



Education for All Global Monitoring Report

Proposed post-2015 education goals: Emphasizing equity, measurability and finance

INITIAL DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

March 2013

The six Education for All goals have helped to drive remarkable progress since they were established in 2000. Some major education needs have not received the attention they deserve, however, and fresh priorities have emerged over the past decade. As the global education community prepares to identify new goals for the post-2015 period, the Education for All Global Monitoring Report team calls on its decade of experience to propose what those goals could look like, along with guiding principles, specific targets and indicators.

Many education observers and recent EFA Global Monitoring Reports have highlighted the limited progress in narrowing inequality gaps in education, despite this being a key feature of the EFA agenda. As we outlined in [an article on our World Education Blog](#), there are two likely reasons for this. One is that the Millennium Development Goals – which have dominated development planning – should have incorporated equity as a core principle, as the EFA goals did. Another is that the lack of measurable equity targets, and of data broken down to shown inequalities within countries, has let down the poorest, girls, those with disabilities, and those in rural areas over the past decade.

The first problem needs to be tackled after 2015 by aligning the broader development architecture with the post-2015 education framework. The second problem underlines the importance of incorporating measurable equity targets in post-2015 goals, a step we recommend in this paper.

It is clear that new goals need to address unfinished business and to anticipate future challenges. While an EFA goal focused on the quality of education, this was missing from the MDG framework and so did not receive the attention it deserved. Measures for assessing equity in learning have also been lacking. The 2013/14 EFA Global Monitoring Report will look at this in more detail, identifying the key role that good teachers play in achieving equitable learning.

The goals should take into account youth and adult skills needed in the light of global trends such as the increasing importance of technology, greater urbanization, shifting population patterns and concerns over climate change and environmental degradation. And while not all education priorities can be measured, it is vital that the goals themselves are simple, clear and measurable.

Our conclusions take into account post-2015 proposals arising from the national, international and online consultations, which we have collated on [our Education Post-2015 information hub](#). They also tap into the wealth of experience that the EFA Global Monitoring Report team has accumulated over ten years as the global community's mechanism for taking stock each year of progress towards the EFA goals.

Guiding principles for setting post-2015 education goals

- **The right to an education, as guaranteed under international and national laws and conventions, must be at the core of the goals.** As a right, education should be free and compulsory. It should help people fulfill their potential and should foster the well-being and prosperity of individuals and society.
- **Ensuring that all people have an equal chance of education, regardless of their circumstances, must be at the heart of every goal.** No person should be denied access to quality education because of factors such as poverty, gender, location, ethnicity or disability.
- **The goals should recognize the learning needs at each stage of a person's life, and that learning takes place in non-formal as well as formal settings.**
- **One main goal should set the overall ambition for education as part of a broader post-2015 global framework.** This overarching goal should be universally applicable, and divided into individual goals that make up a post-2015 education framework. Each of these individual goals should also be linked with other goals to be identified in the broader global framework.
- **The goals should enable governments and the international community to be held to account for their education commitments.** Each goal must have a specific deadline, be worded clearly and simply, be measurable, and have the ambition of getting to zero. The framework should include a commitment to monitoring the goals regularly and rigorously at the global, national and local levels.

Identifying goals for education post-2015

On the basis of these guiding principles, one clear and simple overall goal is proposed, which can be broken down into four individual goals, along with a fifth goal to hold to account those who will be responsible for financing their achievement.

OVERARCHING GOAL

Ensure that by 2030, everyone has an equal opportunity to learn the basics, whatever their circumstances.

Learning the basics means that every child, young person and adult, whatever their circumstances, can read and write with understanding, and can do basic mathematics.

INDIVIDUAL GOALS

To achieve the overarching goal, all children, regardless of their circumstances, will need to have the opportunity to complete pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education of good quality. There is also a need to ensure that youth and adults have the opportunity to acquire skills needed to obtain decent jobs and lead fulfilling lives, with particular attention to those who need a second chance to gain literacy and numeracy skills. Recognizing the failure over the past decade to reach the most marginalized, each of the goals has equity at its heart and there is a cross-cutting inequality goal. The goals will not be achieved unless they are adequately financed, so a finance goal is included to ensure all countries have the means to implement the goals.

The proposed individual goals are:

1. Completion of early childhood education, primary education and lower secondary education

Ensure that by 2030 all children and adolescents, whatever their circumstances, have equal access to, and complete, comprehensive early childhood education, primary and lower secondary education.

2. Quality of early childhood care and education, primary education and lower secondary education

Provide comprehensive early childhood care and education, primary and lower secondary education of sufficient quality to ensure that by 2030 all children and adolescents, whatever their circumstances, have an equal chance of achieving recognized and measurable learning outcomes, especially in literacy and numeracy.

3. Acquisition of youth and adult skills

Ensure that by 2030 all young people and adults, whatever their circumstances, can acquire skills needed to obtain decent jobs and lead fulfilling lives, through equitable access to appropriate training, including via second-chance programmes.

4. Elimination of inequalities

Eliminate inequalities in education by 2030, taking specific measures to reach those disadvantaged by factors such as gender, poverty, location, ethnicity or disability.

5. Financing of education

By 2030, ensure that no country is prevented from achieving education goals by a lack of resources:

1. by maximizing government revenue and ensuring that government spending covers education needs, targeting the marginalized when necessary;
2. by maximizing aid, and targeting it at countries and groups who need it most;
3. by maximizing resources from the private sector, and targeting them at countries and groups who need them most.

Measuring progress towards post-2015 education goals

Identifying how to measure progress towards post-2015 education goals is not straightforward. One of the challenges the EFA Global Monitoring Report has faced over the past decade is that indicators were not identified at the time that goals and targets were established. This led to different indicators being used for EFA goals and MDGs in ways that were not necessarily compatible. It also meant that some goals could not easily be measured, either with existing data or with data that could be collected within the timeframe. It would be preferable for post-2015 goals, targets and indicators to be agreed simultaneously to avoid such complications. We set out our detailed proposals in the table below.

Most commentators are proposing 2030 as a deadline for new goals, a consensus that we support. This timespan is long enough to reasonably expect goals to be reached, without being so long that there is a risk of losing sight of progress. In general, we propose that all targets should aim to get to zero by this date. It is not acceptable that any child or young person should remain out of school, or any young person or adult lack the skills needed to get decent jobs or lead fulfilling lives.

Each goal should have targets that address inequalities. This includes ensuring that, by 2030, gaps are closed between rich and poor, rural and urban, and girls and boys. A target is also needed that tracks progress of the lowest performing group in each country, to ensure that group also reaches the overall target by 2030. In the United Republic of Tanzania, for example, the poorest, rural young

women have only spent 3.7 years in school. By 2030, this needs to increase to 9 years, the same as the global target (Table 2).

Indicators for the overarching goal need to capture equal opportunities in both access and quality in ways that assess overall education performance. For this purpose, we propose that all children and young people should have been in school for at least nine years (generally equivalent to completion of lower secondary school), and achieved a minimum benchmark in reading and mathematics during this time.

There are several challenges in measuring progress towards some of the goals.

- To measure progress in learning, *it is vital to have information on learning whether a child is in school or not*. The 2012 EFA Global Monitoring Report provided some proxies for such an approach in estimating that 250 million children of primary school age are not learning the basics, whether they are in school or not. The findings of the Learning Metrics Task Force could help in this regard.
- While administrative and household data each have their strengths and weaknesses, household data will be essential post-2015 to enable better tracking of progress for the most disadvantaged children, whether by poverty, gender, where they live, or disability. This will require comparable household survey data to be available on a larger scale, with sufficient observations to allow analysis of sub-groups of the population. One strong recommendation of the GMR team is that *the frequency and reach of household surveys needs to be prioritized as a matter of urgency*.
- Extending goals to include lower secondary education requires better information from administrative data sources, including on completion.
- Another challenge is that some indicators do not have data currently available in a systematic manner.
 - In the case of the quality of early childhood care and education programmes, we propose that efforts be made to develop a survey that monitors service provision.
 - In the case of different skills domains for youth and adults, following the analysis in the 2012 GMR, we propose that measures be found for foundation skills in literacy and numeracy, transferable skills (notably problem-solving skills), and technical and vocational skills. There are already data on foundation skills, and some transferable skills (notably problem-solving skills from OECD's PIAAC and from the World Bank's STEP survey), but these are currently only available for selected countries. There are some data collected by ILO on training programmes for adults outside of the formal education system, but this is not collated in a systematic way. We would, therefore, recommend this as another area of priority.
 - On financing, it will be vital to track progress on private sector contributions to post-2015 education goals, but no organization currently collects such data. As a first step, the private sector needs to be more transparent about the funds allocated for different purposes.

Finally, we believe that it is not enough to set goals – if they are to be achieved, they need regular, independent monitoring to track progress and identify policies that have facilitated such progress, as well as holding governments and the international community to account for their promises. The EFA Global Monitoring Report has put education ahead of many other sectors in this regard, and it is crucial that such independent monitoring continue after 2015.

Table 1: Indicators and targets

	Indicator	Source	Target
Overall goal			
Completion	School life expectancy	UIS	9 years
Quality	% of 15-year-olds who reach minimum learning benchmark	OECD PISA (incl. PISA for Development)	100%
1. Completion			
1.1 Pre-primary			
a. Participation	Gross enrolment ratio	UIS	100%
b. Completion	Grade 1 new entrants who have attended some ECCE programme	UIS	100%
1.2 Primary			
a. Participation	Net enrolment ratio (adjusted)	UIS	100%
	Out of school children (thousand)	UIS	0
b. Completion	Expected cohort completion rate	UIS	100%
1.3 Lower secondary			
a. Participation	Gross enrolment ratio	UIS	100%
	Out of school adolescents (thousand)	UIS	0
b. Completion	Lower secondary completion rate	UIS	100%
2. Quality			
2.1 Pre-primary	Measure of ECCE quality	–	–
2.2 Primary	% of children who reach minimum benchmark in grades 4-6	TIMMS/PIRLS, SACMEQ, PASEC, LLECE	100%
2.3 Lower secondary	% of adolescents who reach minimum benchmark in grade 8	TIMMS/PIRLS	100%
3. Youth-adult skills			
3.1 Foundational	Youth literacy rate and numeracy rate	UIS	100%
	Adult literacy rate and numeracy rate	UIS	100%
3.2 Transferable	% of youth who reach minimum benchmark in problem-solving skills	OECD PIAAC WB STEP	100%
	% of adults who reach minimum benchmark in problem-solving skills	OECD PIAAC WB STEP	100%
3.3 Technical / vocational	% of youth participating in training after formal education	ILO	–
	% of adults participating in training after formal education	ILO	–
5. Finance			
		Source	Target
5.1 Domestic	Total public expenditure on education		
	• as % of GNP	UIS	6%
	• as % of total government expenditure	UIS	20%
	Public current education expenditure		
	• to pre-primary education	UIS	10%
	• to primary education	UIS	40%
	• to lower secondary education	UIS	20%

4. Eliminating inequalities		Gender (F/M)		Location (R/U)		Wealth (Q1/Q5)		Lowest group	
Indicator	Source	Gap M-F	Ratio F/M	Gap U-R	Ratio R/U	Gap Q5-Q1	Ratio Q1/Q5	F/M R/U Q1/Q5	Mean
Mean years of education (15+)	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		9 years
% of 15-year-olds who reach minimum learning benchmark	OECD PISA (incl. PISA for development)	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
Gross enrolment ratio									
Gross enrolment ratio	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
Grade 1 new entrants who have attended some ECCE programme									
Grade 1 new entrants who have attended some ECCE programme	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
Net attendance ratio (adjusted)									
Net attendance ratio (adjusted)	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
Never been to school (primary school age) (%)									
Never been to school (primary school age) (%)	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		0
Primary completion rate (by age 15)									
Primary completion rate (by age 15)	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
Gross enrolment ratio									
Gross enrolment ratio	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
Not in school (lower secondary school age) (%)									
Not in school (lower secondary school age) (%)	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		0
Lower secondary completion rate (by age 18)									
Lower secondary completion rate (by age 18)	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
Measure of ECCE quality									
Measure of ECCE quality	–								–
% of children who reach minimum benchmark in grades 4-6									
% of children who reach minimum benchmark in grades 4-6	TIMMS/PIRLS, SACMEQ, PASEC, LLECE	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
% of adolescents who reach minimum benchmark in grade 8									
% of adolescents who reach minimum benchmark in grade 8	TIMMS/PIRLS	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
Youth literacy rate and numeracy rate									
Youth literacy rate and numeracy rate	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
Adult literacy rate and numeracy rate									
Adult literacy rate and numeracy rate	DHS etc	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
% of adults who reach minimum benchmark in problem-solving skills									
% of adults who reach minimum benchmark in problem-solving skills	OECD PIAAC WB STEP	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
% of adults who reach minimum benchmark in problem-solving skills									
% of adults who reach minimum benchmark in problem-solving skills	OECD PIAAC WB STEP	0	1	0	1	0	1		100%
% of youth participating in training after formal education									
% of youth participating in training after formal education	ILO	0	1	0	1	0	1		–
% of adults participating in training after formal education									
% of adults participating in training after formal education	ILO	0	1	0	1	0	1		–
		DAC and non-DAC donors (including BRICs)				Private international development foundations			
5.2 International	Total aid to education								
	• Share in total aid (%)		OECD		20%		–		20%
	• Share to low and lower middle income countries		OECD		75%		–		75%
	Total education aid								
	• to pre-primary education		OECD		10%		–		10%
	• to primary education		OECD		40%		–		40%
	• to lower secondary education		OECD		20%		–		20%

Table 2: Example: United Republic of Tanzania

Indicator		2010	Target
Overall goal			
Completion	School life expectancy	...	9 years
Quality	% of 15-year-olds who reach minimum learning benchmark	–	100%
1. Completion			
1.1 Pre-primary			
a. Participation	Gross enrolment ratio	33%	100%
b. Completion	Grade 1 new entrants who have attended some ECCE programme	...	100%
1.2 Primary			
a. Participation	Net enrolment ratio (adjusted)	98%	100%
	Out of school children (thousand)	137	0
b. Completion	Expected cohort completion rate	74%	100%
1.3 Lower secondary			
a. Participation	Gross enrolment ratio	...	100%
	Out of school adolescents (thousand)	...	0
b. Completion	Lower secondary completion rate	35%	100%
2. Quality			
2.1 Pre-primary	Measure of ECCE quality	–	–
2.2 Primary	% of children who reach minimum benchmark in grades 4-6	87%	100%
2.3 Lower secondary	% of adolescents who reach minimum benchmark in grade 8	–	100%
3. Youth-adult skills			
3.1 Foundational	Youth literacy rate and numeracy rate	77%	100%
	Adult literacy rate and numeracy rate	73%	100%
3.2 Transferable	% of youth who reach minimum benchmark in problem-solving skills		100%
	% of adults who reach minimum benchmark in problem-solving skills		100%
3.3 Technical / vocational	% of youth participating in training after formal education		–
	% of adults participating in training after formal education		–
5. Finance			
5.1 Domestic	Total public expenditure on education		
	• as % of GNP	7.1%	6%
	• as % of total government expenditure	27%	20%
	Public current education expenditure		
	• to pre-primary education	...	10%
	• to primary education	...	40%
	• to lower secondary education	...	20%

Indicator	Gender (F/M)		Location (R/U)		Wealth (Q1/Q5)		Lowest group	
	Gap M-F	Ratio F/M	Gap U-R	Ratio R/U	Gap Q5-Q1	Ratio Q1/Q5	F/M R/U Q1/Q5	Mean
4. Eliminating inequalities								
Mean years of education (15+)	6.6	0.6	0.92	1.9	0.76	3.9	0.54	F R Q1 3.7
% of 15-year-olds who reach minimum learning benchmark								
Gross enrolment ratio								
Grade 1 new entrants who have attended some ECCE programme								
Net attendance ratio (adjusted)								
Never been to school (primary school age) (%)	12%	2	0.86	11	4.05	21	0.07	F R Q1 24%
Primary completion rate (by age 15)	69%	0	0.99	21	0.75	43	0.52	F R Q1 41%
Gross enrolment ratio								
Not in school (lower secondary school age) (%)	42%	9	1.24	14	1.43	20	1.69	F R Q1 58%
Lower secondary completion rate (by age 18)	29%	5	0.83	26	0.46	44	0.19	F R Q1 7%
Measure of ECCE quality								
% of children who reach minimum benchmark in grades 4-6	87%	6	0.93	9	0.89	12	0.86
% of adolescents who reach minimum benchmark in grade 8								
Youth literacy rate and numeracy rate	74%	4	0.95	20	0.78	42	0.54
Adult literacy rate and numeracy rate								
% of adults who reach minimum benchmark in problem-solving skills								
% of adults who reach minimum benchmark in problem-solving skills								
% of youth participating in training after formal education								
% of adults participating in training after formal education								