

**EDUCATION FOR ALL BY 2015:
THE DAKAR FRAMEWORK OF ACTION.**

**A REPORT ON THE WORLD EDUCATION FORUM
HELD IN DAKAR, SENEGAL
26TH - 28TH APRIL 2000.**

BY

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THE BACKGROUND

The Dakar World Education Forum was held against a background of global commitments to the pledges made in Jomtien Thailand in 1990. The Jomtien Conference was rooted in fundamental values about basic human rights of every individual; justice, equity and fairness to all individuals; mutual obligations of society to all its people; the right of all people everywhere to basic education as a fundamental human right; fair and equitable treatment of all learners – infants, children, youth and adults; better learning environments; promotion of learning achievement as a significant measure of real education opportunities; and partnership in educational provision. Arising from these deeply held values and principles was a global consensus on the vision of improving opportunities for basic education and raising the level of educational performance in all countries. The Jomtien Conference on education for all was a global education movement which set the stage for a worldwide action to realise basic education for all individuals. Six Education For All goals and targets were set in the Jomtien declaration namely:

- *Expansion of early childhood care and developmental activities, including family and community interventions, especially for poor, disadvantaged and disabled children;*
- *Universal access to, and completion of primary (or whatever higher level of education is considered as basic) by the year 2000;*
- *Improvement of learning achievement such that an agreed percentage of a cohort (e.g. 80 per cent of 14 year olds) attains or surpasses a defined level of necessary learning achievement;*
- *Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate to say one half its 1990 level by the year 2000, with emphasis on female literacy to significantly reduce the current disparity between male and female illiteracy rates;*

- *Expansion of provision of basic education and training in other essential skills required by youth and adults, with programme effectiveness assessed in terms of behavioural change and impact on health, employment and productivity;*
- *Increased acquisition by individuals and families of the knowledge, skills and values required for better living and sound and sustainable development, made available through all education channels including the mass media, other forms of modern and traditional communication, and social action, with effectiveness assessed in terms of behavioural change.*

Included in the broad vision of Jomtien were such considerations as: political will and commitment, cost effectiveness and improved efficiency, local empowerment and community action, partnership, attention to girls education and the education of disadvantaged groups. improving the terms and conditions of service for teachers, child care and development. and private and voluntary funding sources. The expectations of the Jomtien Education For All vision was better learning opportunities and outcomes for all individuals in all countries in the 1990s. The end of decade World Education Forum in Dakar was both a stock taking event and a gathering for establishing new commitments and consensus.

THE DAKAR WORLD EDUCATION FORUM

The World Education Forum held in Dakar Senegal was preceded by extensive assessments of the progress towards Education For All at national levels, the mid decade review of progress in 1996 in Aman, regional meetings to discuss the progress made by specific regions, and extensive assessments of the global developments by experts at the UNESCO headquarters. The activities undertaken in preparation for the World Education Forum was testimony of the global commitment to Education For All (EFA).

The World Education Forum was sponsored by the key players in the 1990 World Conference on Education For All namely, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, and the World Bank and several multilateral and bilateral organisations. The Forum was a global gathering of

high-level decision makers, technical experts and Non Government Organisations. Honorable Brigadier General Godfrey Miyanda, Minister of Education was the head of the Zambian national delegation which consisted of Dr. Elizabeth Mumba Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor University of Zambia, Mr. Emmanuel Silanda Acting Director Planning and Research Ministry of Education and Professor Geoffrey Lungwangwa Director of Research and Graduate Studies University of Zambia. In addition to the national delegation, there were five participants from Zambia who were sponsored by various Non Government Organisations (NGOs).

The Education Forum was officially opened by the President of Senegal His Excellence Abdoulaye Wade. The keynote address was given by the Secretary General of the United Nations Mr. Kofi Annan. The official opening was followed by a global synthesis of the progress made towards the achievement of EFA since the Jomtien Conference.

ORGANISATION OF THE PROCEEDINGS

Deliberations at the World Education Forum were divided into Plenary sessions followed by Parallel Strategy sessions. Honourable Ministers of Education had special sessions at certain intervals.

Plenary sessions were divided into the following themes: *Improving the quality and equity of education for all. Making effective use of resources for education. Cooperating with the civil society to achieve social goals through education and Promoting education for democracy and citizenship.* Prominent leaders who addressed the plenary sessions included, The President of Nigeria His Excellence Ibrahim Babaginda; The Executive Director of UNICEF Ms Carol Bellamy; The President of the World Bank Mr. James D. Wolfensohn; The Director general of UNESCO Mr. Koichiro Matsuura; The Administrator of the UNDP Mr. Mark Malloch Brown; The Executive Director of UNFPA Ms. Nafis Sadik; Minister of Development Cooperation of the Netherlands Ms. Eveline Herfkens; Secretary of State of the United Kingdom Her Excellence Ms. Clare Short; Assistant Administrator USAID Mr. Thomas Fox; Her Excellence Ms. Graca Machel former Education Minister of Mozambique; Director General World Association of Newspapers Mr. Thomas Balding and Assistant to the

USA President for Economic Policy Mr. Gene B. Sperling. Minister for International Cooperation of Canada Her Excellence Ms. Maria Minna; Director – General Development Directorate European Commission Mr. Philip Lowe. A speech by President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda was read by the deputy Minister of Education. In addition, several speeches were given by various invited guests representing various countries and organisations.

At the end of each theme covered in the plenary there were eight parallel strategy sessions. Theme I on Improving the quality and equity of Basic Education was followed by the following parallel strategy sessions:

- (i) Technology for basic education: a luxury or a necessity?
- (ii) Overcoming obstacles to educating girls
- (ii) Meeting special/diverse educational needs: making inclusive education a reality.
- (iii) Making primary education universal and free
- (iv) Expanding access to early childhood care and development programmes
- (v) Designing basic education content to meet the needs and values of society
- (vi) Enabling teachers to enable learners
- (vii) Assessing learning achievement

The Parallel strategy sessions under Theme II were:

- (i) Overcoming the effects of HIV/AIDS on basic education
- (ii) Utilizing debt relief for education
- (iii) Working with the business community to strengthen basic education
- (iv) Strategic choices in the development and use of teaching and learning resources
- (v) Providing basic education in situations of emergency and crisis
- (vi) Monitoring the provision and outcomes of basic education
- (vii) Mobilising new resources for basic education
- (viii) Building partnerships with funding agencies

Theme III was divided into the following parallel strategy sessions

- (i) Fighting poverty and marginalisation through basic education
- (ii) Promoting population and reproductive health, especially among young people, through basic education
- (iii) Building social integration through bilingual and mother tongue education
A FRESH start to school health: improving learning and educational outcomes by improving health, hygiene and nutrition
- (iv) Promoting basic education and democracy: the role of the media
- (v) Including the excluded: enhancing educational access and quality
- (vi) Literacy for all: a renewed vision for a ten year global action plan
- (vii) After primary education, what?

EMERGING MESSAGES FROM THE WORLD EDUCATION FORUM

GLOBAL SYNTHESIS: Analysis of the global trends indicated that the Jomtien goals and targets were not pursued with great vigour in some countries. In certain countries, education reforms stood still in the 1990s and these countries registered declines in enrollments. There was lack of commitments to Education For All in some countries. Some of the major contextual issues which stood in the way of real progress in most countries were poverty, poor efficient resource management, lack of good governance and poor social economic policies. A major problem which affected many countries was poor knowledge base for EFA. Many countries had poor Education Information Management Systems (EIMS). Lack of data, poor monitoring and evaluation of EFA was a common phenomena in many countries. The challenges of Education For All as evidenced by the global synthesis were the need for effective utilisation of the professionals, establishment of effective policy coordination, development of strong partnerships, mobilisation of more resources accompanied by their efficient management and the development of a knowledge base for EFA through better data collection, storage, analysis and utilisation.

HIV/AIDS: The message from the UNAIDS representative was that the greatest threat to mankind and hence to all educational developments is the HIV/AIDS epidemic. He observed

that AIDS will for a long time to come be a human condition. Education which can effectively change peoples behaviour is extremely important. Narrowing the gender gap in the era of HIV/AIDS is very vital. Countries should develop well structured programmes of sex education which can contribute towards lowering promiscuity. Life skills education and education and information about AIDS for all children are the most important social vaccines against HIV/AIDS. The way forward was for countries to come up with policies and programmes that ensure education for orphans who are victims of HIV/AIDS, integrating AIDS education in Non Formal Education, development of innovative education programmes for girls the most vulnerable group today. The UNAIDS representative cautioned the global community that every delay towards implementation deepens the HIV/AIDS epidemic and wipes out a generation.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: Inclusive education was one of the key principles floated for attention at the Forum. All speakers stated that basic education is a fundamental right of every individual regardless of their life circumstances. Inequalities within educational systems was viewed as affecting the disabled, the rural poor, and the urban poor. Education is the only way of getting those who are marginalised into the mainstream of society. The Director General of UNESCO called on countries to make their education systems non exclusive by focusing on the development of both the formal education system and the non formal education alternatives and use Information Technology to extend education opportunities to those who are left by the formal education. Making education inclusive requires paying attention to establishment of less expensive education delivery systems that are more flexible. An inclusive education system is one which is accessible and equitable. The Executive Director of UNICEF pointed out that "EFA will remain a dream unless excluded children are covered". Some of the examples of strategies for achieving inclusive education for all were decentralisation to involve all stakeholders in educational provision, orchestrating local demand for school by recognising social and cultural barriers, creating a basket of education programmes (in case of India); attracting children to stay in school through school feeding programmes, school textbook programmes, school television programmes (in Case of Brazil); removing of cost barrier in education through universal free primary education (in case of Uganda)

GIRLS EDUCATION: The education of girls was strongly highlighted by all speakers. The keynote address of the United Nations Secretary General highlighted the significance of girls education in efforts aimed at achieving education for all. In his view, the motto and *raison d'être* of the World Education Forum was narrowing the gender gap in education. He stressed the need for equal access of boys and girls to all levels of education and gender sensitivity in all education aspects. Countries were called upon to spend more on girls education. Efforts should be sought to remove constraints that hinder parents from sending their girls to school and keep them there. Once girls were in school, they should be effectively prepared for life. They should be given tools for survival, that is, Information Technology. The battle to educate girls it was observed cannot be won without the energy and initiative of NGOs, support of the business community, effective role of the Information Technology industry, communities and families. There was a strong appeal for the need to build partnership for the education of girls with a focus on improving content, quality and relevance. HIV/AIDS, sexuality education, family life education, gender issues, reproductive health and so on should be part of the content. The UN Secretary General proposed that there should be a debt relief for girls education.

POVERTY: The biggest barrier to education, it was noted, was poverty. Many educational systems impose costs of access, school fees and the requirement for school uniforms which are a further barrier to education for the poorest. Countries were requested to address the education opportunities of the poor by reducing the direct and indirect costs that make education prohibitively expensive for them.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: The World Bank President alerted the conference to the challenge of globalisation. The challenge being the advancements in the digital revolution. Education programmes, it was stressed, should be related to the new forms of technology. Countries were cautioned not to perpetuate backwardness by responding to the challenges of the digital revolution. Information Technology it was, emphasised, should be harnessed to enhance and improve classroom teaching. Proper use of Information and Communication Technologies it was observed, could make basic education available to anyone, anywhere, anytime. Education must be modern by strengthening science teaching from primary level. President Obasanjo observed that the twenty first century was a

knowledge and information driven century. It is a digital revolution century. He called upon African countries to invest in human capital in order to face the challenges of the information age with courage and dignity.

EDUCATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT: Improvements in data collection, storage, analysis and utilisation was considered important for all countries. Efforts should be made in every country to establish knowledge base for EFA. This means generating data on all Education For All activities which includes early childhood education, primary education (or basic education), education for out of school children and youth and adult literacy. Data on EFA should involve monitoring activities, assessing progress towards established goals and evaluating learning achievements and learning outcomes. The donor representatives expressed willingness to assist in building capacities in establishment of Education Information Management Systems in countries where this was weak.

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS: Countries were called upon to develop solid national EFA action plans which will improve access and quality. The action plans should involve all stakeholders. Quality basic education, elimination of gender gaps, assurance of the inalienable right of everyone to education, clear and coherent priorities should be some of the major focus of the action plans. The action plans should in addition address the moral imperative of EFA namely to give hope to all marginalised groups in society. Examples of some of the concrete steps which can be taken include second chance education programmes for dropouts, literacy campaigns and programmes for youth and adults, banning worst forms of child labour, expansion of early childhood education and making education the centre of economic strategies aimed at achieving economic growth and combating poverty. The representatives of the Donor community stressed that countries with clear basic education policies and programmes will be supported financially and technically. Most of the representatives of the Donor community who took the stage to speak shared one message which the Economic Adviser to the US President summarized in the following words: "No country seriously committed to EFA should be constrained to achieve its goals by lack of resources. If you build a commitment to basic education, the International community will come. Debt relief must be targeted to clear EFA goals." The Executive Director of UNICEF Ms. Carol Bellamy called on Donor countries to accelerate the process of debt forgiveness

saying that debt should be forgiven immediately for countries that have a visible Education For All plan that can replace a poverty reduction strategy plan. In formulating national action plans for EFA, countries should have the courage to address new challenges like universal and free primary education, quality teachers, acceptable Pupil Teacher ratios, increasing the use of Information Technology, school health programmes and development and utilisation of research findings. National action plans must be clear expressions of the country's political will and commitment to Education For All.

RESOURCE MOBILISATION: The problem of under funding basic education, it was stated, was because of little efforts given in mobilising resources. Countries should give attention to mechanisms of mobilising resources from NGOs, communities, the business community and other partners. Mobilisation of new allies for basic education should be the goal. Resources include money, people, materials, labour, dialogue, time and ideas. Resources encompass both those required for expanding coverage and those needed for improving quality. To avoid one of the failures of Jomtien, efforts should be made to align resources with vision. The G7 group was called upon to commit resources to education. Governments should aim at allocating up to 6% of the GDP to education. Debt swap for education was considered a necessary strategy for assisting poorer nations.

DONOR FUNDING: Donor funding to education, it was observed, was still at the lowest levels. Global education funding stands at about 120 – 130 billion US dollars. This is mostly provided by governments themselves who contribute about 74% of the total budget, the communities and the private sector put in 23 percent and donors contribute a mere 3%. Given this low level of support to education by the donor community a call was made Britain's Secretary of State for International Development Ms. Clare Short for the World Education Forum to demand that the international community financially back countries committed to universal basic education. She assured the Forum of Her government's further support to basic education especially in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the regions with the worst education indicators.

EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY: Education, it was pointed out, should not be limited to the notion of the transmission of knowledge and skills. Rather, it is learning to know.

learning to be, and learning to live together. Education should develop citizenship. Education is *sine qua non* to democratic development. The structure, organisation, management, and internal culture of education can enforce democracy. Countries were called upon to seek ways in which they can shape the processes and practices of institutions that are vital in shaping their models of democracy. Schools should combine knowledge, ethics, values and attitudes in order to produce a persona whose actions does not compromise the democratic values of equity, equality, justice and fairness. Countries were requested to take steps to change the contents of education. This means introducing values such as democracy, tolerance and peace, and not just education designed to meet the needs of the market.

GOOD GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATION: Resources allocations to education should be subjected to good management. International assistance in education of whatever form should be accompanied by better efficiency and management of resources within the systems of education. Good management involves creating more impact with available resources. Aligning resources with set goals is important in creating impact. Equitable sharing of resources between the rural and urban areas is an indicator of good management of resources. Education authorities should learn from the private sector in order to improve efficiency in resource management. Good management of education is not fast tracking. There is need to establish knowledge of past experience and understand what worked and what did not. There is need to streamline Donor aid through establishment of mechanisms of consultations, establishment of sector-wide approaches, integration of education action plans with poverty reduction initiatives, removal of inefficiencies, critical attention to the share of education in the GDP and understanding and careful assessment of the role of communities.

PARTNERSHIP: Effective partnerships, it was stated, was necessary in achieving the goals of EFA. Education should not be left to the government alone. Countries should build national pacts for education which go beyond the mandate of one government and parliament. Education should be a matter of national concern, priority and mandate which goes beyond the life of one parliament. A long term vision of Education For All can only be effectively realised through creation of partnerships which can sustain it even under conditions of changes in national leadership.

THE MISSING LINK: What to do after Basic education was a question raised at the Forum. The question was discussed in the parallel strategy session on After Basic Education What? It was observed in the discussion that while countries and donors have given attention to basic and higher education the link between the two i.e. what should happen in between is missing. Little attention has been given to exploration of issues of what should be done after basic education. Achievement of EFA, it was noted, cannot be possible unless half of secondary school leavers become teachers each year. The digital revolution can, on the other hand, only be achieved by people with postprimary education i.e. those with abstract thinking capacities.

Secondary education in its current form was viewed as inappropriate. It neither makes people think nor prepares them for life. Existing structures of secondary education are unaffordable by the great majority of people. There is need to change the current structure of secondary education. Countries should think in terms of **post basic education alternative choices of education and training.**

Possible paths to follow after basic education should be put on the agenda. The agenda should include such issues as: the relationship between education and work, the need to link learning to social economic needs, combinations of work and service with learning processes, increasing the use of Information Technology in education delivery, reform of the secondary schools system, demand led and not supply driven structures, community initiated institutions, specialized learning centres etc. Countries were requested to think not only in terms of quality secondary school for the elites but in terms of alternative education and training opportunities which can come through community schools, distance learning centres, night and part time schools, apprenticeship, work/study programmes and so on.

Post basic education should be broad based. It should be a combination of all possible routes to meaningful learning. The guiding goal should be developing basic learning needs. Post basic education should teach people how to be and how to provide services to the communities. The role of the state in this process should be to define learning outcomes based on social economic realities. Countries should be creative and come up with alternative delivery systems which can create learning opportunities. Donors should be

engendered into creating these alternative learning opportunities. AID agencies should finance policy experiments into post basic education alternative learning experiments.

THE ESSENCE OF THE EDUCATION FORUM

The World Education Forum was about reaffirming commitments to the EFA vision as declared in Jomtien in 1990 given global evidence of low progress to achieve set goals and targets. It was also about demonstrating practical innovations which work in extending education opportunities to identified groups. It was, in addition, about openness to each other among all those who are partners in the strive to provide Education For All. It was about creativity and imagination in thinking and planning of what is possible. It was about learning from experiences of other countries. It was about paying attention to problems faced by least developed regions like Sub Saharan Africa and South Asia in meeting basic learning needs of the people. It was about taking action to realize quality basic education for all NOW.

The Dakar Framework of Action adopted by the Forum attached herewith as an appendix expresses the commitment to put Education for All at the centre of development efforts at national and international levels. The Framework for Action calls for taking hard but necessary decisions like universal compulsory free primary education.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ZAMBIA AND THE WAY FORWARD

Zambia has been a flag carrier of EFA since 1990. Many programmes and activities relevant to EFA have been established in the last ten years.

Included among these activities are BESSIP which aims at universalising quality basic education; PAGE which has been an advocacy for girls education; ZERP which focused on school rehabilitation and construction, education management training, and quality improvement through education materials provision; community schools which targets providing education opportunities to excluded children like orphans and various categories of disadvantaged children; Basic education through distance learning which gives learning opportunities through radio to disadvantaged children.

Many NGOs have been encouraged to participate in educational provision at preschool, Basic education, and in nonformal education activities for youth and adults. The national education policy encourages participation in education by communities, the private sectors, NGOs and other agencies. Donor coordination is currently effectively being exercised through the Joint Steering Committee of BESSIP in the case of basic education. Monitoring exercises of learning achievement has taken effect in the basic education sector through M.L.A. studies.

All these activities and programmes attest to the commitment the country has given to the vision of Jomtien on Education For All. The national assessment exercise on progress made in EFA has shown significant improvements. Enrolment ratios in basic education (Grade 1 - 7) have increased significantly (at 88% Net Enrolment Ratio), there is almost parity in primary school enrolment between boys and girls, even rural regions have registered increases in enrolments for both boys and girls. The education opportunities for disadvantaged children in community schools are on the increase. Opportunities for pre-school education in urban areas have reached a 25% mark. It is in rural areas where children have very little opportunities for preschool education. Enrolments in adult literacy programmes has increased over the years. These quantitative achievements indicate significant developments in realisation of the goals of EFA in the country.

Some of the problems which still stand in the way of effective achievements are: poor coordination of all the activities and programmes, poor data bases to provide the magnitude of impact, underfunding across all the areas of EFA, low learning outcomes, disparities in education opportunities between the rural/urban areas and the rising levels of poverty which make participation in education among the poor difficult.

The way forward for Zambia is do adopt the spirit of the Dakar World Education Forum which is, to continue doing more to achieve Basic Education for All by 2015. The guiding principles in this direction are: partnership with all stakeholders, effective co-ordination of all EFA activities and programmes, more resource mobilisation from within the country and outside, efficient use of resources, effective monitoring and evaluation of progress being made, close focus on learning achievement, establishment of clear national action plans,

increased support in terms of resources by the Donor community and more attention to the education opportunities of excluded children, youth and adults.

The immediate steps which should be taken are:

- (1) Establishment of an Education For All Task Force involving all stakeholders which will spearhead coordination and monitoring of the basic education for all activities in the country.
- (2) Formulation of EFA goals and strategies and ^(SIC) national plans of action which the country should follow over the next fifteen years.
- (3) Organisation of a national EFA conference before the end of 2000 to adopt the EFA goals and strategies and the national action plan.
- (4) Carryout a comprehensive directorate of all the EFA activities and programmes currently going on in the country.

APPENDIX

Education For All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments

1. Meeting in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000, we, the participants in the World Education Forum, commit ourselves to the achievement of education for all (EFA) goals and targets for every citizen and for every society.
2. The Dakar Framework is a collective commitment to action. Governments have an obligation to ensure that EFA goals and targets are reached and sustained. This is a responsibility that will be met most effectively through broad-based partnerships within countries, supported by cooperation with regional and international agencies and institutions.
3. We re-affirm the vision of the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien 1990), supported by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention of the Rights of the Child, that every child, youth and adult has the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and fullest sense of the term, an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be. It is an education geared to tapping each person's talents and potential, and developing learners' personalities, so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies.
4. We welcome the commitments made by the international community to basic education throughout the 1990s, notably at the World Summit for Children (1990), the Conference on Environment and Development (1992), the International Conference on Population and Development (1994), the World Summit for Social Development (1995), the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), the Mid-Term Meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All (1996), the International Conference on Adult Education (1997), and the International Conference on Child Labour (1997). The challenge now is to deliver on these commitments.

5. The EFA 2000 Assessment demonstrates that there has been significant progress in many countries. But it is unacceptable in the year 2000 that more than 113 million children have no access to primary education, 880 million adults are illiterate, gender discrimination continues to permeate education systems, and the quality of learning and the acquisition of human values and skills fall far short of the aspirations and needs of individuals and societies. Youth and adults are denied access to the skills and knowledge necessary for gainful employment and full participation in their societies. Without accelerated progress towards education for all, national and internationally agreed targets for poverty reduction will be missed, and inequalities between countries and within societies will widen.
6. Education is a fundamental human right. It is the key to sustainable development and peace and stability within and among countries, and thus an indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies of the twenty-first century, which are witnessing rapid globalization. Achieving EFA goals should be postponed no longer. The basic learning needs of all can and must be urgently.
7. We hereby collectively commit ourselves to the attainment of the following goals:
 - (i) expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
 - (ii) ensuring that by 2015 all children, with special emphasis on girls, children in difficult circumstances and from ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
 - (iii) ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes;
 - (iv) achieving 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;

- (v) eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving 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;
 - (vi) improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.
8. To achieve these goals, we the governments, organizations, agencies, groups and associations represented at the World Education Forum pledge ourselves to:
- (i) mobilize strong national and international political commitment for education for all, develop national action plans and enhance significantly investment in basic education;
 - (ii) promote EFA policies within a sustainable and well-integrated sector framework clearly linked to poverty elimination and development strategies;
 - (iii) ensure the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for educational development;
 - (iv) develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management;
 - (v) meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and help to prevent violence and conflict;

- (vi) implement integrated strategies for gender equality in education which recognize the need for changes in attitudes, values and practices;
- (vii) urgently implement education programmes and actions to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic;
- (viii) create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning and clearly defined levels of achievement for all;
- (ix) enhance the status, morale and professionalism of teachers;
- (x) harness new information and communication technologies to help achieve EFA goals;
- (xi) systematically monitor progress towards EFA goals and strategies at the national, regional and international levels;
- (xii) build on existing mechanisms to accelerate progress towards education for all.

9. Drawing on the evidence accumulated during the national and regional EFA assessments, and building on existing national sector strategies, all States will be requested to develop or strengthen existing national plans of action by 2002 at the latest. These plans should be integrated into a wider poverty reduction and development framework, and should be developed through more transparent and democratic processes, involving stakeholders, especially people's representatives, community leaders, parents, learners, NGOs and civil society. The plans will address problems associated with the chronic under-financing of basic education by establishing budget priorities that reflect a commitment to achieving EFA goals and targets at the earliest possible date, and no later than 2015. They will also set out clear strategies for overcoming the special problems facing those currently excluded from educational opportunities, with a clear commitment to girl's education and gender

equity. The plans will give substance and form to the goals and strategies set out in this document, and to the commitments made during a succession of international conferences in the 1990s. Regional activities to support national strategies will be based on strengthened regional and sub-regional organisations, network and initiatives.

10. Political will and stronger national leadership are needed for the effective and successful implementation of national plans in each of the countries concerned. However, political will must be underpinned by resources. The international community acknowledges that many countries currently lack the resources to achieve education for all within an acceptable time-frame. New financial resources, preferably in the form of grants and concessional assistance, must therefore be mobilized by bilateral and multilateral funding agencies, including the World Bank and regional development banks, and the private sector. We affirm that no countries seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources.

11. The international community will deliver on this collective commitment by developing with immediate effect a global initiative aimed at developing the strategies and mobilizing the resources needed to provide effective support to national efforts. Options to be considered under this initiative will include:

increasing external finance for education, in particular basic education;

ensuring greater predictability in the flow of external assistance;

facilitating more effective donor coordination;

strengthening sector-wide approaches;

providing earlier, deeper and broader debt relief and/or debt cancellation for poverty reduction, with a strong commitment to basic education;

undertaking more effective and regular monitoring of progress towards EFA goals and targets, including periodic assessments.

There is already evidence from many countries of what can be achieved through strong national strategies supported by effective development cooperation. Progress under these strategies could - and must - be accelerated through increased international support. At the same time, countries with less developed strategies - including countries affected by conflict, countries in transition, and post-crisis countries - must be given the support they need to achieve more rapid progress towards education for all.

12. We will strengthen accountable international and regional mechanisms to give clear expression to these commitments and ensure that the Dakar Framework for Action is on the agenda of every international and regional organisation, every national legislature and every local decision-making forum.
13. The EFA 2000 Assessment highlights that the challenge of education for all is greatest in sub-Saharan Africa, in South Asia, and in the least developed countries. Accordingly, while no country in need should be denied international assistance, priority should be given to these regions and countries. Countries in conflict or undergoing reconstruction should also be given special attention in building up their education systems to meet the needs of all learners.
14. **Build on existing mechanisms to accelerate progress to EFA**

Implementation of the preceding goals and strategies will require national, regional and international mechanisms to be galvanised immediately. To be most effective these mechanisms will be participatory and, wherever possible, build on what already exists. They will include representatives of all stakeholders and partners and will operate in transparent and accountable ways. They will respond comprehensively to the word and spirit of the Jomtein Declaration and this Dakar Framework of Action.

The functions of these mechanisms will include, to varying degrees, advocacy, resource mobilisation, monitoring, and EFA knowledge generation and sharing.

The heart of EFA activity lies at the country level. National EFA Forums will be strengthened or established to support the achievement of EFA. All relevant ministries and national civil society organisations will be systematically represented in these Forums. They should be transparent and democratic and should constitute a framework for implementation at sub-national levels. Countries will prepare comprehensive National EFA Plans by 2002 at the latest. For those countries with significant challenges, such as complex crises or natural disasters, special technical support will be provided by the international community. Each National EFA Plan will:

- be developed by government leadership in direct and systematic consultation with national civil society;
- attract coordinated support of all development partners;
- specify reforms addressing the six EFA goals;
- establish a sustainable financial framework;
- be time-bound and action-oriented;
- include mid-term performance indicators; and
- achieve a synergy of all human development efforts, through its inclusion within the national development planning framework and process.

Where these processes and a credible plan are in place, partner members of the international community commit to working in a consistent, coordinated and coherent manner. Each partner will contribute according to its comparative advantage in support of the National EFA Plans to ensure that resource gaps are filled.

Regional activities to support national efforts will be based on existing regional and sub-regional organisations, networks and initiatives, augmented where necessary. Regions and sub-regions will decide on a lead EFA network that will become the Regional or Sub-regional Forum with an explicit EFA mandate. Systematic involvement of, and coordination with, all relevant civil society and other regional and

sub-regional organisations is essential. These Regional and Sub-regional EFA Forums will be linked organically with, and be accountable to National EFA Forums. Their functions will be: co-ordination with all relevant networks; setting and monitoring regional/sub-regional targets; advocacy; policy dialogue; the promotion of partnerships and technical cooperation; the sharing of best practices and lessons learned; monitoring and reporting for accountability; and promoting resource mobilisation. Regional and international support will be available to strengthen Regional and Sub-regional Forums and relevant EFA capacities, especially within Africa and South Asia.

UNESCO will continue its mandated role in coordinating EFA partners and maintaining their collaborative momentum. In line with this, the UNESCO Director-General will convene annually a high-level small and flexible group. It will serve as a lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilisation. Informed by a monitoring report from the UNESCO institutes (IIEP, IBE, UIE) and, in particular the Institute of Statistics, and inputs from Regional and Sub-regional EFA Forums, it will also be an opportunity to hold the global community to account for commitments made in Dakar. It will be composed of highest-level leaders from governments and civil society of developing and developed countries, and development agencies.

UNESCO will serve as the Secretariat. It will refocus its education programme in order to place the outcomes and priorities of Dakar at the heart of its work. This will involve working groups on each of the six goals adopted at Dakar. This Secretariat will work closely with other organisations and may include staff seconded from them.

Achieving Education For All will require additional financial support by countries and increased development assistance and debt relief for education by bilateral and multilateral donors, estimated to cost in the order of \$8 billion a year. It is therefore essential that new, concrete financial commitments be made by national governments and also by multilateral donors including the World Bank, and the regional development banks, civil society and foundations.