the short term, the government would likely face the dilemma of either higher public expenditures through having to pay higher salaries or lower performance and productivity from officials juggling several income-generating activities.

Third, another form of dependence that has provoked dissatisfaction and questions about the real leadership in education has been the reliance on long-term technical assistance. While, as noted above, that assistance has been valuable in helping to assure soundly formulated policies and plans, there is on the one hand resentment about its duration and influence and, on the other, nervousness that reducing it may affect the quality of the ministry's performance.

The fourth problem, related to the previous one, concerns shortages of capacity and impediments to developing capacity, both institutional and individual. The National Programme for Administrative Reform across the whole government has progressed more slowly than planned, and that has hampered institutional development in ministerial departments, including those of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. At the individual level, the transfer of skills from technical assistants to Cambodian personnel has been unsystematic and slow, while training programmes to develop skills have not produced results in sufficient quantity.

The fifth and final problem involves communications and mutual understanding with other ministries, particularly the Ministries of Finance and the Interior, both critical to smooth functioning of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports itself in terms of ensuring on the part of one that money

reaches the right quarters at the right time and on the part of the other, that local conditions permit and facilitate the running of the schools.

### ***Lessons***

The lessons of the Cambodian experience with SWAp can be readily inferred from the discussion so far. In summary, they would run:

1. The importance of committed and stable political leadership over several years.
2. Similarly, the importance of good technical leadership over several years.
3. Recognizing and treating the process of developing a SWAp as a learning process for all involved – government and its education and administrative personnel at all levels, donors, NGOs and general public – and organizing appropriate learning forums.
4. Constructing efficient channels for the exchange of information, dialogue and consensus building (in Cambodia, there were regular meetings of the ministry, donors and NGOs, supplemented by separate preparatory meetings of the donors and NGOs and underpinned by the use of a special Donor co-ordination Adviser).
5. Using flexible donor support modalities within a single policy framework, in line with country priorities and implemented through government structures.
6. Using different forms of budget support.
7. Ensuring transparency as a condition for building trust, which is in turn a condition for risk sharing.
8. Ensuring the development and installation of transparent and efficient procedures for financial accountability (in Cambodia, intensive training was used to establish budget management centres at central, provincial, district and institutional levels, but was partially hampered by problems with the Ministry of Finance and the lack of a comprehensive network of banking facilities).

General discussion  
of SWAp

The general discussion of the experiences with SWAp in education was in the main conducted in smaller groups, which for the sake of untrammelled informality and openness neither recorded nor reported their exchanges.

However, before the plenary meeting dissolved into groups, there was interest in the roles taken by NGOs in Cambodia and the United Republic of Tanzania. Those in Cambodia seemed to have been able to use the long period of weakness in the institutions of central government to strengthen their confidence and capacities to take initiatives to a degree that made them prominent players in the education sector. Their community was now a vibrant mixture of international and national bodies. The latter were often headed by foreigners, who had put down their roots locally, but many had local founders and leaders. One in fact comprised a number of civil servants, who had been released by their superiors to mobilize resources as an NGO – and to secure better pay for themselves. Another had formed a partnership to develop its own substantial research programme into educational and social conditions.

Although NGOs were less prominent in the United Republic of Tanzania, they were actually part and parcel of the educational scene in the country, and were very active in discussions of policy and practice. They have four representatives on the Basic Education Development Committee, which oversees the development of pre-primary, primary, secondary, teacher and adult education, and has to ensure that each complements the goals of the wider sector development programme. This committee reports to the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee – only national representatives – of which the Permanent Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office is Chair. In addition, the NGOs have a few representatives in all the Technical Working Groups that act as 'think-tanks' for the development committee.

Apart from their advisory role in helping to form and reform educational policy and practice, NGOs also work in schools and with school management

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committees all over the country and are thus in a strong position to supplement the government's own monitoring services. As a result, they attract support from many of the country's development partners.

### **Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP)**

Françoise Caillods  
IIEP

### **Education and Poverty Reduction Strategies<sup>12</sup>**

#### ***Background***

In 1999, the governing boards of the IMF and World Bank faced the facts that 1.2 billion people still had to subsist on less than US\$1.00 per day and that in many countries the numbers of people in such poverty was actually rising. In response, they approved a new approach to the challenge of reducing poverty: it was to be country driven, country owned, long term in its perspective – but budgeting annually in the short term and planning over a three-year span for the medium term – oriented to results and based on partnerships, both internally within the country and externally with the international community. Countries that adopted an explicit and credible poverty reduction strategy would have access to substantial debt relief and to higher levels of concessionary loans. In addition, such a strategy would serve as a framework for development assistance from all sources.

The concept of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) was a real attempt to integrate four distinct components into a coherent plan of evolving action: (a) a diagnosis of the dynamics of poverty; (b) the identification, definition and sequencing of priorities and priority actions; (c) the budgetary processes

12. Françoise Caillods, 'Education and PRSP: a review of experience' (slide presentation prepared for the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003, on the basis of a paper with Jacques Hallak for DfID).

to support the actions; and finally (d) the monitoring system to track progress and adjust action. The concepts of 'country driven' and 'country owned' cast their view of 'country' much wider than 'government' to include civil society and consultative processes that would enable large numbers of people to participate in identifying needs and putting forward constructive proposals. There was also an emphasis on partnerships and the need to work at ensuring co-ordination between partners.

Within that frame, the role of education in reducing poverty was envisaged to combine the human capital approach with its emphasis on building skills and capacities with the push for integrated development, which involves developing wide, cross-cutting knowledge.

#### ***Assessing progress***

In 2002, since three years has passed since the adoption of Poverty Reduction Strategies, IIEP, with the support of DfID, undertook a study of how the strategies of various countries were handling education. In addition, it was interested to assess the extent to which preparing a PRS affected education policy and practices, as well as the ways in which the education sector took account of the poor and their interests. Although the strategies of 22 countries have been published, only 18 were available to the study. With these, IIEP looked at the process each country used to develop the strategy, the scope of the education agenda, the convergence with the EFA goals, references to educational policies and what featured as cross-cutting themes.

All 18 PRS included the objective of universal primary enrolment, and 14 (78 per cent) planned to offer incentives for families to enrol their children. (Interestingly, only 4 (22 per cent) proposed to use school meals as an incentive for enrolment, as well as a support for effective learning by poor children.) Compared with enrolment, only 11 (61 per cent) named universal primary completion as an explicit target. However and importantly, 16 (89 per cent) did aim to improve the quality of education: if successful, it should facilitate

better learning and higher rates of completion. On the other hand, the objective of ensuring that the learning needs of young people and adults were met was included by only 11, and even fewer – 7 (39 per cent) – mentioned improving adult literacy or eliminating gender disparities. Although PRS do largely reflect their countries' educational policies and plans, none of the education sections in PRS makes precise connections between education investment and poverty reduction, nor do they often specify how different measures are going to target the poor and poverty.

Four main areas appear as cross-cutting themes that affect all sectors in PRS: empowering the poor, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and capacity building. Interestingly, it is in these cross-cutting areas that the most innovative programmes appear.

All PRS estimate their costs, but it has to be said that this is not one of their stronger aspects. They all provide for regular monitoring with credible indicators, as well as for regular updating.

The education chapter in several PRSPs is probably one of the most developed in this respect. This is probably due to the fact that countries have developed EFA action plans and other development plans. In countries where SWAp have been developed, the education strategy appears particularly well formulated and costed.

As regards the process for developing PRS, it is clear that in many countries real participation by wide public representation has influenced the education agenda. On the other hand, the presence of Prime Ministers' Offices and Ministries of Finance is overwhelming. There appear to have been differences of view between the economic and technical sides: the economists feel that the technical task managers are too conservative and controlling, while the technical task managers feel dispossessed by the economists. Alongside this, there is some sense that the educational assistance was 'de-professionalized'. This apparently limited and unhappy participation by the



line ministries that will after all have to implement PRS may well undermine their sense of ownership and possibly their commitment to thorough implementation.

### ***Shortfalls?***

The review of the 18 PRS revealed that the countries are indeed ‘in the driving seat’, which can lead to real change for the better, and that education is among the best planned sectors. On the other hand, they also reveal deficiencies in conceptual clarity, focus, clear road maps for progress and in assuring sustainability.

As regards conceptual clarity, none of the plans spells out the details of the relation between education and poverty and the kind of education that is likely to reduce poverty most effectively – although 12 of the 18 PRS do include vocational education, but with little consideration of employment opportunities and trends. None of them addresses the probability that education, even vocational education, on its own does not create jobs nor the question whether education needs to be substantially reformed, if it is to accommodate the needs of the poor.

On focus, PRS restrict themselves to the narrower MDG rather than take in the broader visions of Jomtien and Dakar. Non-formal education, ‘learning to learn’ and opportunities for lifelong learning are for the most part absent or cursorily treated. Even the reduction of illiteracy among working adults is rarely included among the key indicators, and therefore runs the risk of being neglected.

On sustainability, the economic projections do seem to err on the side of optimism and there are questions whether the process of developing the PRS has permanently changed either the local framework for developing policy decisions or the framework for deciding the pattern of international assistance. For instance, the existence of an approved PRSP has been a determining

factor for a country to be included in the Fast Track Initiative for EFA. Yet evidence is still lacking on the influence of these on the practices of aid agencies.

### ***Summary assessment***

Overall, the PRS process does have the potential to be a very powerful instrument for reducing poverty, for promoting participatory democracy and for transforming modalities of development assistance. The first indications of its implementation in the 18 countries are good. Nevertheless, it is still too early for any conclusive judgements.

General discussion of PRS
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As the 18 countries studied could not represent the full range of countries invited to develop PRS, but were only the first to have submitted papers, IWGE members hoped that IIEP would be in a position to present a review of many more countries and their PRS at its next meeting.

The accountability of the process of developing a PRS came into question. Mobilizing the participation of civil society and the general public seemed on the face of it to bypass duly elected bodies and to substitute for them ad hoc and not necessarily representative assemblies. Did the resulting plans also bypass elected bodies? If so, to whom was the process accountable? In fact, the long list of participating stakeholders in the countries included both local elected people and civil society, while the final version of the resulting PRS was discussed in Cabinet, before being submitted to Parliament. In Ghana, the PRS process had been conducted in exemplary fashion, but the Cabinet review shifted the focus of the draft PRS paper away from poverty to other objectives in development. The experience indicated that donors need to engage the whole of a government in a dialogue to ensure full understanding of the intent of a PRS.

There was an impression that in some of the countries reviewed the discussions had occurred at the national level between only the ministries of

finance and development planning. There appeared to have been little penetration to the line ministries, let alone to the regional and district levels. In effect, the participatory process originally envisaged has been largely ignored, possibly in the interests of speed. Whatever the reason, marginalizing the implementing ministries and other organisms meant that the 'country' was not in 'the driving seat', so that there did seem to be a risk that the plan for the PRS would be sound, but might remain only on paper. This could bring into question the wider feasibility and sustainability of the approach. It, too, indicated that the donors needed to engage governments in thorough dialogue about the full intent of the PRS process.

On the other hand, the international community needed to be careful about attempting to enforce a single and uniform approach to developing strategies for reducing poverty. There could be opportunities for experimenting with different approaches to policy formulation. Possibly, the donors could insist on the spirit of democratic participation, but keep their hands off particular experiments to achieve it.

So far, these strategies do not constitute full-blown planning instruments. They tend to be very short term, more in the nature of rolling plans. Yet they are indeed potentially powerful tools, even though the time required for the process to take root and for the investments to effect a substantial alleviation of poverty in the world remains unknown. Some countries have developed very detailed sets of indicators to monitor performance and progress, and some, the United Republic of Tanzania for example, have decentralized the monitoring to the regions and districts. It still remains early days for judgement, except to observe that the education sector is currently among the best planned. That said, it has to be recognized that the scope governments have in the fungibility of funds may lead to a diversion of finance from education to other dimensions of poverty reduction.

As regards education, the PRS process had served to bring it more to the centre of development concerns. There was a time when education was

regarded merely as one of the spending arms of government, not a powerful channel of investment in future development. Also, on multi-sectoral missions, technical ministries took a back seat to the economists. The fact that in the United Republic of Tanzania the Prime Minister's Office has taken responsibility for leading educational development, as well as overall socio-economic development, reflects the shift in views. In reciprocal fashion, while the link with PRS was bringing education more to the centre of development thinking and planning, it could also work to change education by making educators focus on educating to reduce poverty. The process for developing PRS is new, but it has made people more interested in issues of poverty. If then education can demonstrably help reduce poverty, it will generate higher interest in itself.

In this vein, the fact that even relatively weak PRS have good education components suggests that the work at Jomtien and Dakar is now paying off, thanks to the efforts of UNESCO. The lesson is that educators need to be more proactive in taking planning, implementation and the assessment of attainments and impact to the next level of effectiveness. That said, the risk of 'dispossession' by the economists is real, for educators are often perceived to be 'mushy' and weakly rigorous in their thinking. To counter this, education sector teams need to be strong.

Although the education sections of PRS might be stronger than those of other sectors, a review by USAID of PRS for nine African countries found features in the educational sector very similar to those reported by IIEP. A relatively narrow view of education tended to predominate, so that the plans could not be termed truly sector-wide. On the other hand, it is also true that rigorous attention to primary education by a strong ministry, as in the Gambia, does feed into other education sub-sectors, since both quantity and quality at the primary level depend at least partially on the quantity and quality of the secondary and tertiary sub-sectors.

One of the gaps in PRS and in the education sectors was any proper analysis of the impact of HIV/AIDS. While the pandemic was certainly mentioned, there was no examination of how it is hollowing out human capital and not only in educational institutions. For example, in some countries the whole agricultural research community had disappeared, yet neither the plans for the education sector nor those for any other sector had any mention of how to replace such vital expertise.

Finally, if educators really are to be equipped to deal with economists on level terms, they need to recognize that the competencies to draw up a PRS are very complex, so that they need to ensure that they have themselves fully trained for the task.

### **The EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI)<sup>13</sup>**

Ruth Kagia  
World Bank

#### ***Genesis***

The Fast Track Initiative (FTI) owes its existence to two events at the Dakar Forum in 2000. The first was the resolution that by 2015 all children should complete a full course of primary schooling. The second was the pledge by the President of the World Bank, Jim Wolfensohn, that no country with a credible plan to achieve that goal would be unable to implement it for lack of resources. Pursuing that pledge, the Development Committee of the IMF and World Bank, for the first time ever, discussed education at its meeting on 11 September 2001 and at the next meeting in April 2002 endorsed the Bank's Action Plan and the proposal for a Fast Track Initiative. In a parallel strand of support, G8 had established a Task Force for EFA at its meeting in June 2001 to report back at its next meeting in June 2002, while the forum at Monterrey had agreed on a 15-year trust fund, the Millennium Challenge Account, to mobilize additional ODA of at least

13. Ruth Kagia, 'The EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI)' (slide presentation for the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

US\$5 billion by 2006. The Chair of G8 now serves as the Chair of FTI as well – currently, France holds it. It would be fair to declare that education had never had it so good, since so many of the world's leaders wanted to be 'education people' and education had never before been so close to the centre of the international agenda.

The need for FTI to stimulate and promote better and faster progress towards EFA was clear from the trend lines of improvement in primary completions rates (PCR) in the various regions of the world. The countries of the Middle East and North Africa had already attained PCR of nearly 80 per cent in 1990 but had stagnated since then. The countries of South Asia had attained PCR of around 65 per cent in 1990, but had managed to raise that by only a further 5 per cent by 2000. If that rate of progress remained constant, they would achieve only 75-80 per cent by 2015. In sub-Saharan Africa, the PCR was just under 50 per cent in 1990 and just over 50 per cent in 2000. That rate of progress would have meant a PCR of about 60 per cent in 2015. The rates for East Asia and Pacific, Europe and Central Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean were better, but would still fall short of universal completion. Special initiatives to accelerate the pace of progress – and simultaneously raise the quality of education – were obviously necessary.

### *Aims*

FTI is a global partnership to maintain the political momentum to achieve EFA and to mobilize additional international support for countries that design and implement policies and programmes that offer a strong probability of accelerating current rates of progress and achieving universal primary completion by 2015. The resources it will seek to harness include savings on the domestic front from increasing efficiency and regular incremental growth in budgets, as well as the more usual increases in external funding. The changes in pace demanded from countries and donors are dramatic: between them, the countries moving towards EFA need to find an extra US\$18 billion, while the donors should contribute a further US\$3 billion.

Simultaneously, FTI will work with the donor community to bring about a harmonization of policy and better co-ordination of practice in the interests of facilitating the tasks of the beneficiary governments. In this regard, it is worth reflecting on the fact that the United Republic of Tanzania alone has to submit some 2,500 reports annually to its several donors in all the sectors for which it accepts support.

### ***Indicators***

As the focus will be on primary completion and not simply on enrolment, FTI will promote the quality of education and the improvement of learning outcomes. It proposes to use international indicators – an indicative framework – to monitor the progress of each country in implementing these dimensions. Currently, the indications from countries that have been successful in achieving EFA include sufficient political commitment to mobilize domestic resources in support of the objective and to insist on sustained quality and efficiency in service delivery. Associated symptoms of such commitment are:

1. Government spending on education runs at about 20 per cent of the national budget.
2. The allocation for primary education is around 50 per cent of the total education budget.
3. Average teacher salaries are equivalent to around 3.5 times the GDP per capita.
4. Pupil-teacher ratios in primary schools do not exceed 40:1.
5. Spending on non-salary items for education runs at around 33 per cent of recurrent spending.
6. The average primary repetition rate does not exceed 10 per cent.

It goes almost without saying that a major function of the initiative will be identifying the lessons from the participating countries and sharing them with non-participants.

### ***Qualifications for participation***

The criteria agreed for inviting a country to participate in FTI are simply that it should have submitted a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and had it adopted by the donor community and that its education sector-wide plan should be in process of effective implementation. So far, 18 countries are participating in FTI proper, 11 of them in Africa, 4 in Central and South America, and one each in East Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Together, they account for about 17 million of the 123 million children out of school, i.e. around 14 per cent. Five other countries – three in South Asia, two in Africa – are in what is termed the ‘analytical track’. Four of them have populations of well over 100 million people and together they account for some 50 million or 40 per cent of the children out of school. Ten of the 18 have already received additional international funding for their primary schools, while the remaining eight will be receiving similar support during the latter half of 2003.

### ***Progress***

Although FTI has been effectively operational for only a year, it is possible to discern some gains already. In the first place, FTI has united the donor community around a common agenda. Secondly, it has sharpened the focus on financing issues and has attracted an additional US\$300 million in direct support of EFA, as well as commitments of further increases in donor funding. Third, it has succeeded in securing agreement on and in establishing bases for benchmarking progress in terms of policies, funding trends and practices and outcomes. Fourth, it has stimulated some countries – e.g. Mozambique, Nicaragua – to adopt policy reforms and enabled others to consolidate what they had already undertaken – e.g. Burkina Faso and Niger. Finally, it has catalyzed some changes in the behaviour of some donors, for example in considering support for recurrent expenditures and in calibrating support in reference to unit costs.



### ***Risks***

On the less positive side, despite the efforts of FTI, not to mention the efforts of other more established agencies, there are signs that the international focus on EFA is waning. Indeed, the overall international response in terms of contributing funds could be deemed disappointing. If this is allowed to continue, there will be a risk of losing momentum. That loss would in turn jeopardize the feasibility of sustaining long-term support for the substantial recurrent expenditures involved in primary education.

On another dimension, FTI plans seem to be more aligned with the PRSP with their rather narrower educational aims, than with EFA that has more ambitious targets for education.

Finally, conceptual differences linger about the most appropriate architecture for the financing, whether the focus of FTI should be global or remain on individual countries and on the pace of expanding participation in the initiative.

### ***Overall***

None of these less positive factors is either immediately threatening or insurmountable. Good early outcomes from the participating countries could help reverse them.

General discussion  
of the Fast Track Initiative  
(FTI)

FTI was introduced in a rush. Originally, it envisaged working with only five countries. But the pressures from many more countries to participate and to make haste in implementing it were almost overwhelming. It appeared then that here was a moment in history to seize, a tide of opportunity, which had to be taken at its flood, as Shakespeare might have advised. There were indeed fears that the contract of FTI had been entered with no capacity

to seize the tide, that the contract would be twisted and exaggerated into promises beyond the contract and that the increases in the numbers of participating countries would actually compromise its fulfilment. On the other side, the chair of the United Nations Secretary General's task force for MDG, Jeffrey Sachs, argued that the initiative was too timid. In the event, all the donor governments signed off on it in the World Bank's Development Committee and at Monterrey.

However, there were four gaps. First, FTI is not the complete EFA. As the slide presentation suggested and three months of work with Nigeria on EFA made clear, FTI covers only some of EFA goals: it is, as it were, only a cutting edge in clearing the bush. Second, the focus on real resources was vital for action: the challenge was how to unlock them and make them available to the participating countries. Third was the issue of transforming the resources into the outcomes that everybody wanted: this had to be worked out country by country. Finally, was the question of the indicators to monitor effectiveness: Would one indicator each for quality, efficiency and economic returns indicators suffice, or could more be required without making them an impossible Christmas list? Was the interest of the World Bank risking too economic a slant? Would the data actually be obtainable? Whatever the indicators that were finally agreed, they could be only symptomatic pointers, but they would at any rate provide handles for deeper investigations.

Nobody would claim that nothing had happened before FTI, but it has helped to inject a new urgency and credibility into the field, to enhance political engagement, and to strengthen the arms of educators in the competition for resources and support. Indeed, the chief service of FTI so far is that it has achieved much political attention and given a sense of real action. In Holland, for instance, FTI did strengthen the position of education in the ODA portfolio, so that, even with the entry of a new government and despite heavy weather from other departments, the commitment to allocating 15 per cent of the aid budget to education remained firm. Along with MDG, FTI makes a fine

instrument to galvanize development efforts. For that and also in itself, FTI is difficult to criticize.

Nevertheless, clarification is necessary. For instance, the IIEP review of PRSP noted the concern to improve SWAp: if FTI also intends to contribute to PRSP and SWAp, how precisely does it do so without in some sense muddying the waters? Dakar required countries to examine their policies in relation to the EFA goals. Action within FTI should do the same, so that the gaps between FTI's aims and the broader aspirations of the EFA goals can be identified and addressed, as the work in Nigeria apparently has done. For instance, OSI had earlier reported to the meeting that some of the countries in southern and eastern Europe were showing signs of a regression towards treating females inequitably, yet gender inequity did not appear among FTI's criteria for either participation or performance. Also, was it clear that the initiative would provide technical assistance to countries to assemble the data and provide the documentation necessary for assessing their situation against the criteria, as the World Bank had done out of its own budget in some cases?

Some negative reaction arose also from the uncertainty whether FTI intended only to accelerate the progress of countries that already had good policies in place and were implementing them well; or whether it proposed a fresh plan or offered only an indicative framework. For FTI and its emphasis on acceleration, the choice was clear: if it did not start with countries that already had their feet on the right ladder, there could be no confidence that additional help would be of use. Further, the indicative framework would serve to help prevent reversals of direction. However, many countries were not clear whether the two criteria were in fact prerequisites for participation or objectives to be sought with the support of FTI.

For its part, DfID already had both bad and good experiences with FTI. On the one hand, it felt that the initiative had been far too rushed, too driven by external rather than domestic interests, too prone to making governments

jump through hoops for money that did not actually exist. On the other hand, in Nigeria and Yemen, the initiative had engendered good partnerships and had served to strengthen effective co-ordination. Further, in assessing needs, the Gambia, for example, had initially estimated a three-fold increase in its normal budget, which was a bit wild. However, FTI assessment process linked in with the PRSP to produce a better thought-out approach. Yet partnership and assessing needs are long term, evolving processes, which are not fully reconciled with the immediacy of FTI.

A partnership builds its strengths on the strengths of each of the partners. The World Bank's strength showed in the decision of its Development Committee in September 2001 and in the action plan it proposed in 2002. It identified the four gaps and focused the financing. But it failed to focus on the policies of the partners, their existing capacities and their absorptive capacity. Where good capacity exists, it allows a country to absorb additional resources of up to 30 per cent of its GDP, whereas a country with really poor capacity can normally manage to absorb usefully only 6 per cent of its GDP. The list of 18 participant countries raises the question whether the World Bank as a partner in FTI adequately took into account the absorptive capacities of the participating countries.

FTI aims to help co-ordinate the donors. In the case of the Netherlands, the harmonization of implementation modalities and the fact that sustainability is being discussed in terms of the recurrent costs of education systems have been helpful, and may even serve as an example for other donors. But the business of harmonization is incomplete. For instance, FTI currently plans in cycles limited to three years, whereas DANIDA plans on a five-year cycle within a frame of up to 15 years of assured support.

FTI sponsors launched it without having clearly fixed the rules of the game, so that imperfections of understanding and implementation were inevitable. Yet the latest discussions point to general happiness about its

evolution. The focus on individual countries is right, but the financial challenge, taken with the requirements of meeting MDG, remains huge, demanding something like a sevenfold increase in the allocations for education. If the educational campaign against HIV/AIDS enters the picture, the increase and resultant challenge are of course even greater. So far FTI has secured nowhere near the amount of money needed, but there is movement and the sponsors remain optimistic.

There is no doubt that FTI will continue, if only because some instrument is needed to sharpen the processes supporting the movement towards EFA. While it is the case that the G8 meeting in June 2003 dropped education from its agenda, it is also the case that the IMF/World Bank Development Committee will be reviving the discussion in September. At the technical level all is ready. What is needed is more aggressive advocacy for FTI on the political side.



## *Theme 5*

### Following up on Dakar

#### **Action by UNESCO**

Abbimanyu Singh  
UNESCO

At Dakar, UNESCO accepted the responsibility to take the lead in efforts to ensure the achievement of the six unanimously agreed goals. The role requires UNESCO to mobilize support for the efforts, to co-ordinate them and to maintain their momentum. The first necessity is to monitor progress towards the goals. UNESCO does this annually in every participating country and in an international perspective. The UNESCO Institute of Statistics has set up a special EFA observatory to collect the statistics and, equally important, to work with countries to improve their quality and comprehensiveness. In addition, UNESCO has established a special 'Dakar Follow-up Unit' at its Headquarters in Paris to act as a secretariat to the High Level Group and its Working Group. The function of the High Level Group (HLG) is to mobilize partners and resources, while the Working Group serves to assist HLG through bringing together appropriate international expertise on the range of issues that affect EFA. In addition, a dozen or so 'flagships' have been established with a number of partners to take the lead on important themes. For example, FAO leads the flagship on 'Education for rural people'.

HLG has 35 members from four constituencies, who meet annually in November. The first constituency comprises education ministers from countries aiming for EFA: they take up 18 seats. Ministers from the second constituency, OECD/DAC, take up a further six. The third constituency comprises six United Nations agencies with a substantial stake in education, while the fourth constituency, the international NGOs, take up the remaining seats. Clearly, HLG needs to align its observations, advice and requests with the findings of

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the annual monitoring. It next meets in Delhi in November 2003 and will issue a joint communiqué which will include requests addressed to countries that have signed up as partners for EFA.

The Working Group is due to meet in July 2003 in Paris. One of its tasks is to examine the functioning of the EFA flagships, clarify their roles more precisely and suggest how they may be reinforced.

The six Dakar goals are served by the overall main thrust of UNESCO's work. The policy division is engaged with the 'conflict' countries, the evolution of EFA plans, the campaign against HIV/AIDS. During 2004-2005, UNESCO will be fine tuning a closer alignment of its divisions' work with the development of EFA, as well as bringing about better co-ordination and convergence between itself and its six affiliated institutes. Related to this point is UNESCO's determination to ensure that its leadership of the new Literacy Decade is closely linked with its leadership in EFA.

To ensure even better monitoring, UNESCO will reinforce the monitoring unit with the services of a number of associate experts from a range of countries.

The *EFA Global Monitoring Report*, enabled by funding from DfID, was done independently and has been well received. The next such report will be thematic, focusing on 'gender and education'. In advocacy, the EFA Week held around the anniversary of the Dakar Forum proved very successful in mobilizing global attention, for it organized a 'world lesson' in which more than 1.5 million people participated. At the same time, partnerships with NGOs are increasing, with some 600 members now participating in collective consultations and regional groupings and, with the support of the World Bank, building their capacity to engage with governments.



## **EFA Global Monitoring Report<sup>14</sup>**

Steve Packer  
UNESCO  
EFA Monitoring Unit

The Dakar Forum recognized that serious efforts to achieve EFA really would require international monitoring, for beyond simply observing progress, it would be able to detect which policies seemed to be working most effectively and efficiently, illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of both national and international practices, and alert the education community to emerging challenges. An additional benefit might be that the monitoring and its outputs could well turn out to be a tool for improving partnerships between governments and a range of other agencies. With the support of DfID, Sida and the Government of the Netherlands, UNESCO set up an independent team in Paris to do the monitoring. The team, currently with 12 staff, works with the help of UIS and a range of other institutions and agencies to produce the Global Monitoring Report. They also collaborate on improving the methodologies of observation and measurement, so as to provide UNESCO's member governments with more reliable and better quality information. For these purposes, the Monitoring Unit is commissioning work globally to supplement the usual statistics: studies of policies, practices, approaches to promoting inclusion, mitigating disadvantage and poverty are afoot not only in developing countries, but also in Eastern Europe, France, the Nordic countries and the United Kingdom. To ensure proper coverage, balance and relevance, the Editorial Committee for the report is drawn from a range of stakeholders. This presentation summarizes the current state of play in EFA.

The first point to note is that the international goals do seem to be influencing national aims and policies. Several examples follow: Viet Nam has set a goal to increase NER in primary school to 97 per cent by 2005 and to 99 per cent by 2010; Rwanda aims to raise the same ratio from 73 per cent

14. Steve Packer, 'EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002: Is the world on track?' (slide presentation at the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

in 2001 to 80 per cent in 2005 and to 90 per cent in 2010; Bhutan aims to raise the literacy rate from 54 to 80 per cent by 2007; India aims to ensure that all children aged 6 to 14 receive eight years of quality education by 2010; and Burkina Faso aims to increase the proportion of Grade 1 pupils who reach the sixth year of primary from 60 to 75 per cent by 2010; while in the United States the 'No Child Left Behind' Act requires the 50 states of the union to develop plans with annual measurable objectives that will ensure that all teachers teaching in core academic subjects are highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. More indirectly, DfID's Public Service Agreement with the British government undertakes to help affected partner governments to increase their average primary enrolment ratios from 58 to 72 per cent and, in 16 sub-Saharan countries, to improve the ratio of girls to boys in primary schools from 89 to 96 per cent.

Thus, the evidence so far seems to confirm that international, time-bound quantitative goals do have major influence on subsequent action: e.g. the United Nations targets for decolonization, smallpox eradication and child immunization were all achieved by the target date or soon after. Despite the apparent lack of progress between Jomtien in 1990 and Dakar in 2000 then, this should moderate fears or cynicism that international conferences and declarations backed by follow-up programmes have little or no effect. Balancing this view is the observation that many national targets predict quite substantial percentage increases over short periods of time, without specifying the assumptions on which the forecasts depend.

Although measuring only the quantitative aspects of progress would not do justice to the EFA agenda, three of the Dakar goals are indeed quantifiable: UPE/UPC, Literacy and Gender Equality. Regarding these three – and disregarding the problems of measurement, e.g. What is meant by 'literacy' or quality or lifelong learning – 83 countries either have already achieved them or have a good chance of doing so by 2015. However, 43 countries are likely to miss one goal – they include Bangladesh, China, Egypt and Indonesia,

which between them account for more than a third of the world's population. Further, 28 countries are at serious risk of not achieving any of the three goals: they include India, Pakistan and many sub-Saharan African countries that between them account for a further 28 per cent of the world's population.

These observations actually point to the need for a more nuanced and critical approach to the meaning of goal achievement, for the countries that appear to perform least well on the indicators are generally the least developed countries, where economic growth is severely constrained. They point to the importance of drawing lessons about why or why not goals are achieved, and what shape future action should take. They should help countries and the international community assess whether or not the goals might be achievable in particular countries and under what conditions. They could also point to ways of coping with unforeseeable domestic and external changes that can affect progress towards a particular goal. From another angle, if the observations detected less than best use of resources, they could warn of the dangers of a backlash in donor countries in the form of rapidly waning support for EFA.

So far, the monitoring has revealed a need to work with several degrees and dimensions of achievement and to plan for partial success, which means planning also for partial failure. This requires paying particular attention to progress in countries starting from low levels of achievement.

The monitoring has shown that the costs of achieving UPE and eliminating gender disparities have been underestimated. Revisions estimate that external assistance must increase fivefold to reach just the UPE and gender goals alone. However, the Monterrey consensus and FTI have generated new pledges for increased ODA and visible new effort in favour of UPE. Here of course appears the need to monitor the performances of donors in living up to their declared commitments to EFA, as well as the performances of agencies, national and international, which have undertaken to work on the ground in support of EFA.

The first EFA goal is the elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005. To keep attention focused on this, the Global Monitoring Report for 2003-2004 will take 'Gender and education' as its theme. Subsequent reports will take up 'Quality in education' (2005) and, linking with the United Nations Literacy Decade, 'Literacy' in 2006. Alongside these themes, tracking national policies and shifts in practice by the leading development agencies will remain central features of the report.

To be effective in informing and influencing education policy, the report will have to build up its visibility at regional and particularly national levels. UNESCO will encourage global and local launches through providing its field offices both with appropriate materials and with training in how to use them to best effect. The main report is of course bulky and runs to more than 300 pages. It should serve the purposes of the policy and technical personnel in ministries of education, donor agencies and academic institutions. A summary of fewer than 20 pages should serve to keep a much broader public abreast of the world's movement towards EFA. UNESCO encourages its translation into local languages, along with its use in seminars, conferences and networks of parliamentarians, schools of development studies, and activist organizations working in support of education.

### **Data for monitoring EFA<sup>15</sup>**

Denise Lievesley  
UNESCO  
Institute for Statistics

The most important issue about the data for monitoring EFA and MDG is their quality. The problem with defining quality is that, in regard to data for policy decisions and planning, it has at least twelve aspects that need to be satisfied: validity, reliability, relevance, potential for disaggregation, currency, punctuality, coherence across different sources, clarity about limitations, accessibility, comparability through adherence to internationally agreed standards, consistency over time and space, efficiency

15. Denise Lievesley, 'Improving the quality of data for monitoring EFA and MDG's' (paper prepared for the IWGE meeting, Tuusula, Finland, 23-25 June 2003).

in the use of resources. An international institution like UIS lacks control over all these aspects in all countries and is further constrained by the extreme weakness of the statistical systems in some countries. Yet the expectations of users are often unrealistically high, so that UIS needs to find a way of expressing the constraints honestly without being defensive. (It is also the case that many international agencies allocate insufficient attention and resources to producing good statistics or to developing statistical capabilities.)

Two factors compound the problem of quality. One is that the international community has sometimes selected indicators without sufficient regard to their measurability and with inadequate development of international standards. The other is that many of the dimensions of quality inherent conflict with each other. A particularly critical and circular tension arises between timeliness and other aspects. For UIS, this is important, as credibility is lost, if the data are so out of date that users seek other sources, or attempt to collect them from the countries themselves, thus increasing the burden on already weak statistical services and possibly pushing down whatever priority is given to completing the UIS questionnaire. On the issue of timeliness, UIS has managed to reduce the time between collection and dissemination from over 30 months in 1998 to just 15 months in 2001. (In terms of coverage, 166 countries out of the 205 approached (81 per cent) responded to the 2000/2001 questionnaire.)

Another source of tension is that there is an inherent conflict between national ownership of data and the integrity of international data. International agencies must protect their right to question the integrity of any data received, even though some countries claim the right of veto over any data not approved by their authorities. A way to resolve this is the principle of 'no surprises': national statisticians are given the opportunity to comment on changes made to data published internationally.

Five principles should underpin the collection of international data:

1. Duplication of data collection to be avoided through collaboration between agencies.

2. Data must reflect national needs – national statistical priorities should not be distorted by international demands.
3. International agencies should be temperate in their demands for data.
4. A balance has to be agreed between economy to avoid overloading weak systems and sufficiency to avoid over-interpreting single indicators.
5. Wherever possible, the international database should utilise existing sources of data rather than require new data collection.

UIS is working in a number of ways with national statisticians to improve the quality of data. In addition, it works with the OECD on the World Education Indicators project, which borrows many successful ideas from the OECD networks of educational statisticians, but is driven by the needs of the participating countries. Issues of 'data quality assurance', 'data integrity' and a culture to foster and protect it, advocacy for sound statistics, and promoting the use of data also need sustained attention and work.

The international community is prone to recommending new indicators. But these cannot and should not be implemented without proper methodological development and testing. However, there are areas where new indicators are necessary. They include 'student assessment', 'primary school completion', 'primary school graduation' and 'degrees of literacy'. Along with the new indicators, additional sources of data are being identified. The main source is, of course, the core of administrative statistics that any education system needs. New national and international sample-based assessments help monitor quality, equity and effectiveness. Household surveys similarly provide a different perspective that complements rather than replaces existing administrative systems.

These additional possibilities underline the importance of integrating data collection and statistical capacity building, even though it is neither a cheap option nor a fast solution. At the end of 1999, the World Bank, IMF, OECD and United Nations launched an initiative, 'Partnerships in statistics for

development for the 21st century' (PARIS21). At the launch, Clare Short warned:

“Five years from now we could see the international community locked into a collaborative, output driven system that measures progress against our 21 agreed indicators year on year, country by country. Or, if we lack the statistics we need, the whole credibility of the 2015 strategy will crumble. We can then go back to all the old rhetoric and mutual blame of development failure and many of the poorest countries could become permanently marginalized from the massive wealth production that globalization is bringing.”

General discussion  
of monitoring and statistics

The proposal to focus the Global Monitoring Report on a single theme raised the question of how to balance it against the needs for an overall review of all the themes involved in the six goals of EFA. The EFA Monitoring Unit was still discussing this issue, but the current plan was to devote four chapters to one major theme and a further two to the ongoing review, one dealing with advances in policy and practice, the other assessing international commitment and support. On the latter point, the unit had encountered the problem of inconsistency between the reports from OECD/DAC and those from the parliaments of the donor countries.

The unit aims to cover progress towards all six Dakar goals and towards covering the four gaps identified in the discussion of FTI. However, the 2002 report was able to address only three goals and one gap, namely the financial. The unit faced a real problem in accessing databases of reliable data on national plans and outcomes. Most countries needed to upgrade their databases. One of the problems was that countries tended not to collect data that UIS had not specifically requested. For instance, measures of the effective demand for education can only be local, so that planning to meet it should be decentralized, along with actually monitoring it. But there are practical problems in devising

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and supporting national monitoring systems, when the monitoring is decentralized.

Currently, international demands for information are driving national practice, and there is excessive reliance on external monitoring: this should be reversed. SWAp and PRSP should be building national capabilities to monitor through decentralized structures. It is a fact that most countries have few analytical skills available to produce the quality of statistics to generate the information required for planning. Developing these skills is of course a long-term process. While these structures and processes are being developed, international demands might be met in part by studies of samples rather than censuses.

In response to a question about the relationship between the EFA Working Group and FTI secretariat, assurance was given that good relationships generate a good deal of communication and mutual sharing of information and ideas.

The EFA Monitoring Unit gathers information only from countries that have signed on to EFA. For example, it has hardly any data from Turkmenistan. UIS does try to collect data from all countries, whether or not they are part of the EFA movement. Although it actually pushes each country for a response, there are some countries that do choose to abstain. In such cases, UIS is sometimes able to get help from other United Nations agencies, like UNICEF.



## Evaluation and future programme

The meeting briefly evaluated its discussions and considered its future programme.

### **Evaluation**

1. IWGE should consider replacing the 'show and tell' session with the circulation of single sheet summaries from each participating institution. This would release further time for exchanges on substantive issues.
2. The current programme was interesting, useful and helpful. More group work could have increased its value.
3. Breaking into groups for the discussion of the SWAp experiences in Cambodia and the United Republic of Tanzania was a good idea, much enhanced by not having to be curtailed by the need to report back to a plenary meeting. The benefits should be noted for future meetings.
4. In view of the large volume of material for study, participants might consider providing only lists of key strategy or research papers that their agencies had published, rather than full copies.

### **Future programme**

#### *Date*

The custom of holding meetings of IWGE approximately every 18 months should be continued. That would indicate November/December 2004 for the next meeting.

#### *Venue*

The World Bank's offer to host it in Washington, DC was gratefully accepted.

### ***Co-ordinating dates***

As to the specific dates, CIDA requested that IWGE try to co-ordinate its schedule with other meetings so as to avoid clashes with other important meetings and possibly to help reduce travel costs. (It was understood of course that clashes could always occur between meetings that fixed their dates well ahead and those that had to be convened in haste.) As the 2004 meeting was to be in Washington, the possibility could be investigated of co-ordinating it either with the October meeting of the IMF/World Bank Development Committee, or back-to-back with the EFA High Level Group, which would be meeting in Brazil in November.

### ***Possible themes for discussion***

Participants expressed a desire to balance continuity in the issues reviewed from meeting to meeting with the introduction of fresh or emerging issues. The Planning Committee was requested to bear that balance in mind as it considered the following list of possible topics for the next meeting to discuss:

1. Life skills – what exactly are they?
2. Linkage of education with other MDG.
3. The interrelated issues of governance/corruption/decentralized decision-making.
4. Capacity enhancement for EFA.
5. Quality in education.
6. Focus on statistics and profiling.
7. Modalities of international assistance: a further review of the evolution of SWAp, PRSP, FTI, harmonization of donor policies and practices.
8. Progress on gender and gender issues within SWAp.
9. Financing modalities related to capacities of countries.

**IWGE Planning Committee  
Planning Meeting, 25 June 2003**

Summary record of  
the Planning Committee's  
Meeting, 25 June 2003

The Planning Committee endorsed the proposal to hold the next meeting in Washington, DC, United States during the period October/November 2004, with the precise dates to be determined in the light of the schedules of other important international meetings.

After examining the suggestions made during the closing plenary session, the Committee considered that priority should be given to how current concerns with the issues of governance could support the drive for EFA. The aspects of governance that could affect progress towards the six Dakar goals are decentralization, ethics, management, information systems and their transparency, civil society, community control, corruption, building and maintaining capacity. Country cases in the area would of course be needed to ground the discussions in realities.

The time for discussing the cases and issues in plenary and groups should be generous to enable wide participation and deep probing. The clearly well received device of unrecorded group discussions should be used again.

The 2004 meeting should also continue monitor experiences and developments with PRSP, SWAp, HIPC, data collection, gender equity and, in the light of the UNESCO General Conference and the ADEA Biennale, improving the quality of education, particularly in primary schools and for poor and rural populations.

In January 2004, the Secretariat will circulate to members of the Planning Committee a brief paper for their decision on the content and emphasis of the 2004 programme. Members will also be requested to relate their advice to

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work their organizations are currently doing that could serve to illuminate the issues.

(N.B. As the venue for the Planning Committee's meeting was very noisy, the rapporteur apologizes, if his record of the decisions is incomplete. However, he did note that all the agencies that help finance IWGE were present.)

## *Appendix 1*

### List of participants

#### **Multilateral agencies and institutions**

##### **Agence intergouvernementale de la francophonie**

Ms Annick D'ALMEIDA

Responsable du programme 'Éducation de base'

##### **Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)**

Mr Mamadou NDOYE

Executive Secretary

##### **Commonwealth Secretariat**

Ms Nancy SPENCE

Director, Social Transformation Programme Division

##### **International Institute for Educational Planning**

Mr Gudmund HERNES

Director

Ms Françoise CAILLODS

Deputy Director

Mr Christopher TALBOT

Programme Specialist

Mr Gabriel CARRON

IWGE consultant

Mr John OXENHAM

IWGE Consultant

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**UNESCO**

Mr Abhimanyu SINGH  
Lead Manager, Dakar Follow-up, Education Sector

Ms Koto KANNO  
Programme Specialist/Gender Focal Point, Education Sector

**EFA Monitoring Report**

Mr Steve PACKER  
Deputy Director

**World Bank (IBRD)**

Ms Ruth KAGIA  
Director of Education

Mr Peter BUCKLAND  
Senior Education Specialist

**Bilateral agencies and foundations**

**Aga Khan Foundation**

Mr Jeremy GREENLAND  
Director of Education Programmes

Ms Marilyn BLAESER  
Senior Programme Officer, Education

**Open Society Institution (Soros Foundation)**

Ms Jana HUTTOVA  
Director, Education Support Program (EPS)

**Belgium**

Mr Edwin BOURGEOIS  
Education strategies Unit, Directorate General for International Cooperation  
(DGIS)

**Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)**

Ms Maysa JALBOUT  
Senior Advisor – Education

**Denmark**

Mr Knud MORTENSEN  
Technical Adviser, Education  
Department of International Development Co-operation (DANIDA)

**Finland**

Mr Heikki KOKKALA  
Education Adviser  
Department for International Development Co-operation (DIDC), Ministry  
for Foreign Affairs

**France**

Mr Jean-Claude BALMES  
Responsable de la division Éducation et Formation professionnelle  
Agence française de développement

**Germany**

Mr Stefan LOCK  
Programme Officer for Education,  
German Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ)

Ms Ingrid JUNG  
Head Education Division, Capacity Building International (InWEnt)

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Mr Hubert HARTMANN  
Basic Education Specialist  
(German) Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ)

**Ireland**

Ms Maire MATTHEWS  
Senior Development Specialist – Education  
Development Co-operation Ireland, Department of Foreign Affairs

Ms Anne O'KEEFFE  
Assistant Desk Officer for Emergency/Recovery Aid, Department of Foreign  
Affairs

**Italy**

Ms Teresa SAVANELLA  
General Directorate for Development Cooperation (DGCS), Ministry of Foreign  
Affairs

**Japan**

Ms Yumiko YOKOZEKI  
Senior Adviser (Education), Institute for International Co-operation  
Japan International Co-operation Agency

Ms Emi YAMAMOTO  
Associate Expert on Gender, Global Issues division, Planning and Evaluation  
Department  
Japan International Co-operation Agency

**Netherlands**

Ms Marjan KROON  
Basic Education Expert, Department for Culture and Education, Ministry of  
Foreign Affairs



**Norway**

Ms Sissel VOLAN

Head, Unit of Education, Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD)

**Portugal**

Ms Maria Angelica RIBEIRO

Co-ordinator

Gabinete de Assuntos Europeus e Relações Internacionais, Ministry of Education

**Sweden**

Ms Berit RYLANDER

Senior Programme Officer, Department for Democracy and Social Development

Swedish International Development Agency

**United Kingdom**

Mr Peter FELL

Education Specialist, The British Council

Ms Zahra JABEEN

Northern Areas Education Project, The British Council, Pakistan

Ms Adaeze IGBOEMEKA

Assistant Education adviser, Department for International Development (DfID)

Mr Digby SWIFT

Department for International Development (DfID)

**United States of America**

Mr Gregory LOOS

Head, Basic Education Division, U.S. Agency for International Development

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Ms Julie Hanson SWANSON  
Education Program Specialist, Office of Women in Development  
U.S. Agency for International Development

Mr Kurt MOSES  
Vice President and Director, Academy for Educational Development (AED)

**Other invitees**

Ms Denise LIEVESLEY  
Director, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Canada

**Appendix 2**  
**Programme – IWGE, Finland, June 2003**

<b>Monday, 23 June</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>	
09.00-09.15	Word of welcome by G. Hernes (IIEP) Official opening by P. Majanenn (Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland)	
09.15-10.30	<b>Theme 1:</b> Recent trends in education aid policies and practices Introduction by G. Hernes – Show and tell (agencies' representatives)	C. Wright
10.30-11.00	<i>Break</i>	
11.00-12.30	– Show and tell (cont'd)	
12.30-14.00	<i>Lunch</i>	
14.00-15.30	<b>Theme 2:</b> Increasing girls' participation in education: How to make it happen Introductory remarks by F. Caillods (IIEP) (a) An international view – Panel composed of C. Wright (UNICEF) K. Kanno (UNESCO), J. Huttova (Open Society Foundation) – General discussion	H. Kokkala
15.30-16.00	<i>Break</i>	
16.00-17.45	(b) Country experiences – Panel composed of D. Swift (DfID), Y. Yokozeki (JICA), Z. Jaben (British Council), J. Greenland/M. Blaeser (Aga Khan Foundation) – General discussion	G. Loos

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18.00	Dinner hosted by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Director-General Juhani Toivonen	
<b>Tuesday, 24 June</b>		
09.00-10.30	<b>Theme 3:</b> Rebuilding and developing education in situations of emergency – Panel composed of C. Talbot (IIEP), P. Aguilar (UNICEF), P. Buckland (World Bank)	G. Hernes
10.30-11.00	<i>Break</i>	
11.00-12.30	– General discussion	
12.30-14.00	<i>Lunch</i>	
14.00-15.00	<b>Theme 4:</b> Modalities of development co-operation (a) Sector-wide approaches Panel composed of B. Rylander (Sida), G. Carron (IIEP)	D. Swift
15.00-16.00	– Group discussion	B. Rylander/ J.C. Balmes
16.00-16.30	<i>Break</i>	
16.30-17.30	(b) Poverty reduction strategy programmes R. Kagia – Presentation by F. Caillods (IIEP) – General discussion	
18.00	Presentation on education development in Finland Reception hosted by Ministry of Education and National Board of Education	
<b>Wednesday, 25 June</b>		
09.00-10.30	(c) Fast-track Initiative J. Greenland – Presentation by R. Kagia (World Bank) – General discussion	
10.30-11.00	<i>Break</i>	

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11.00-12.00	<b>Theme 5:</b> Information session on Dakar follow-up – Introductory statement by A. Singh (UNESCO) – Presentations by S. Packer (EFA monitoring report ), D. Lievesley (UIS)	A. Singh
12.00-13.00	Miscellaneous Proposal for further action	F. Caillods
13.00	<i>Lunch</i>	

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*Dato'Asiah bt. Abu Samah* (Malaysia)  
Director, Lang Education, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Designated Members:

*Carlos Fortín*  
Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Geneva, Switzerland.

*Thelma Kay*  
Chief, Emerging Social Issues, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Bangkok, Thailand

*Jean Louis Sarbib*  
Senior Vice-President, World Bank, Washington DC, USA.

*Ester Zulberti*  
Chief, Extension, Education and Communication for Development (SDRE), Food Agriculture Organization (FAO), Rome, Italy.

Elected Members:

*José Joaquín Brunner* (Chile)  
Director, Education Programme, Fundación Chile, Santiago, Chile.

*Klaus Hüfner* (Germany)  
Professor, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany.

*Zeineb Faïza Kefi* (Tunisia)  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Tunisia to France and Permanent Delegate of Tunisia to UNESCO.

*Philippe Mehaut* (France)  
Deputy Director, Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications (Céreq), Marseille, France.

*Teboho Moja* (South Africa)  
Professor of Higher Education, New York University, New York, USA.

*Teiichi Sato* (Japan)  
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Professor, University of Tampere, Tampere, Finland.

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