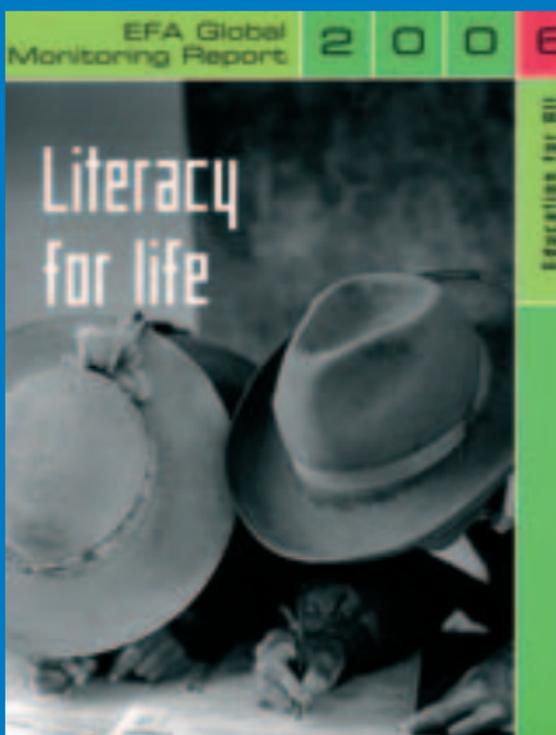


# EI analysis

## THE STATE OF PLAY ON EDUCATION FOR ALL: EI'S RESPONSE TO THE GLOBAL MONITORING REPORT 2006



Taking literacy as its focus, the Global Monitoring Report (GMR) 2006 poses some very pertinent questions:

- Is the world on track to achieve Education for All by 2015?
- What challenges lie ahead in the area of early childhood care and education?
- Where do we stand on universal primary education, including the ongoing challenge of children outside schools?
- Will there be enough qualified teachers to provide quality education for all?

This review summarises the assessment made by UN partner organisations on these matters and comments upon the GMR from the EI perspective.

**EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL**

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# GLOSSARY



## AIDS

Acquired  
Immunodeficiency  
Syndrome

## ECCE

Early Childhood Care  
and Education

## EFA

Education For All

## FTI

World Bank's Fast  
Track Initiative for  
Education

## G8

Group of Eight  
Industrialised Nations

## GCE

Global Campaign for  
Education

## GDP

Gross Domestic  
Product

## GMR

Global Monitoring  
Report

## GNI

Gross National Income

## GNP

Gross National  
Product

## GNP

Gross National  
Product

## HIV

Human  
Immunodeficiency  
Virus

## IMF

International  
Monetary Fund

## MDG

Millennium  
Development Goals

## NGO

Non Governmental  
Organisation

## ODA

Official Development  
Aid

## PRSP

Poverty Reduction  
Strategy Paper

## UNESCO

United Nations  
Educational,  
Scientific and  
Cultural Organisation

## WB

World Bank



## INTRODUCTION

When the Framework for Action was agreed upon in Dakar in 2000, a crucial decision was made: to annually produce a report which would provide an update on progress made and challenges still ahead with regard to achieving Education for All by 2015. This year's report is the fourth of its kind and outlines in detail the developments worldwide.

Each year, the GMR pays attention to a specific theme. In previous years this included the issues of Gender and Equality (2004) and Quality Education (2005). This time round the specific focus is on Literacy. Every year the emphasis is laid on further related areas which are also of crucial importance to teachers and their unions. For example, what achievements have been made by national governments thus far on securing Education for All? What is the role of national teachers organisations in achieving the national EFA plans? What is the education sector response to the HIV pandemic? What are the teachers' needs? The GMR addresses these and other issues.

The GMR is a voluminous document of over 400 pages, full of details and country information, analysis and statistics. However although the number of pages might pose a problem to union leaders facing tremendous challenges of all kinds, it is in the view of EI an absolute must to take note, since the document touches upon a range of key policy areas with serious implications for the teaching community. Moreover, practice shows that in many instances these data are more well known in Washington and Paris than at national level. In that sense the Global Monitoring Report definitely provides a key tool for unionists.

Indeed the annual GMR on Education for All is by no means a book to be left on the shelf. It should be treated as a working document which unionists worldwide can draw upon in their discussions with membership and the government.

In this review of Chapters 2, 3 and 4 referring to EFA progress, country efforts and international commitments to EFA respectively, EI has endeavoured to highlight some key areas of importance and to comment upon them from the union perspective. EI hopes that the result is of value to all of its readers.

## ON LITERACY FOR LIFE

*"Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults"* was one of the six goals adopted at Dakar in 2000. Literacy, a subject which has been somewhat neglected in the period since Dakar, is the thematic focus of the GMR 2006.

Literacy represents a vital challenge because it is at the very foundation of learning. What is more, the achievement of EFA is inextricably linked to adult literacy. Today there are 771 million illiterate adults worldwide (18% of the adult population) as against 871 million in 1990. But these figures are misleading. As such, they hide the fact that achievements on literacy vary hugely from region to region. For example, whilst East Asia and the Pacific saw a drop in illiteracy rates of 44% between 1990 and 2004, during this same period, the level increased by 9% in Sub Saharan Africa. This demonstrates that progress made thus far is insufficient to balance out population growth. Meanwhile Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger consistently have the lowest rates of literacy (below 20%).

It is important to note that indigenous populations and the disabled are particularly excluded from learning. Moreover, women account for 64% of the world's illiterate. What makes this statistic even worse is the fact that it has remained unchanged since 1990, indicating that although important achievements have been made in certain countries over this period, in others, the wheels of progress are rolling backwards.

Once again the correlation between illiteracy and poverty is singled out in this report. *"Where poverty rates are higher, literacy rates tend to be lower"*<sup>1</sup>. For example, in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India and Mozambique, 78% of the population is living on less than \$2 a day, and literacy rates are below 63%.

Examples of good practice and praiseworthy policies have been observed in certain countries. Nevertheless literacy remains the weakest link in education systems. In many countries governments earmark barely 1% of their national education budget for literacy programmes. According to a preliminary study commissioned for this report, US\$26 billion will be needed between now and 2015 to enable 550 million people to participate in literacy programmes with a duration of 400 hours. Once again adequate financing, supported by the international community must be examined. This can only be achieved by means of a holistic approach to Education For All.

The advantages of literacy, whether human, social, cultural, political or economic, are numerous and to a large extent have already been demonstrated. This report reasserts statistics and concrete examples in support of the fact that the development of formal education is the most important factor in worldwide progress on literacy and that the school remains to be the place where most people acquire basic literacy skills.

# EFA: WHERE DO WE STAND? ON SCHOOL LIFE EXPECTANCY

*"About 100 million children of primary school age were not enrolled in primary school in 2002".<sup>2</sup> In Sub-Saharan Africa the school age population is likely to increase by 34 million, or 32% between 2000 and 2015. This begs the question, what will the situation be like in the schools of 2015?*

What is the average duration of education that any child can expect? The report gives a clear but unacceptable answer: *"A child in sub-Saharan Africa can expect to attend school for an average of five to nine fewer years than in Western Europe or the Americas."*<sup>3</sup> This figure is startling and thus worth repeating: five to nine years less. The first step towards closing this gap lies with Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). Every educationist will agree that this phase is extremely important for the rest of the life of any child. But participation levels in pre-primary education are still very low within the countries most in need of ECCE. The GMR notes that *"progress [on this] between 1998 and 2002 was limited."*<sup>4</sup> What is more, in Morocco, Bangladesh and the Dominican Republic a decline in attendance was reported.

Much of the focus in the GMR is on school life expectancy in primary education. It is here that most investments are made. It is also here that governments like to show progress. Still the GMR is less than enthusiastic. *"Worldwide, progress towards universal primary education has been slow since Dakar."*<sup>5</sup> The global net enrolment rate in primary education increased by only one percentage point, from 83.6% in 1998 to 84.6% in 2002. In that same period the total enrolment in primary education rose from 655 million to 671. Some breakthroughs have been made. Several of the countries recording increases recently abolished school fees, such as Tanzania, Guinea and Lesotho. In Niger, the net enrolment rate increased from 26% to 38%. Yet despite these increasing numbers, schools still face the challenges of grade repetition (34% in Gabon) and retention (Malawi 22%).

The Global Monitoring Report also outlines gender disparities in primary education. These enrolment disparities start in Grade One. This is a crucial moment because once enrolled, girls tend to perform better than boys. Also survival rates are generally higher for girls than for boys, everywhere, that is, except sub-Saharan Africa. Countries like India and Nepal have made considerable progress. On the other hand nearby Pakistan is amongst the lowest on the Gender Parity Index. And still only little more than half - 104 out of 180 countries - have achieved gender parity in primary education.

Secondary and tertiary education feel the impact of these increases in enrolment in primary schools. Between 1998 and 2002 the number of secondary students rose from 430 million to almost 500 million. *"Meeting this demand will be a major education policy challenge in the coming decades."*<sup>6</sup> Many more teachers will be needed in secondary schools in the coming years. EI takes the view that it is crucial for teachers' unions to be part of the debate on supply and demand. If they stay out or are kept out of that debate, they will most likely be confronted with a new round of crash courses and para-teachers, this time at secondary schools.

Every education system has to make sure that those who finish primary schools have a fair chance to enter secondary schools. Some countries still have transition rates below 70%. Again, in particular girls are the first to be excluded from the transition to secondary schools. As the GMR states *"Only 57 of 172 countries have reached gender parity in secondary education."*<sup>7</sup>

Finances play a crucial role in enrolment rates and are – in addition – an extra impediment for girls. The report is clear on this issue and the observation made in this report should have direct policy implications in all countries facing the gender disparity: *"When access to school is limited because of high direct costs, girls are less likely than boys to participate in secondary education. When access is not limited by resource constraints, more girls than boys participate, especially at the upper secondary level."*<sup>8</sup> This is also evident in tertiary education: *"enrolment ratios for women are higher than those for men in half the developing countries."*<sup>9</sup>

## ON QUALITY EDUCATION

The sixth Dakar Goal on EFA focuses on quality learning outcomes, and measurable achievements. In this respect, the GMR expresses its concerns on underachievement in many countries: *"Achieving EFA requires improvements in the quality of learning throughout the school system,"*<sup>10</sup> in developing countries as well as industrialised nations. Still the main concerns lie with Sub-Saharan Africa, where there is conclusive evidence that achievement levels have decreased in recent years in several countries. A major handicap here is the lack of data which would allow for a systematic monitoring of the quality of education.



# EFA: WHERE DO WE STAND?

Although the subject of quality figured prominently in the previous report, this issue, which is of such crucial importance to teachers worldwide, is not sufficiently highlighted in the 2006 GMR. Quality is of permanent concern and should be consistently prioritised in all reports.



## EI on quality education

You have heard the outcry of the teachers assembled here. Their outcry is not first and foremost on their salaries; their outcry is on their sense of being professionals. Worldwide I hear many teachers who share with me their feelings of embarrassment and shame. They go home frustrated because they have – again – been confronted with the impossible task to teach 80 or more children. You can be frustrated once or twice, but not on a day to day basis. That leads to cynicism and demotivation and high stress levels amongst educators.

Eswaran, General Secretary of the All India Primary Teachers Federation (AIPTF) and member of the EI Executive Board

## Prospects for 2015

Amongst the 90 countries that have not yet achieved Universal Primary Education (and for which a projection could be made) only 20 are likely to reach the goal by 2015. A further 44 are expected to make reasonable progress. Twenty are at considerable risk because their Net Enrolment Rates are decreasing. These are mostly countries in transition in Central and Eastern Europe, and Central Asia.

Likewise on gender parity the situation is still far from perfect. Of the one hundred countries that had not achieved gender parity by 2002, only six are likely to get there by 2005, and only eight more by 2015. The remaining 86 are at risk of not achieving it at all. This leads to a conclusion to which EI can fully subscribe: *“There has been steady but insufficient progress towards the EFA goals.”*<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> GMR, p. 169

<sup>2</sup> GMR, p. 47

<sup>3</sup> GMR, p. 38

<sup>4</sup> GMR, p. 39

<sup>5</sup> GMR, p. 41

<sup>6</sup> GMR, p. 51

<sup>7</sup> GMR, p. 56

<sup>8</sup> GMR, p. 57

<sup>9</sup> GMR, p. 57

<sup>10</sup> GMR, p. 58

<sup>11</sup> GMR, p. 71

## COUNTRY EFFORTS: INCREASING MOMENTUM IS EFA A NATIONAL PRIORITY?

Many governments have developed a PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) which outlines their policies on tackling the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Education is to be part of that PRSP process. But is it really?

The 2006 GMR notes that *"education chapters were not well integrated into the broader strategies."* Furthermore the financial sustainability of education plans are found to be *"too optimistic about domestic financing and heavily dependent upon external aid."*<sup>12</sup> Over the period 2000–2004 budget allocations generally increased in Latin America but declined in Sub-Saharan Africa. It has been argued – for instance by the Delors Commission in 1996 – that governments should invest at least 6% of their GNP in education. Anything below that point may have serious consequences for the quality of education.

Still, the percentage of GNP spent is not the only method of measuring commitment to education goals. Another way is to look at the share of total government expenditure devoted to education. Here we note that while in industrialised countries this share seldom goes beyond 15%, more than half of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa surpass this level by far. For example, Botswana and Guinea spend over 25% of the national budget on education. In other countries the proportion spent is declining, notably in South Africa, Ecuador and Togo. However in some countries access to education improved without any corresponding increase in public spending on education. This led to a dramatic increase in pupil/teacher ratios, *"dramatically so in Ethiopia and ... Tanzania."*<sup>13</sup>

This is clearly a matter that requires the full attention of national teachers' organisations. National commitment to the Dakar Goals is also shown through budgetary allocation.



Thus it is of key importance that unions carry out a thorough study on public funding of their education systems. The 2006 report strongly expresses support for EI's views on this matter: *"The level of public resources allocated to education is crucial to the achievement of EFA"*<sup>14</sup>

Despite positive steps in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda to abolish school fees, in many countries they continue to represent a major obstacle. Private contributions remain very common at public schools and institutions. This too is a matter for further investigation by the unions and their partners within the national GCE.

### Consultation of civil society and teachers' unions on national EFA plans

Time and again, EI and the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) remind governments of the commitment they made in Dakar to consult and engage civil society in the EFA process. Practice shows that most governments have not put this commitment into effect. The report is straightforward



ward on this issue: *"unions are not fully engaged in national policy discussions"* and these discussions are *"often limited to time-bound thematic consultations rather than involving sustained, institutionalized dialogue on national education policy as a whole."*<sup>15</sup> Furthermore *"it remains uncertain whether the first decade of this century will be characterized by a more participatory approach than was the case in the 1990s."*<sup>16</sup>

Still, in a number of countries, unions have succeeded in making progress. For example in Peru and Ecuador, unions are now part of a national process of consultation. In Tanzania, Burkina Faso and Mali unions have also made progress on getting their voices heard but only following a strong and pro-active intervention to this end.



## El on dialogue

In many countries, dialogue and seeking consensus are not the fashion of the day. Rather, leaders resort to their notion of 'strong leadership' and skip the consultation process. I come from a country where the majority of the population was never consulted for decades. Systematic exclusion was a disaster for the country. After liberation we all discovered the need for and the great value of dialogue. As El President, I seek to promote this spirit of dialogue between education authorities and unions wherever possible. EFA can only be achieved when all stakeholders are included. Not as a favor but as a fundamental right. I call upon all donor governments to include institutionalise the consultation of unions as part of the criteria of Good Governance.

Thulas Nxesi, General Secretary of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) and President of El

<sup>12</sup> GMR, p. 76

<sup>13</sup> GMR, p. 81

<sup>14</sup> GMR, p. 76

<sup>15</sup> GMR, p. 78

<sup>16</sup> GMR, p. 79

## THE 12 STRATEGIES OF THE DAKAR FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON EFA

1. Mobilise strong national and international political commitment for education for all, develop national action plans and enhance significantly investment in basic education.
2. Promote EFA policies within a sustainable and well-integrated sector framework clearly linked to poverty elimination and development strategies.
3. Ensure the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for educational development.
4. Develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management.
5. 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 that help to prevent violence and conflict.
6. Implement integrated strategies for gender equality in education which recognise the need for changes in attitudes, values and practices.
7. Implement as a matter of urgency education programmes and actions to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic.
8. Create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning, with clearly defined levels of achievement for all.
9. Enhance the status, morale and professionalism of teachers.
10. Harness new information and communication technologies to help achieve EFA goals.
11. Systematically monitor progress towards EFA goals and strategies at the national, regional and international levels.
12. Build on existing mechanisms to accelerate progress towards EFA.



## COUNTRY EFFORTS: INCREASING MOMENTUM

### Teachers for EFA

The GMR 2006 acknowledges the central role of teachers in the achievement of EFA. One crucial question to be addressed is whether there will be enough qualified teachers to provide quality education. The report is hardly optimistic on this matter in concluding that *"the number of teachers remains problematic in the very countries that need to increase the coverage of their primary school systems most significantly."*<sup>17</sup>

Mozambique, Chad, Senegal, Nepal, India and Nicaragua all show a pupil/teacher ratio which is way behind on the criteria of the delivery of quality education. Mali, Rwanda and Malawi are all 55/1 or above. This requires a proactive approach and the long-term commitment of governments to tackle the current and future shortage of teachers. Teachers' unions have every right to be part of that process.

Of course, the report does not restrict itself to numbers alone. The GMR 2006 also looks at quality and notes that *"large proportions of primary school teachers lack adequate academic qualifications, training and mastery of content."*<sup>18</sup> This is a concern expressed by EI and its affiliates at every possible forum. The report shows that several countries show a drop in the proportion of trained teachers e.g. Ghana, Niger and Belize. And in half of the countries in South and West Asia more than 30% of primary school teachers lack training. In particular the situation in Western African countries is identified as an area with a dramatic increase of voluntary teachers (Para-teachers) without pre-service training, at substantially lower salaries than other teachers.

EI does not support the observation made in the GMR that the teacher training situation is improving. Many countries have made pledges to compensate the lack of pre-service training by setting up in-service training programmes, but there is no evidence yet that this promise is actually being implemented.

<sup>17</sup> GMR, p. 85

<sup>18</sup> GMR, p. 87

Finally, many teachers are confronted with the urban-rural divide. Working in remote areas is not popular. Still, about 70% of the world's poorest people live in rural areas, a phenomenon which represents an additional challenge for education planners and teachers. In some countries, Governments give preference to informal education through NGOs. Still, as the report rightly states *"non-formal programmes are unlikely to reach the scale required to meet the learning needs of large numbers of rural children. To this end, research into formal programmes is needed."*<sup>19</sup> EI welcomes this change in view and a renewed focus on the public education, also in rural areas.

## TEACHERS FOR EFA: RECALLING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GMR 2005

The GMR 2005 focused on quality education and made a number of recommendations with regard to the role of teachers in EFA. In order for teachers to contribute to the EFA goals, it was noted that the following steps (amongst others) needed to be taken. These recommendations are still valid and outstanding today:

### 1. RECRUIT SUITABLE CANDIDATES

To achieve EFA between now and 2015 millions of new teachers need to be recruited. However these enormous gaps in supply should not lead governments to reduce their standards in this respect, as is the case in many countries. Studies show that in certain developing countries less than 10% of teachers satisfy the minimum requirement of having passed the first cycle of secondary education.

### 2. RECONSIDER THE INITIAL TRAINING OF TEACHERS

The GMR 2005 pays tribute to the diversity of conditions experienced by the education sector in various countries. Nonetheless it demonstrates that quality training is crucial to meet the needs of students. In spite of this, initial training is scant to non-existent in many countries. In the past the structural adjustment measures which were forced upon developing countries by IFIs, meant that initial training centres were simply closed. Today awareness is heightened and once again training schools are being reopened. But much remains to be done.

### 3. ENSURE CONSTANT PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

The GMR 2005 showed that teachers need constant support, particularly at the outset of their careers, both from their more experience colleagues as well as teacher trainers. This support is pivotal for the young teacher to remain in the profession.



# COUNTRY EFFORTS: INCREASING MOMENTUM

## HIV and AIDS

HIV/AIDS has an indisputable effect on education systems. The 2004 EI Congress identified HIV/AIDS as one of the priority areas for the 2005–2007 period. EI therefore welcomes the emphasis placed by the GMR 2006 on this area. Still, the report does not refer to the many efforts made by teachers and their unions to address the pandemic. In EI's view some reference could have been made, for example, to the initiative taken by SADTU to conduct a broad survey of HIV prevalence in the teaching community and on the policy response to this survey.

In 2005, 5 million new infections occurred and more than 3 million died. In the worst case scenario Kenya, Zambia and Tanzania will each lose 1,500–3,000 teachers to AIDS in 2005 alone. In addition, the infected teacher loses on average 18 months of teaching. Absenteeism is a significant and rising problem. Projection data consistently indicate that the cost of absenteeism to employers is substantially greater than the cost of training and recruitment to replace staff lost through AIDS.

To what extent are education systems prepared to deal with AIDS? The report notes that they simply are not. It notes that the HIV and AIDS pandemic is responsible for accenuating teacher shortages in Africa. Yet there is no consistent effective response to this expected shortage and teachers' unions report that teachers who die of AIDS do not get replaced, thus increasing even further the pupil/teacher ratio.

Keeping girls in school is an important strategy. But this in turn raises other issues. Are schools safe places for teachers and learners? The report emphasises the need to eliminate violence in schools, including corporal punishment. *"Where violence is ever-present in schools, it is a formidable obstacle to achieving EFA."*<sup>20</sup> Governments and unions have to unite to develop strategies and policies to give an effective response to these issues.

<sup>19</sup> GMR, p. 92

<sup>20</sup> GMR, p. 101



# INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS: TIME TO ACT

Each GMR published to date has made an analysis of the commitment of the international donor community to the EFA goals. In previous reports, the GMR expressed serious criticism on the performance of the international community. There was too little effort made, the financial gap was not closed, there was lack of coherence and coordination.

The 2006 report notes the following: *"There are ten years to go before 2015. Commitments need to be turned into significant international action."* This call is followed by a very clear recommendation: *"Aid needs to double now, and its quality must improve."*<sup>21</sup> EI gives its strong support to this statement. Without further aid that is allocated well, there will be insufficient progress by 2015.

## EI on international solidarity:

Globalisation makes it ever more possible for us as teachers to work on international solidarity. We have the technical means and the skills to communicate. But we are underutilising these means and skills. Sharing with others is the basis of building international solidarity. It is important that teachers and unionists are informed on policies and practical examples of colleagues in other countries and continents. International solidarity also implies that affiliates in the industrialised countries continue to cooperate with affiliates in developing countries. Unions in the North have a moral responsibility to support their Southern colleagues by lobbying their governments to achieve the target of 0.7% of GDP for development cooperation and increased aid towards education. Taking full part in our Annual Global Action Week as well as in partnerships in other specific areas of cooperation development are a good starting point.

Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary of EI



## 2005: A new momentum?

The GMR notes that in 2005 new momentum was created. *“Expectations were raised that the international community would step up its support for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).”*<sup>22</sup> Education should benefit from this momentum. But what is needed is a higher level of more predictable and long term aid.

EI concurs that important steps were taken in 2005. But still, even though the Official Development Aid (ODA) has never been higher (US\$ 79 billion in 2004), the percentage of Gross National Income spent (0.25%) is still below the average level recorded up to the early 1990s (0.33%).

A similar observation can be made for the international support given to the education sector. There was a significant increase in bilateral aid from 2000 (US\$ 3.55 billion) to 2003 (US\$ 4.65 billion). But this amount is still well below the US\$ 5.7 billion allocated in 1990.

### Aid and Education

Bilateral aid to education  
in 2003 = US\$ **4.65 billion**

Bilateral aid to education  
in 2000 = US\$ **3.55 billion**

Bilateral aid to education  
in 1990 = US\$ **5.7 billion**

### Transparency needed

From the perspective of the teaching community EI wants to add one element which was largely absent from the GMR: there should be full transparency in the funding of education systems. EI affiliates note time and again their great difficulties in getting insight into the financing of education. What is the commitment of their government –at national and regional levels – and what is paid through external funding? Such transparency is needed in order to meet the Dakar commitment to involving civil society in achieving the EFA goals. As Transparency International note in their recent publication ‘Stealing the Future’ (December 2005:5) *“In a context of decentralisation, diversification, privatisation and globalisation of educational services, ensuring that funds allocated to education contribute effectively to achieving the (Dakar) goals set is a key concern”*.

### Choices donors make

Such transparency would give insight into the real commitments of donors to assist in achieving the EFA goals, including Universal Basic Education. International

<sup>21</sup> GMR, p. 105

<sup>22</sup> GMR, p. 106

data show that overall nearly 60% of bilateral commitments are for post-secondary education, twice what is assigned to basic education. Only four countries gave priority to basic education: Denmark, UK, the Netherlands and the USA. In contrast, the GMR notes that although Germany and France give a relatively high proportion of their aid to education, within this basic education has a low priority.

The GMR 2006 gives a sobering account of the distribution of bilateral aid to education. The report notes that the least developed countries receive just one-third of total ODA, though they also tend to have the poorest EFA indicators. So, it is not, first and foremost, needs that determine where the money ends up. *"The regional priorities of most donors reflect historical and political factors."*<sup>23</sup> This is the reality, despite the commitment – as laid down in the Dakar Framework for Action – to give priority to those countries in greatest need. Evidently some donors want success stories. What else could explain the fact that disproportionate volumes of aid go to middle-income countries with relatively better social indicators, including primary school?

In that respect multilateral agencies do better. Their allocation to basic education is significantly higher than the bilateral donors.

### The Finance Gap

Great publicity was given in 2005 to the G-8 meeting in Gleneagles, where the richest nations in the world concluded on providing debt relief. This debt relief can benefit EFA. But, as EI previously asked, are there strings attached? What social sector policy reforms must be implemented, including the privatisation of education and cuts in salaries – to get such debt relief? Many teachers' unions around the world watch this process with considerable concern.

Despite efforts and commitments at international level, the gap in EFA external financing remains significant. About US\$ 7 billion of international aid is needed each year to achieve Universal Primary Education. Over half of this amount is missing. The report is right in stating that aid is not a miracle cure to achieve EFA and that domestic resources are key. That makes it even more imperative that governments give insight into their efforts to finance education. Too often there is no transparency and financial matters are dealt with between recipient governments and the donors alone.

### Long Term and Predictable Aid

The GMR makes a plea in favour of long term and predictable aid. The authors recommend *"aid that enables recurrent costs to be met so governments can make essential policy changes for EFA which would otherwise be untenable."*<sup>24</sup> All EI affiliates should take note of – and quote – the following observation made by the GMR – an observation which is in strong support of EI's longstanding position:

*"Aid can assist governments in taking politically sensitive decisions"* such as:

*"Teachers' salaries: Aid can help satisfy demands from teachers unions to increase salaries, which have declined in real income over the past thirty years and enable governments to recruit badly needed addition-*

# INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS: TIME TO ACT

*al teachers. Where new contract teachers have been recruited at salaries below civil service pay scales (e.g. in francophone Africa) aid can finance the professional development of these new and usually under-qualified teachers.”<sup>25</sup>*

## The Fast Track Initiative (FTI)

Within the overall international effort to achieve the EFA goals, a specific place is taken by the Fast Track Initiative. This international partnership was designed to accelerate progress. It was launched by the World Bank and the IMF at its 2002 spring meeting. Three years down the line, the GMR makes a number of interesting observations. These observations are in line with critical remarks it made in previous years. For instance in 2005 the GMR indicated that it is crucial to see to it that *“FTI tools are aids to policy rather than checklists to observe”*.

Another important question in the previous GMR of 2005 was whether the FTI has the potential to become a framework for all education sector work in developing countries. The report expresses doubts on this issue and indeed, on the potential success of FTI: *“It remains to be seen whether innovative bridging funding can make a true difference to countries that would otherwise be neglected.”* This critical approach is also reflected in the 2006 report: *“Although endorsements have given FTI a prominent place in EFA coordination, they have not yet resulted in a significant increase in aid to basic education.”<sup>26</sup>* Clearly the FTI is taking responsibility for the important task of donor coordination on education. Still the question remains, is it having any real impact?

## International coordination

It is worth noting that despite the lack of capacity to generate more funds through the FTI process, donors are taking the lead in the coordination of EFA that was mandated to UNESCO. The report notes with concern that *“while many of the UN approaches to education are complementary, others appear to be in competition.”* The report gives positive examples of silent partnerships (in which one donor represents the interests of others) and notes with concern that capacity building is not receiving the attention it deserves.

<sup>23</sup> GMR, p. 113

<sup>24</sup> GMR, p. 119

<sup>25</sup> GMR, p. 118

<sup>26</sup> GMR, p. 120

## 2005 and beyond

The chapter ends on a positive note: *"There are promising signs that the coming years will bring increased commitments and progress."* Still, *"it is vital that the case be made strongly for EFA in the follow-up to the G8 decisions and the outcomes of the UN Special Assembly."*<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> GMR, p. 130/131

## EI on financial commitments:

There is still a gap of 4 billion US Dollars. Apparently it is impossible for the international donor community to cough up this money. I fail to understand this, and as EI and affiliates we must demand explanation from every government leader. Four billion is the monthly expenditure of the war in Iraq, it is the net profit of a large multinational to be divided amongst shareholders, it is a big amount but it should be possible. There is no excuse. We must also seek explanations from Government leaders of the G8 and their promises made in Gleneagles. It [has been] confirmed again that in many instances developing countries pay the price for debt cancellation. If that is so, then that will have a direct impact on the EFA challenges we face.

Juçara Dutra Vieira, President of the Brazilian Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores em Educação (CNTE) and Vice President of EI





## IMPLICATIONS FOR EI AFFILIATES

Possible actions for teachers' unions in industrialised and developing countries alike:

In industrialised countries, teachers' unions can question their Government (Ministries of Development Cooperation) on the choices they have made regarding support to the education sector in developing countries and the achievement of EFA. What are the underlying policies, and in what manner does the government see the involvement of the union in the developing country as a benchmark of 'good governance'? Teachers unions in industrialised countries can also inform their counterparts in developing countries on what their (donor) governments are doing.

In developing countries, teachers' unions can push for more transparency on the financing of the education system, to get insight into the role of donors and the priorities that are made. Since financing is a key element in achieving the EFA goals, unions – in a strategic alliance with civil society organisations united in the Global Campaign for Education – should develop policies, express their views and do advocacy on the use and distribution of funds available. In unity there is strength.

The world is more than five years, one third of the total period, on its way towards achieving Education For All. In light of this, the Global Monitoring Report 2006 examines progress on making the goals on EFA - set down at the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 - a reality. This publication highlights some of the key areas of importance to teachers and comments on them from the union perspective. EI sincerely hopes that the result is of value to all its readers.



Education International is a world-wide trade union organisation of education personnel, whose 29 million members represent all sectors of education from pre-school to university in 348 national trade unions and associations in 166 countries and territories.

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