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WANTED! TEACHERS

Thirty million teachers are needed to achieve Education for All by 2015. Faced with an unprecedented teacher shortage, some countries are now turning to low-paid, poorly trained teachers. Focus, a four-page dossier, looks at the trade-off between quantity and quality.

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The success or failure in meeting the international target of Education for All by 2015 will depend largely on the action of governments to improve the quantity and quality of the teaching force.

But, as the dossier in this issue points out, the shortage of teachers in both North and South is reaching unprecedented levels. This can be explained by an increasingly challenging and poorly-paid profession which no longer attracts the most talented. While education experts agree that teachers are key to ensuring good quality education, their status, working conditions, career perspectives and professional development have not ceased to plummet.

It is estimated that more than 30 million new teachers will be needed to achieve the goal of Education for All by 2015. In a drive to accelerate recruitment while limiting public spending, some countries are having to recourse to low-paid, poorly trained 'voluntary' teachers. Started in the 1980s in the context of structural adjustment policies, the practice has taken root in many countries.

Let us not delude ourselves. Without qualified, competent, motivated and performing teachers, Education for All will not be achieved. Quality must not become the hostage of quantity.

Yet, the guiding principles exist. The 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers sets out standards on numerous issues relating to professional, social, ethical and material concerns of teachers. Although it is almost forty years old, this document is as valid today as it was then.

More recently, the Framework for Action adopted by over 160 countries at the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 indicates the three ingredients of quality education: well-trained teachers, a curriculum that builds upon the knowledge and experience of teachers and learners, and participatory governance and management.

Aïcha Bah Diallo

Acting Assistant Director-General for Education

Overcoming **poverty** in remote zones

A project in Cambodia provides skills training to children and youth

At dawn, 15-year-old Pring Hout used to set up shop with her mother on a dusty Phnom Penh roadside. Her working day did not end before 9.00 p.m. Pring and her siblings sold petrol and sugar cane juice. They did this seven days a week, all year round.

Nearly three decades of war has turned Cambodia into one of the world's poorest countries. There are over 1,000 street children in Phnom Penh alone. Many of these children and youths engage in begging, scavenging, shoe shining and other small jobs. In all, some 700,000 5- to 17-year-old Cambodians are estimated to be working. Nearly three-quarters of them have dropped out of school or never attended in the first place.

Since August 2002, an umbrella project under the United Nations Human Security Fund has been addressing the learning needs of these children and youth. Four NGOs, working with Cambodia's Non-formal Education Department, provide courses in literacy and numeracy and a host of other skills such as hairdressing, basket making, chicken raising and motorcycle repairs. HIV/AIDS prevention education and cultural activities are also provided.

From skills to jobs

Responsibility for the different activities is shared out among the NGOs, based on their expertise and on the needs of the communities they work in. UNESCO Phnom Penh is coordinating these efforts.

Along with the learning activities, a number of residential centres for disadvantaged were also opened in three provinces and community learning centres have sprung up in poor areas of Phnom Penh.

Pring joined the project in February 2003. "I have finished the sewing and crochet course and am now working in a garment factory," she says. She landed the job just before completing the six months training.

Mith Samlanh/Friends, one of the partner NGOs, is running a training centre for adolescents that offers a dozen different skills. Specially developed learning materials in modules allow the students to study at their own pace. With the help of the NGO, some of

he says. "I have changed my habits and stopped drugs."

Two NGOs offer micro-credit, lending small amounts of money to start a business. The loans can be used for anything from buying pigs to tools and spare parts for mechanical repairs.

Community involvement

"Local communities are participating too in the project and this is positive for their empowerment," says Sue Fox, who oversees the project at UNESCO Phnom Penh. She carries out day-to-day co-ordination, management, monitoring and supervision of staff. She explains that emphasis is on reintegrating the younger children into the formal school system. For the older ones it's about providing them with skills.

This \$600,000 three-year project reaches out to learners in Phnom Penh and four provinces. In some provinces, roads are few and far between and in the rainy season access to villages is close to impossible. Nevertheless, over 5,000 children and youths have benefited from the project and more than 300 children of school-going age have been reintegrated into the formal education system.



Some young people learn useful skills

them have opened a shop, Friends 'N' Stuff, and a part of the revenue is ploughed back into the centre.

Srey Pheaktra, 16, dropped out of primary school and lived on the street, abusing drugs and stealing. Now he attends the Punleu Komar Kampuchea Organization Centre where he learns to read and write and repair motorcycles. "This gives me a good feeling,"

This means that at eight months before the project ends, the objectives have already been reached. Over 2,000 more people have benefited than was originally planned. But what happens now? "Without funding some learning activities are sustainable but, unfortunately, others, such as the residential centres, are not," says Fox.

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Saving lives, saving minds

New minimum standards for education in emergencies aim at giving 50 million children a chance to learn

As wars multiply around the globe, involving civilians to unprecedented degrees, UNESCO estimates that more than half of the 104 million children out of school live in countries touched by conflict. More than 27 million children in those countries do not have access to education. In Mozambique, some 45 per cent of primary schools were destroyed during the civil war; in Rwanda, over two-thirds of teachers either fled or were killed. The majority of refugee children who do receive education are enrolled at primary level, with only 6 per cent getting secondary schooling.

Conflict is a major obstacle to achieving Education for All. In recent years, initiatives to provide education in emergencies have proliferated. The issue was brought centre stage in 1996, following former First Lady of Mozambique Graça Machel's landmark report to the UN, recommending that education "be established as a priority component of all humanitarian assistance."

"Rebuilding education has to happen immediately. You can't wait for the trains to be running. Minds have to be saved as well as bodies," says Beverly Roberts, Coordinator of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). The 900-member network, supported by UNESCO, shares data and best practices, and works to promote education of good quality.

Stability and protection

Examples of countries where education in emergencies is at work include northern Uganda, where war has displaced over a million people and directly targets children. In eighteen years, more than 25,000 of them have been turned into soldiers and sex slaves. Each night, some 50,000 children and adolescents commute to bigger, safer towns to sleep. In the lamp-lit passageway of one "night displacement" camp, a group of young girls, holding exercise books, is preparing for school exams. "I'd rather sleep at home, but I am scared of soldiers," says one of them.



Teaching in a war-torn school in Afghanistan

In Basrah, southern Iraq, following the fall of the Saddam regime, Save the Children USA has been supporting learning programmes for 50,000 children. Activities include teacher training, classroom rebuilding, as well as classes in reading and writing, sports, music and landmine safety. In places like Kosovo, East Timor, Lebanon, Rwanda, South Africa and Sierra Leone, education has helped provide protection, structure, stability, healing and hope to impressive numbers of children and young people.

Minimum standards

What kind of education works in such difficult circumstances? New minimum standards for education in emergencies were launched last December at the Second Global Consultation on Education in Emergencies and Early Recovery (Capetown, South Africa). The standards are the result of consultations among over 2,250 people from more than 50 countries. "They will help us to improve the quality of the education we offer the children and young people we serve," says Christopher Talbot, Chair of INEE's Working Group for Minimum Standards in Education.

"They are a basic but useful tool," adds Roberts. "They show what good quality education in emergencies can look like, and make it possible to identify what isn't working. They represent, in fact, the very first attempt to have any global standards for education at all."

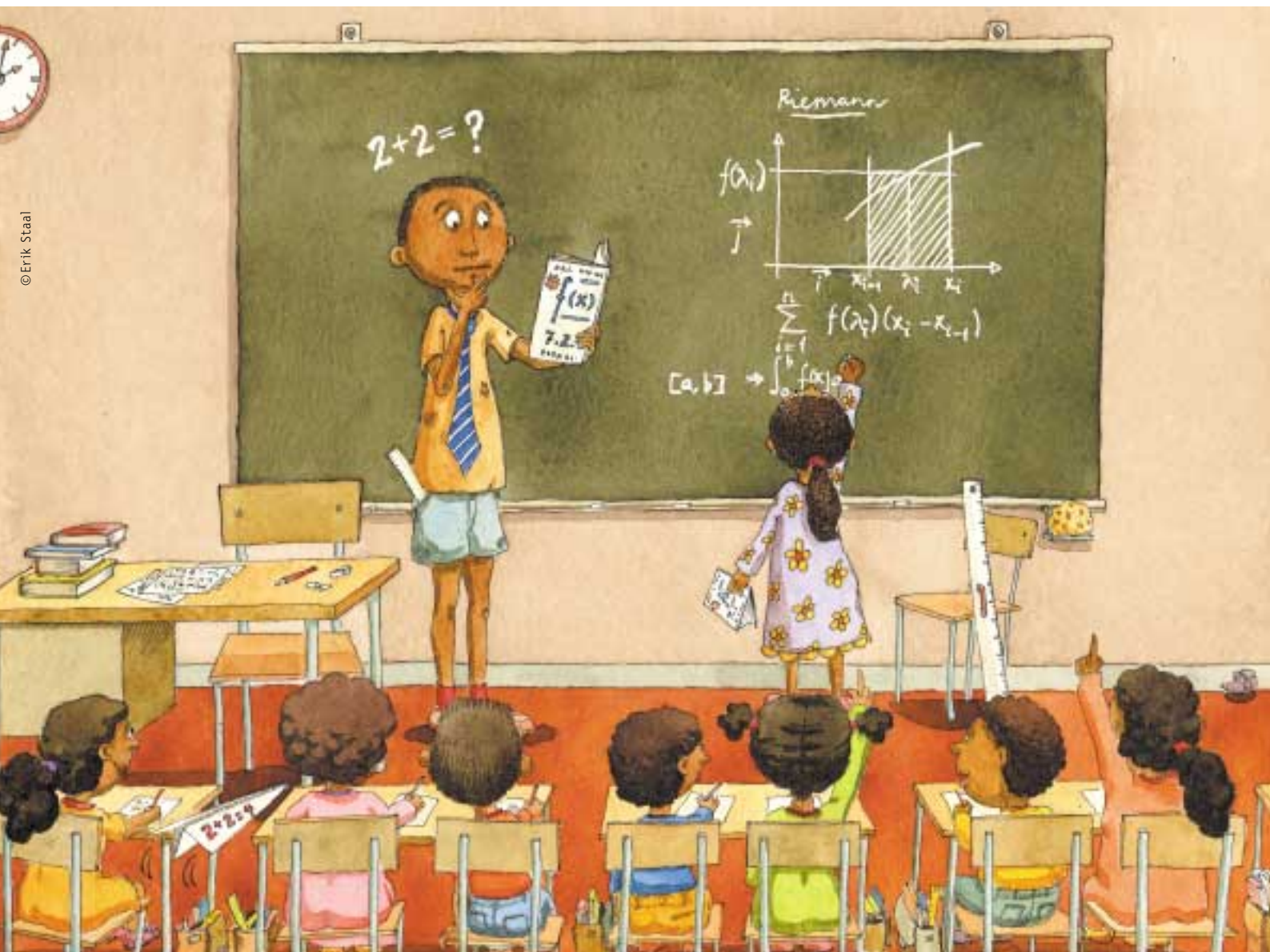
The standards will help encourage governments to rebuild a system that delivers education of good quality, with a better gender balance, and content that promotes peace. "We are constantly reminded how education can contribute to conflict, and how it can help to prevent it," adds Roberts. "Sierra Leone is a good example," she adds. "They had one of the best educational systems in Africa, but it mainly served the elite. It excluded too many people."

For Dickson J.S. Goers, of Sierra Leone's Ministry of Education, the war in his country spread a new awareness of education's benefits. "Educated people cannot easily be convinced to take the gun against another," he says.

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Wanted! Teachers

In response to a global shortage of primary-school teachers, some poor countries are turning to so-called 'para-teachers' with little training and low salaries.



©Erik Staal

In the heat of Malawi's afternoon sun, it is not unusual to see sixty children huddled around a teacher in the shade of a massive baobab tree. In towns, there can be 100, even 200 children in a class. When the government abolished school fees in 1994, primary school enrol-

ments soared. But the number of trained teachers – let alone school buildings – could not keep pace.

And Malawi is by no means unusual. The shortage of teachers is worldwide. More than 30 million new teachers are needed to meet univer-

sal primary education by 2015. To make matters worse, the HIV/AIDS pandemic in some countries is killing teachers almost as quickly as replacements can be trained. In Zambia, an estimated 815 primary school teachers died of AIDS in 2000, corresponding to 45 per cent of all teachers trained that year.

Even if sub-Saharan Africa is worst-hit, OECD countries, including the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the Netherlands and Germany, could also soon face a crisis, albeit for different reasons. There, fewer young people are attracted to an increasingly challenging and poorly paid profession, while an ageing teacher population will be retiring en masse over the next decade.

The Senegal example

The main bottlenecks in producing more teachers are training and salaries, leading some countries to take drastic measures. When Mamadou Ndoye, Executive Secretary of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), took over as Minister of Education in Senegal in 1995, teachers were still trained along colonial-era traditions, with four years of study in special colleges (Ecoles Normales), and two years of teaching practice. Constrained by structural adjustment curbs on public spending, the challenge then was to train hundreds more teachers each year, without increasing the wage bill. "I decided we would have to recruit less expensive teachers," says Ndoye. Strict rules on public sector employment meant that these teachers would have to have a different status to those already in post.

So, the Ministry called on those with more than four years' secondary education to train as 'voluntary teachers.' Selected candidates were given salaries one third of those of teachers in the civil service system – and put into schools after just three months training. Faced with low salaries and no career prospects, up to 70 per cent of these teachers deserted the classrooms in the first year. This prompted the new Senegalese government to improve working conditions and nine years later, over 18,000 'volunteers' have been recruited, according to Ndoye. Today, with a new employment status that gives better pay and career prospects, 'volunteers' make up the bulk of Senegal's primary teaching force.

Similar measures have been taken in many other countries. Between a fifth and a third

Rajasthan's Shiksha Karmi schools

Hamir Singh used to run a flourmill in Karthoda village, in a remote part of rural Rajasthan's Ajmer district of India. But, since 1987, he has been a Shiksha Karmi (education worker) in a unique project aimed at providing primary education for out-of-school children – usually girls, children with disabilities, and those from so-called scheduled castes ("untouchables").

Back in 1984, when there was a government school in Karthoda, the teacher had to walk 6 km across the scrub from the next village and did not always turn up. But three years later the Shiksha Karmi initiative was launched to address the problems of inadequate access to education in rural areas by training para-teachers.

All the teachers come from the local community. Male teachers should have four years of secondary school while females may have less, since educated females old enough to teach are still rare in rural Rajasthan. These teachers are given a 6-week residential, induction training, using discussions, exercises, songs, role-play and a range of unconventional techniques. This is followed by two 30-day training programmes in the first two years, a 20-day training after two years and a 10-day training every year after that. Teachers are paid a minimum wage.

By 2001, according to an evaluation by the Swedish development agency, SIDA, that helped set up and support the project the initiative had spread to 2,697 villages, covering all thirty-two districts of the state. It was catering, by then, for 202,000 students (84,000 of them girls) through 2,700 day schools, 4,335 evening schools and ninety-seven courtyard schools. Now, twenty of the day schools have become primary schools. Roughly 6,000 Shiksha Karmis are currently employed.

The project is heavily dependent on external support. The UK development agency, DFID, has now taken over from SIDA, and there are concerns that the state will not assume full responsibility if this support ceases.

of all primary teachers in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia may not be properly trained, according to a paper presented at the first conference of para-teachers in Bamako (Mali), in November 2004, organized by the World Bank, ADEA, Education International and Mali's Ministry of Education.

Less expensive teachers

In remote, rural areas of some countries, though, even these low-cost, state-run systems are failing. In Malawi, despite the increased output of training colleges, few new teachers want to go to rural areas, where 90 per cent of the population lives. Women, who form 47 per cent of the teaching force, are particularly reluctant to leave their families in the towns, where they have trained. Many rural schools have only one, or even no female teachers.

In Sierra Leone, after an eleven-year civil war that ended in 2001, a limit on employing more teachers, agreed with the International Monetary Fund, has meant that as many as 20 per cent of primary-school teachers at government-funded schools are not even on the public sector payroll, according to a background paper for the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report. Where there is no government school, some villages have set up their own 'community schools' where classes are taught by secondary school leavers working a few hours a day and paid for by the community and NGOs.

A Trojan horse

But the recourse to low-paid and poorly trained teachers has attracted considerable protest from both education specialists and teachers' unions, who fear that such teachers are a kind of Trojan horse, undermining

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Wanted! Teachers

→ the profession. After the first recruitments of volunteer teachers, Senegal's civil servant teachers walked out, boycotted schools and filed a complaint with the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Recently, in August 2004, graduate teachers in Himachal Pradesh (India) demonstrated against the State's decision to fill over 1,500 new vacancies with para-teachers, while trained teachers remain unemployed.

For Monique Fouilhoux, of Education International, a union that represents the interests of some 30 million teachers worldwide, the employment conditions and longer-term prospects of para-teachers have to be addressed. "When people are poorly paid,

have a precarious status and are not trained," she says, "they are not in a position to deliver quality teaching. And conditions can be hard for these teachers, sometimes obliged to take on other jobs to make ends meet."

There is growing concern that less qualified teachers are providing poor-quality education.

In Malawi, the Ministry of Education implemented a system where candidates were given three months' college training and then put into schools, receiving in-service training over the next two years. But, says Damis Kunje, a former teacher and now part

of a government think-tank at the University of Malawi, "the recruits had just two years of secondary schooling. It was very difficult for them to cope with the short training they were given, because of their own low level of education."

Lower standards

This picture is repeated over much of sub-Saharan Africa. In Benin, only 7.2 per cent of full-time teachers have upper-secondary education, while in Cape Verde the figure is nearly 10 per cent. In Malawi, says Kunje, "the kind of education offered is pushing pupils back home. There are many children in Standard 1 (first year of primary) but only 20 per cent survive to Standard 8."

Other regions, besides sub-Saharan Africa, also have high numbers of poorly qualified teachers. In Bangladesh, for example, in 1995, 44 per cent of teachers had less than nine years' schooling, and 18 per cent had no training at all.

However, according to a study on a total of 2,000 teachers and 28,000 primary school children in Grades 1 and 5 carried out by PASEC (Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs) in nine African countries, initial teacher training had almost no effect on children's performance in reading, writing and arithmetic tests. Indeed, in the Guinea sample, temporary teachers with little training got better results than permanent staff. The report concludes that a few months of initial training, focused on relevant professional skills, is as good as more formal and longer training.

But not everyone agrees. Evaluations in several countries by the Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), based at Sussex University (UK), have concluded that quality training, including in-service training, is essential when lower standards of recruitment have to be accepted.

Distance learning is being used as an alternative system where trainers are in short supply, such as the Zimbabwean Integrated →

Teacher shortage in Cambodia

Cambodia has turned to volunteer and contract teachers several times in the past twenty-five years. In 1979, it was urgent to replace the teachers who had not survived the Khmer Rouge regime and almost anyone who could read was eligible to teach after short training. Later, these volunteers were given further training, making them certified teachers. But, by the late 1990s there was a new teacher shortage, this time due to higher requirements to enter teacher training, the forced retirement of teachers at age 55 years and commitments to EFA.

Once again, the government turned to contract teachers as an emergency measure, particularly for rural and remote areas. These teachers were recruited directly by the head teacher and paid by the state. The majority of this new wave was either recently retired teachers, or recent upper-secondary graduates. Although they were not given any training, they played a key role in increasing access to school between 1996-2001 especially in remote areas where the shortage was most acute. However, in 2002, the government decided to cut back on contract teachers, arguing quality concerns and corruption associated with the practice of direct appointments.

To make up for the loss of these teachers, the government decided to deploy staff more efficiently, to attract teacher candidates from remote areas and to require teachers to work double shifts. Teachers have been reluctant to increase their workloads because they often have to wait months to receive their additional pay. In the meantime, they are forced to quit second jobs that help them make ends meet. To get around this, some teachers combine classes, or cut lesson times, and even subcontract to untrained teachers.

Today, the practice of recruiting student teachers from remote areas and posting them in their villages seems to be the most promising option in addressing the teacher shortage in these zones.

Source: Paper presented by Yael Duthilleul of the International Institute for Educational Planning at the Conference on Contract Teachers in Bamako (November, 2004)

→ Teacher Education Course (ZINTEC), which has been running for fifteen years. After initial training in colleges, new teachers receive on-the-job training for ten semesters using distance-learning technologies, backed up by tutorial supervision and regional seminars. Some experts believe that ZINTEC has been successful in combining quality with low cost.

As alternative education systems multiply in response to the teacher shortage, there is some concern that at least part of the responsibility for education will slowly move out of the public sector altogether. According to Guntars Catlaks, of Education International, there is a growing trend to look outside the public sector to make up for deficiencies – a policy that he says is supported by a recent OECD report. “The OECD is saying that public spending on education is too high and cannot be increased. If you agree with that, you have to find alternative funding.” He gives the example of a recent strike of teachers in Italy motivated by the government’s cuts in public primary schools. As a result parents are seeking education in the private sector. “But we think the public education system should be strengthened. It is the only way to provide good quality education,” says Catlaks.

A third way

The international drive to provide Education for all by 2015 is forcing governments to find a solution to the teacher shortage. There is growing consensus that national budgets simply cannot stretch to fund the traditionally-trained teachers in the numbers required to reach the EFA goals. What’s more, the cost per teacher in sub-Saharan Africa is estimated at eight times per capita GDP, while the world average is twice per capita GDP. But, according to the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005, “in much of Africa, teacher earnings were actually lower in real terms by 2000 than in 1970”.

These issues were at the centre of debates at the Bamako Conference where two divergent standpoints were presented: tradition-

ally-trained teachers versus para-teachers. According to Pascal Hoba of ADEA who attended the gathering, what emerged from discussions was actually a ‘third way’. Participants agreed to a series of measures to professionalize para-teachers and improve their career prospects. Among these measures are the need for at least secondary level education and a minimum of six months training.

These developments will undoubtedly not be accepted in all quarters. They prompt Richard Halperin, Chief of UNESCO’s Section

for Teacher Education, to reiterate that for teachers to be effective they must be well-trained, motivated, have a decent work environment, good pay and an attractive career path. “Teachers are key to improving the quality of education. There are no short-cuts” he says. He challenges policy-makers: “Do you want your own child to be become a teacher? If not, why not? What specific reforms would it take to make you glad and proud that your child was entering teaching?” ●

UNESCO supports African teachers

African teachers are at the heart of UNESCO’s efforts. The Organization is launching a new initiative for teacher training in sub-Saharan Africa. This programme will help countries develop the policies, teacher education, and labour practices (with the International Labour Organisation) that will be required, if the Education for All goals are to be achieved. Beneficiaries will include teachers, principals, school inspectors, teacher-training institutions, and university teacher-education heads. It will link up with UNESCO’s major initiatives for literacy and for HIV/AIDS prevention. The first phase will start in 2005.

The Initiative builds upon the current Capacity-building of Teacher Training Institutions in sub-Saharan Africa, which has conducted an assessment of teacher-training institutions in forty-three countries to determine the types of assistance required to improve policies and facilities. Training is now being provided to planners, policy makers, curriculum developers and trainers in open and distance learning in ten countries.

Two other projects financed by Japan will also start next year. A project in Mali will upgrade the skills of teachers in community schools, training over 100 trainers of trainers and more than 2,000 teachers. In Niger, it will provide in-service training to 2,000 para-teachers and to fifty educational inspectors and advisers.

The UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) works with education institutions using capacity building approaches, research, networking and communication. The institute aims to improve the quantity and quality of African teachers by addressing such issues as distance education and ICTs to respond to problems of teacher shortage and teacher development, equipping teachers to deal with HIV/AIDS, and exploring new and innovative approaches. IICBA works with several universities within and outside Africa to develop distance education programmes to boost the skills and qualifications of the staff of teacher-training institutions. IICBA has also created a network which enables teachers and teacher educators to share important lessons learnt and materials they have developed amongst themselves.

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The quality imperative

A new report shows that education systems are failing children in many parts of the world

Throughout 2005, the spotlight in international circles will be on how many countries reach gender parity in primary and secondary education, the first milestone on the ambitious Education for All agenda adopted in 2000. On current trends, this goal is at risk of not being achieved in almost 60 per cent of the 128 countries with available data. Although overall enrolment rates in primary education are rising, the pace of change remains too slow to achieve EFA by 2015. There are still over 100 million children who never set foot in school; 57 per cent of them are girls.

Poor performance

There are millions of others, however, who are seemingly gaining little benefit from their education, according to the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2005. Achievement tests conducted in Southern Africa provide some compelling evidence: for 100 children enrolled, less than twenty achieved minimum mastery in a Grade 6 reading test. On average, in many low-income countries, more than one-third of children have limited reading skills after four to six years in school. In one third of countries with data, less than 75 percent of students reach Grade 5. This figure mirrors problems of both household poverty and poor education quality.

The challenge is clear: a policy aimed at boosting net enrolments alone will not achieve the education goals. By analysing research and surveying progress towards the goals through a quality lens, the report outlines policies for better learning.

Quality with quantity

Achievement tests are just one indicator of quality. Others include government spending on education (below the recommended 6 per cent of GNP in most regions), pupil-teacher ratios (too high in countries where the EFA



A child in the classroom of Tintihigrene school, Mali, where there is one teacher for 65 pupils.

challenge is greatest), how long students stay in school and teacher qualifications. Instructional time – a strong influence on achievement – has actually decreased over two decades in some regions. While cognitive

skills lend themselves to assessment, some equally important facets of education quality elude measurement. These include how systems nurture the creative and emotional development of children.

Quality and quantity are complements, not substitutes. The report points to historical examples of countries that have made giant leaps towards high quality, including Cuba and the Republic of Korea. They are characterized by strong commitment to the teaching profession and policy continuity over time. Others, including Brazil, Bangladesh, Chile, Egypt, Senegal, South Africa and Sri Lanka are showing ambition in their drive to expand access and improve the quality of education through for example, better teacher training, more learning time, national textbooks policies and targeting of the poorest performing schools.

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3 questions to Rasheda Choudhury

Director of the NGO network Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), and Member Secretary of Education Watch, Bangladesh

1 Only 65 per cent of primary schoolchildren in Bangladesh reach Grade 5. Why do so many drop out?
Our enrolment rate is quite high but our completion rate is low. The whole primary education system is not child-friendly. It doesn't have child-centred learning, schools are not attractive and the pupil-teacher ratio is 1:60. In these conditions it's impossible for a teacher to go for child-friendly and interactive learning methods.

2 Quality teaching is vital for learning. Is teacher training in Bangladesh ambitious enough to turn out qualified teachers?
Nearly 40 per cent of our primary school children are first-generation learners. This means they cannot get support at home because their parents are illiterate. Most of our teachers get in-service training, not pre-service training. These untrained teachers are not equipped to deal with these learners.

Mounting momentum

The High-Level Group is fulfilling its role in maintaining the momentum of the Education for All movement. The fourth meeting in Brasilia from 8-10 November 2004 spawned a great number of side events. They focused on child labour, public-private partnerships, girls' education and the Fast-Track funding Initiative. A "teachers' parliament" was also organized. The presence of Brazil's President Lula da Silva at the meeting and the launching of the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005 on educational quality also gave the event a high profile.

The Communiqué adopted by the gathering identified three areas for urgent attention: girls' education, teachers and financial resources. Participants outlined a number of key measures that governments must take in each of these core areas: the abolition of school fees and other costs that deprive poor

children of education, and improving teachers' working conditions and professional development.

In response to the estimated shortfall of \$5.6 billion needed annually to achieve the goal of universal primary education by 2015, the High-Level Group urged donor countries and funding agencies to increase funding to education and deepen debt relief. "It was heartening to see a renewed sense of responsibility among our EFA partners towards meeting our shared commitments," says Abhimanyu Singh, Director of UNESCO's Division of International Coordination and Monitoring for Education for All. The High-Level Group also called upon the UN organizations to ensure high visibility of the EFA agenda in the discussions at the forthcoming Millennium Declaration Review Summit, in September 2005.

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Universities on board

Universities play a vital role in Education for All (EFA), recruiting and training teachers and grooming tomorrow's educational researchers. But this role could be enhanced if all the other fields of study that universities offer, such as health, science and technology, engineering and social sciences, converged to support the Education for All agenda.

3 The Global EFA Monitoring Report places Bangladesh 107th in its EFA Development Index, which currently counts 127. How can Bangladesh move up this ladder quickly?

Our children are slow in gaining the basic competencies that are needed of primary school graduates. So we must now tackle this problem. The new national framework, which we call the Primary Education Development Programme, has identified quality as the major area to be addressed in the next five years. We need to focus also on equity, gender equality, education for the disabled and the poor to move up the ladder. We must aim at children learning at the end of the day.

In a meeting at UNESCO (3-4 November 2004), the university community decided to engage closer with EFA. "Universities are autonomous and their challenge is to keep their autonomy while participating fully in national education efforts," says Winsome Gordon, Chief of UNESCO's Section for International Cooperation in Higher Education.

One concrete outcome of the meeting was the decision to reinforce the UNITWIN/Chairs programme in such areas as teacher education, HIV/AIDS, literacy and the use of ICTs in education. Others include agreement to align their programmes to address Education for All; create resource centres to manage distance learning; share experiences and best practices in the field of sustainable development; and establish a UNITWIN network for small island developing states universities to boost their contribution to sustainable development. Over 100 Education Ministers, university rectors and associations attended the meeting.

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World tour

→ Top-level education administrators and trainers from Sudan and Yemen received one week's training in the concept of gender equality in education (Khartoum, 4-9 October). The training was organized by UNESCO Beirut.

→ EFA Coordinators from fourteen countries of East and Southeast Asia participated in the sixth national EFA Coordinators' meeting (Bangkok, 19-22 October) to share information on progress being made towards the Education for All goals.

→ Rural people in poor countries will benefit from basic education thanks to a new project launched at a workshop in Rome (15-17 November) attended by more than 100 civil society organizations, officials from the Italian Development Cooperation and experts from FAO, UNESCO and other international organizations. The project will be co-financed by the European Commission, several European NGOs, FAO and UNESCO.

→ Eighty high-ranking officials of Ministries of Education, teachers, educational NGOs from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan discussed best practices in teaching for sustainable development and integrating this theme into the curriculum, at a meeting in Almaty (10-12 November).

→ Ministers of Education and of Cooperation, UN agencies and representatives of the civil society met at the Teachers' Parliament, just prior to the meeting of the High-level Group on EFA (6-7 Nov.) Their Declaration calls for every child to be educated by highly qualified teachers in well-managed schools.

→ Representatives of 150 NGOs and civil society organizations attended the annual meeting of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA. The meeting was preceded by a session on reinforcing the dialogue between civil society and governments and by the Arab regional consultation.

Reaching Kazakh children



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Distance education brings learning to rural Kazakhstan

A new UNESCO project is using information and communication technology to bring education to children living in large areas of Kazakhstan contaminated by radioactivity.

The needs of children in these areas are particularly great as they suffer from both the impact of radioactivity on their health and from the fact that qualified teachers

are refusing to work there. The schools that do exist are inadequate, concludes a recent UNESCO-sponsored study. One teacher often teaches all subjects from primary through secondary education in a decrepit building, and higher education is unavailable.

The most devastated zone is around Semipalatinsk, in eastern Kazakhstan, formerly a huge, secret nuclear testing range. From 1959 until 1989, the Soviet Military conducted 456 nuclear tests and the radioactive contamination was carried by winds across the steppes. The contaminated area now covers one-fifth of Kazakhstan, or an area roughly the size of France.

The new project will adapt free software available in Europe aimed at education management and course production. It will also provide teacher training on how to use the software and strengthen infrastructure in selected pilot sites. "Relying on the educational expertise of Kazakh specialists and the transfer of know-how are key to a sustainable project," says team leader Dana Ziyashev.

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Technical education for sustainable development

In their foundation training, hairdressers and car mechanics must learn how to dispose safely of the chemicals they use. Tree planting should be an integral part of carpentry training. These two concrete examples show how sustainable development can be integrated into technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

They were given by participants attending the international experts meeting "Learning for Work, Citizenship and Sustainability" in Bonn, Germany, last October. They agreed that TVET must play a major role in promoting sustainable development and discussed the challenges of this reorientation.

"While education is a key to any development strategy, TVET is the master key that can transform the world of work and the economy, alleviate poverty, save the environment, and improve the quality of life,"

said Lourdes Quisumbing, a former Secretary of Education, Sports and Culture in the Republic of the Philippines.

Among the seven strategies proposed to UNESCO were the review and development of national TVET policies, creation of learning materials and evaluation and research.

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Celebrating the African Diaspora

"Celebrating the African Diaspora" was the theme of an International Youth Forum held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago last November. The event gathered some 120 secondary school students, teachers and national coordinators from nineteen countries in Africa, the Americas, the Caribbean and Europe. All are active participants in the Transatlantic Slave Trade (TST) Education Project, which is implemented by UNESCO's Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet).

Through panel discussions, pedagogical and artistic workshops, the participants explored the causes and consequences of slavery, celebrated the African diaspora and prepared an international schools campaign against racism to be launched on 21 March 2005.

The Forum was organized as a contribution to the celebration of 2004, the International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition.

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Brain drain in Africa

A new UNESCO study looks at the issue of the brain drain in French-speaking African countries. The number of qualified people leaving Africa is on the increase. These graduates go abroad in search of a good education, jobs or for political reasons, the study reveals. The problem also concerns non-university personnel such as technicians and nurses.

“There is a double paradox,” concludes the study. Higher education institutions in developing countries spend their limited resources on training skilled professionals who either leave to work in developed countries or face unemployment at home. What is more, development partners tend to recruit expensive experts from the North to handle projects in the South! One example is Burkina Faso, where 800 international experts work, while an even greater number of qualified Burkinabes are unemployed.

The study explores how to turn brain drain into brain gain. Recommendations include the creation of a database of African talents and diaspora, better use of the competences of Africans living abroad and improved mechanisms to facilitate the return of Africans to their home countries.

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Youth dialogue on AIDS prevention

Youth groups from Brazil and Mozambique have taken advantage of their cultural similarities to exchange ideas on AIDS prevention. Educators from the two countries met at workshops to discuss how to use dance, theatre and music in raising awareness of the pandemic, and prevention approaches.

“Art education associated with peer education is one of the very best tools for changing sexual behaviour,” says Cristina Raposo, HIV/AIDS coordinator at UNESCO Brazil. Brazil is a champion in this area, she adds. “Our experience shows that it’s extremely important to get youth involved in designing and implementing AIDS prevention activities.”

According to UNAIDS, since 1997 Brazil is experiencing a relative stabilization of AIDS incidences, while HIV-prevalence in Mozambique is still rising, with the majority of new infections occurring among the under 29-year-olds.

The exchange programme was jointly organized by UNESCO and the US Agency for International Development Brazil. A poster and brochure with the key messages generated from the youth exchanges were recently published by UNESCO Brasilia.

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JANUARY

10-15

3rd Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting on the Draft International Convention Against Doping in Sport • Paris, France
 Contact: Kevin Thompson, UNESCO Paris
 E-mail: k.thompson@unesco.org

15-18

Meeting of the UNESCO Baltic Sea Subregion Education for All Coordination Working Group • St. Petersburg, Russian Federation
 Contact: Alexander Sannikov, UNESCO Paris
 E-mail: a.sannikov@unesco.org

FEBRUARY

7-10

Education for All Southern Africa Conference
 Organized by UNESCO, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) and World Education • Johannesburg, South Africa
 Contact: Grace Kaimila-Kanjo
 E-mails: gracek@osiafrica.org and efa@worlded.co.za

17-23

Exhibition on Sign Languages and Braille • Organized by UNESCO, the World Blind Union and the World Federation of the Deaf
 Paris, France
 Contact: Martha Milanzi, UNESCO Paris
 E-mail: m.milanzi@unesco.org

MARCH

21

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
 Launch by the Associated Schools Project Network of the campaign: *All Equal in Diversity: Schools Mobilizing Schools Against Racism, Discrimination and Exclusion* for schools participating in the Transatlantic Slave Trade Education Project.

APRIL

25-26

3rd Regional Scientific Committee Meeting for Asia and the Pacific
 Organized by the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge • Seoul, Republic of Korea
 Contact: Min-Chul Shim, UNESCO Paris
 E-mail: mc.shim@unesco.org

26-30

EFA Week. This year’s edition will call for education to end poverty and empower women.
 Contact: Abhimanyu Singh, UNESCO Paris
 E-mail: abh.singh@unesco.org

27-29

UNESCO Regional Seminar on the Implication of the World Trade organization on Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific
 Organized by the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge, and the Korean National Commission for UNESCO
 Seoul, Republic of Korea
 Contact: Min-Chul Shim, UNESCO Paris
 E-mail: mc.shim@unesco.org

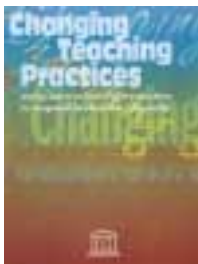
● **Teacher Education Resource Pack: Student Materials.** This resource pack aims at helping schools to respond to student diversity, in particular students vulnerable to exclusion and underachievement. It comprises four modules: special needs in the classroom, special needs: definitions and responses, towards effective schools for all, and help and support. Price: 14.80€. The Teacher's Library series. Available from UNESCO Publishing: www.upo.unesco.org



● **Increasing teacher effectiveness** by Lorin W. Anderson. This publication shows that regardless of new materials or curricula, educational effectiveness depends primarily on teachers and the way they teach their classes. This updated edition summarizes a wealth of new research from countries with very different social and economic backgrounds. Price: 12.20€. Fundamentals of Educational Planning, 79, IIEP. Available from UNESCO Publishing: www.upo.unesco.org

● **Education for All through Voices of Children.** This attractive booklet presents the opinions of young people in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on education and in particular on why children do not attend school. "There are many reasons for children's non-attendance," says 16-year-old Kokshetau (Kazakhstan). "It's senseless to repeat them... We need to start doing something and help all children." Available from UNESCO Almaty. E-mail: almaty@unesco.org

● **Basic Education Studies in Bangladesh** edited by Dr Kamrunnessa Begum and Salma Akhter. The studies in this document focus on early childhood services, out-of-school adolescents, a framework for equivalent competencies for formal and non-formal education, monitoring and evaluation of non-formal education, quality primary education, employment of school dropouts, status of public and private schools and an ethno-linguistic study of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Area. Available from UNESCO Dhaka. E-mail: dhaka@unesco.org



● **Changing Teaching Practices: Using Curriculum Differentiation to Respond to Students' Diversity.** This booklet and CD-ROM, developed to facilitate and support inclusive education, is intended to help teachers to teach all students together regardless of their abilities, disabilities or background. E-mail: sdi@unesco.org

● **Education for All: Sharing Challenges, Multiplying Results.** This brochure examines where Latin America and the Caribbean stands vis-à-vis each of the six Education for All goals. It also presents UNESCO's Regional Project for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC). Available in English, Portuguese and Spanish from UNESCO Santiago. E-mail: santiago@unesco.org

● **Inter-sectoral Co-ordination in Early Childhood Policies and Programmes: A Synthesis of Experiences in Latin America.** This document, based on country studies in Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba and Mexico, examines different inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms in early childhood care and education and analyses what contributes to successful coordination. Available from UNESCO Santiago. E-mail: santiago@unesco.org

● **EFA in South Asia: Analytical Study on Dakar Goals.** This series of six booklets documents what is being done to achieve each of the six Education for All goals in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Available from UNESCO New Delhi. E-mail: newdelhi@unesco.org

● **Higher Education in a Globalized Society: Education Position Paper.** This 28-page document is one of a series of UNESCO position papers on key issues relevant to education today. It focuses on the implications of globalization for higher education. Available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. E-mail: sdi@unesco.org



● **Synthesis of the South Asia National EFA Plans of Action.** This document presents a critical review and analysis of the National EFA Plans of Action in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Available from UNESCO New Delhi. E-mail: newdelhi@unesco.org

● **ECD Policy Development and Implementation in Africa** by Alan Pence. This monograph focuses on the processes involved in developing and implementing early childhood care, education and development (ECD) policies in African countries. Early Childhood and Family Policy Series, No. 9 – 2004. Available from: sdi@unesco.org

● **Interagency Consultative Group on Secondary Education Reform and Youth Affairs.** This document presents the final report of the fourth meeting held from 30 June to 2 July 2004. E-mail: sdi@unesco.org

● **PROSPECTS, 130, Open File, Social Dialogue.** This issue of UNESCO's quarterly review of comparative education focuses on national and international policy dialogue on education. Available from the International Bureau of Education. www.ibe.unesco.org; E-mail: b.deluermoz@ibe.unesco.org

● **Making Books: A Practical Handbook for Writers of Teacher Support Materials** by Andrew Clegg. This guide, produced in the context of the UNESCO/DANIDA Basic Learning Materials Initiative, examines the design and use of teacher support materials in Namibia and worldwide, and provides useful suggestions regarding content, methodology, layout and evaluation. It is a useful guide for teachers, curriculum developers, potential authors and anyone interested in producing learning materials. Available from UNESCO Windhoek. E-mail: windhoek@unesco.org

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