



G8 Education Experts Report 2009

SHARING RESPONSIBILITIES TO ADVANCE EDUCATION FOR ALL

In April 2000, the international community gathered in Dakar for the World Education Forum and adopted the “Framework for Action on Education for All (EFA)”¹, a collective commitment to action based on a vision of the critical role of education for empowering individuals and transforming societies.

Nine years later EFA is facing success and new challenges. 2009 is a crucial year for EFA: ideally, by the end of the year all grade-one aged primary school children should be enrolled in order to complete a six-year course of basic education by 2015. And yet, 75 million children and 266 million adolescents remain out of school, thereby missing out on the opportunity to develop their talents in order to improve their lives and contribute to the development of their societies.

Most of these out-of-school children are categorised as “hard to reach”; yet, these children are neither unknown nor unattainable: more than four out of five of them live in rural areas; of the remaining twenty per cent, many live in urban peripheries; most of them are child labourers, as education is not a viable alternative for them; they are growing up in vulnerable households, in fragile states, in conflict or post conflict countries, they are orphans, are

¹ The six EFA goals included in the Framework for Action are:

- 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, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to 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.



affected by HIV/AIDS; or have disabilities. In too many areas of the world, girls are especially vulnerable.

The Italian presidency of the G8, recognizing the importance of confirming the collective commitment to EFA, has proposed education as one of the four development priorities, in line with previous G8 Presidencies, since the Okinawa Summit in 2000.

Important progress has been made towards achieving universal primary education (UPE) and ensuring equal access for girls and boys, the two EFA goals reflected in the Millennium Development Declaration as MDG 2 and MDG 3. But this is not enough. A renewed shared effort is needed to safeguard gains and to embrace the whole EFA agenda, especially the neglected areas of literacy, early childhood care and quality of education. The challenge lies in expanding access while ensuring quality of education and relevance of learning.

As the G8 Education Group, we acknowledge the fundamental importance of education as a contributor to the whole MDG agenda, including economic growth and sustainable development. We call for a more forward looking approach, promoting EFA policies within a sustainable and well-integrated sector framework clearly linked to poverty reduction and development strategies.

We will build on the strengths of the most comprehensive international initiative in the education sector: the Education for All-Fast Track Initiative (FTI). In this regard, we welcome efforts undertaken by the FTI Partnership to reform its governance, to progress on implementation and to streamline and strengthen the FTI operating structure, both at the country and global level. The forthcoming replenishment process of EFA-FTI offers an opportunity to translate commitments into action.

G8 commitment to EFA

G8 has been committed to the EFA goals since 2000 and this support has been reiterated each year. The “Hokkaido Toyako Summit Declaration”, adopted in 2008, paid specific attention to countries affected by crisis or conflict, to girls and marginalized populations. G8 Leaders affirmed “*the*

importance of life-long learning and a holistic approach to the education systems” and committed “to work to improve access to and the quality of education through capacity development of teachers as well as community involvement” and “to promote synergies with other development sectors”. In addition, the Declaration also called for the G8 to report on its progress to support FTI.

In this report we will briefly discuss the progress that has been made towards EFA and the challenges that remain, we will reaffirm the importance of education and look at the efforts needed to ensure that EFA by 2015 remains achievable; this will lead to a discussion of EFA-FTI, where we will outline the main features of G8 financial support to FTI, whilst recognising that a future mechanism to monitor progress on meeting G8 commitments to EFA should move from a focus on financial inputs to a broader focus on aid effectiveness and development results.

Progress and challenges in EFA

Since 2000 significant progress has been made in providing access to primary education:

- average net enrolment has increased from 54% to 70% in Sub-Saharan Africa between 1999 and 2006 and from 75% to 86% in South and West Asia;
- 28 million decline in the number of out-of-school children (number of school-age children not attending primary school);
- in FTI countries, primary completion rates have increased by 18% in partner countries as a whole and by 22% in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Progress has also been seen on gender parity, with 20 more countries having achieved gender parity both in primary and secondary education (from 1999 to 2006) and about two-thirds of developing countries having achieved parity at the primary level.

However, the goals of UPE and gender parity in education are at risk of being missed by 2015, if “business as usual” continues. In 2006, the number of out-of-school children was still around 75 million, of which more than 80% were rural children and 55% girls. Moreover, this number includes just primary-school-aged children and does therefore not account for those millions of teenagers that, having missed their chance to enter school at the



right age or having dropped out early, are unlikely to get the opportunity to obtain any valuable form of education.

At the same time, progress towards UPE puts pressure on higher levels of education, with a growing demand for post-primary education, and a consequent need for increased teacher recruitment and training at all levels.

Teacher shortages are a significant barrier to progress on the Education for All agenda, in regard to both enrolments and learning outcomes. The provision of qualified teachers in adequate numbers is crucial to ensuring sustainable human development and making national goals achievable. Globally 18 million primary school teachers are needed over the next decade to meet UPE goals; accounting for both new teachers and vacancies created through attrition. It is estimated that by 2015 up to 3.8 million new teachers will be needed in Africa.

Monitoring shows that inequalities are growing; both within countries, where disparities (based on gender, income, rural/urban gaps) negatively affect the universal access of education, and across countries. In addition, fragile states account for almost half of the 75 million out-of-school children. Thus, equity and inclusion remain fundamental issues to be addressed.

Reaffirming the role of education for recovery, growth and development in the current economic crisis

Climate change, the food crisis, and above all the economic crisis are challenging the implementation of sound development strategies. With predicted falls in GDP growth rates severe budget cuts are likely to affect public expenditure in developing countries - impacting upon vital social services, such as education. Moreover, a contraction in private inflows (including remittances) to developing countries is likely to increase the financial burden on families struggling to keep their children in education.

Against this background, we restate that education can play a key role in global recovery, growth and development. Reducing investments in education would mean depleting the human capital base and endangering the long term productivity and economic resilience of developing countries. In a time of crisis, education is a powerful tool; enabling communities to cope



with major environmental and economic challenges and maintaining social cohesion and stability.

With this view we support the 2008 Oslo Declaration “Acting Together”, adopted by the EFA High Level Group (HLG) convened by UNESCO, which states that education is:

“one of the most effective tools for achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth and recovery, reducing poverty, hunger and child labour, improving health, incomes and livelihoods, for promoting peace, democracy and environmental awareness”, as well as a driver “to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs”.

Efforts needed at the country and the international levels

In line with the Oslo HLG recommendations, we encourage a cross-sectoral approach to poverty reduction, taking into account the specific context of each country and aiming at long-term sustainability. National education sector plans should streamline policies for equity and inclusion, set priorities for the allocation of reduced domestic budgets, and build synergies among education, food security and health policies, with a view to establishing comprehensive social safety nets for the most vulnerable.

The donor community should strengthen efforts for coordination and harmonization whilst encouraging sustainability rather than perpetuating dependency. More emphasis should be devoted to capacity development. G8 may further explore ways to highlight the role of aid for institutional capacity building in the education sector as well as the role of education to empower individuals and societies and for it to contribute to global challenges across the entire development agenda.

This approach requires country specific analysis to identify the most effective modalities by which aid in education may specifically contribute to development results in each country. UNESCO is currently undertaking a survey to monitor the effects of the financial crisis on the education sector; in the longer term, however, better country-level data mapping is necessary to assess knowledge and skills needs within the education and other



development sectors, with a view to creating a baseline for result measurements and impact analysis.

Recognising that millions of children have not attended school or dropped out early, there is the need to support remedial education and second chance opportunities in a systematic way and on an appropriate scale.

Special attention is to be devoted to the quality of teaching and the relevance of curricula, as pre-conditions for improving learning outcomes. Motivated and adequately trained teachers are essential at the primary level, to provide the foundations for learning. At the post-primary level, the role of competent teachers is central to skills development for employability.

The magnitude and complexity of the described challenges call for a concerted international action to tackle policy, capacity and data issues. Human, technical and financial resources from donors and international organizations are needed to sustain national efforts.

Updated international education aid architecture

Since its inception EFA-FTI has been a driver for change in the evolving education aid architecture. As a global partnership of donors and developing countries it should continue to ensure the effectiveness of aid in support of country owned and led education sector plans..

Important revisions in the governance structure and working systems of the FTI were approved in 2008 to better respond to the expansion of the partnership, which currently includes 37 endorsed countries². Future direction for the FTI will be informed by the findings of two important exercises currently taking place; the external evaluation of FTI and the design of a coherent replenishment mechanism for all the FTI financial channels.

The external evaluation aims at assessing the effectiveness of the FTI in accelerating progress towards EFA as well as its contributions to improve aid effectiveness both at the country and global levels.

² Albania, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Ethiopie, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Moldova, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Timor Leste, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia.



The FTI Steering Committee in the recent meetings in Copenhagen agreed on a replenishment strategy encompassing two steps: a first step aims at covering financial needs of the FTI Trust Funds in the next 18 months, estimated by the FTI Secretariat at US\$ 1.2 bn; a second step will follow, starting from the end of 2010. The overall replenishment strategy aims to increase the predictability of financing, to overcome funding shortfalls and to enhance regular disbursement of country allocations. To enable this to be realised greater cooperation and coordination among donors is needed at the country level for precise costing of education plans, better analysis of absorption capacities and quicker disbursement of assistance.

G8 commitment to EFA-FTI

Since the endorsement of the report *"A New Focus on Education for All"* at the Kananaskis Summit in 2002, which first proposed the FTI, G8 donors have contributed to FTI, together with other major donors, through political, technical and financial inputs.

Politically the G8 has assumed the task of co-chairing the initiative on a rotating basis, following G8 Chair's rotation. This has resulted not only in the advancement of FTI through policy guidance and regular management, but also in ensuring a high profile for education in the G8 debate. As a result of the FTI Governance reform, FTI will be chaired by an independent Chair starting from July 1st. G8 will hold a seat in the new Board of Directors.³ Some G8 donors have taken the lead in promoting specific programmes and providing FTI with technical inputs to keep a balanced approach to such important aspects as capacity development, assessment of learning outcomes and data quality.

Financial support from G8 donors to the Education sector is provided through bilateral and multilateral channels and through the FTI trust funds; in addition, some G8 are very active in General Budget Support (GBS) frameworks. GBS plays an important role in Education financing through the national budgets to which it is channelled. This is particularly relevant for EC, which committed the total of US\$ 5.6 billion in GBS in the period 2000-

³ The G8 Delegate will be a representative of the country currently chairing the G8 supported by the incoming Chair as an alternate. This arrangement will ensure a link of the FTI Board with the rotating G8 Presidency.

2007 in all developing countries and the total of US\$ 2.9 billion in FTI endorsed countries in the period 2002-2007⁴.

The following table and graph show cross-G8 donors aggregate⁵ direct support for education sector-wide⁶, for basic education ⁷and for basic education in the 37 FTI-endorsed countries⁸.

AGGREGATE G8 ODA COMMITMENTS (US\$ millions)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Education	4389,41	4472,4	4926,87	5983,55	6324,1	5287,83	6513,91	7069,82
Basic Education	1142,42	871,78	977,92	1573,85	1854,79	1727,76	1308,6	1750,71
Basic Education to FTI-endorsed countries			280,77	383,34	465,67	413,15	608,80	923,49

⁴ The following table shows EC general budget support commitments in all developing countries and in FTI endorsed countries (USD millions)

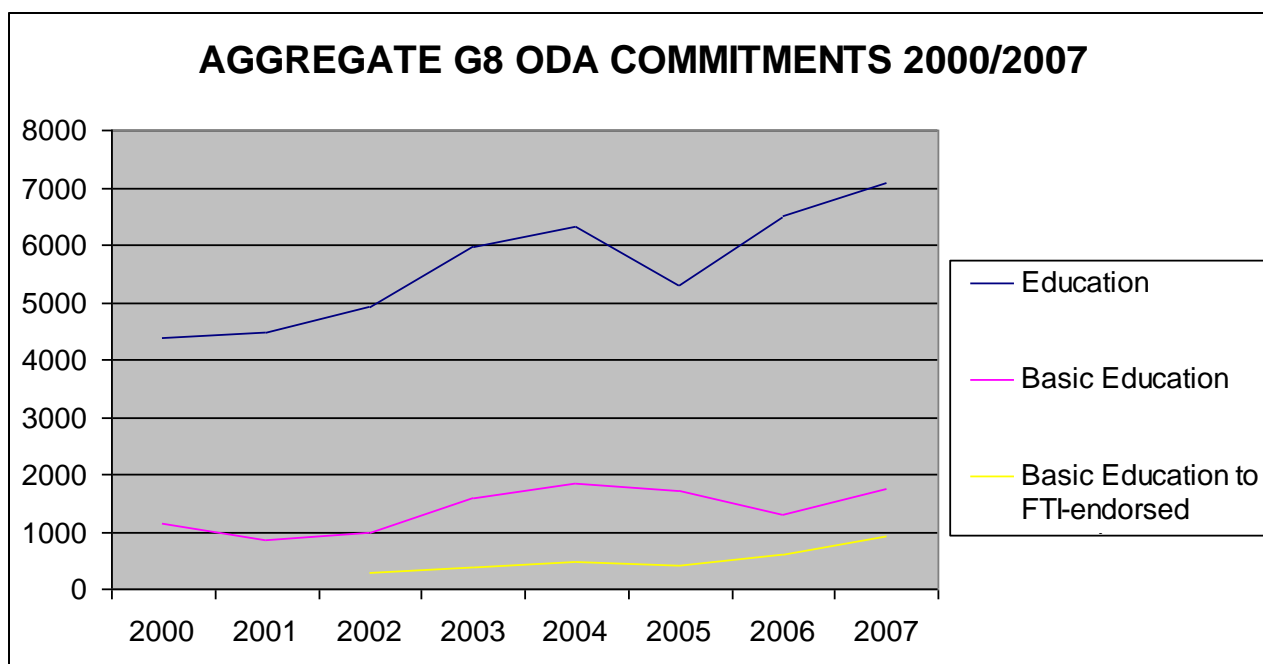
Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
All dev. countries	722	286	579	761	721	1136	463	955	5623
FTI-endorsed countries			431	554	552	634	202	492	2867

⁵ These figures relate to ODA by all G8 countries plus EC.

⁶ Source: OECD/DAC

⁷ Source: OECD/DAC

⁸ Source: Figures provided by each G8 member



We take notice of accounting constraints related to estimations of shares of budget support and of the different modalities adopted by each G8 donor in officially reporting to DAC its contributions to FTI trust funds and to other multilateral agencies' trust funds.

We will follow on these constraints with OECD/DAC, FTI Secretariat and the GMR team.

The following tables show G8 aggregate support to the FTI Trust Funds since 2004⁹.

⁹ Source: FTI Secretariat.



AGGREGATE G8 ODA CONTRIBUTIONS TO FTI Trust Funds (in US\$ millions)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Catalytic Fund¹⁰	2,4	2,4	188,7	20	203,4	72,1
Education Program Development Fund¹¹		0,94	10,1	9,36	4,8	4,36

Secretariat Fund	Total contributions from September 1, 2004 to June 30, 2009				6007,707	
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¹⁰ Contributions to the Catalytic Fund (CF) include signed G8 commitments as of May 28, 2009.

¹¹ Contributions to the Education Program Development Fund (EPDF) include signed G8 pledges.

The way forward

- The current economic crisis offers an opportunity to reinforce the fundamental importance of education for development and growth; and to show how education may contribute to the whole MDG agenda. In line with principles adopted in the Oslo Declaration, education should form a crucial element in the design of country-specific inter-sectoral development plans.
- The G8 remains committed to achieving MDG 2 and 3 as basic education is a key factor in poverty reduction. In seeking to address the broader EFA goals a holistic approach to the entire education sector should be adopted, with particular focus on education quality - leading to learning at all levels and skills development, particularly for youth, to ensure that investments deliver maximum benefit in terms of relevant skills and employability.
- The G8 encourage a focus on inclusive education, centred around access for girls and marginalised groups most at risk of missing out on the gains from education. The G8 also recognises that investment in teacher recruitment, training and careful management of this valued resource is crucial for improving education quality. G8 countries are in support of the "International Task Force on Teachers for EFA" endorsed by the High Level Group Meeting on EFA in Oslo.
- The G8 reaffirms support for the FTI, its founding principles and the current reform process. We are committed to reinforcing the country-based foundation of the FTI, notably the development of education plans embedded in PRSPs which contribute to an effective implementation of sound and sustainable sector plans with primary education priorities aligned with those of both the wider education sector and other sectors to assure development results.
- The G8 will continue efforts to mobilize bilateral and multilateral resources to meet the needs of FTI endorsed education sector plans and to close gaps in education data, policy and capacity to accelerate action



on EFA. The G8 is committed to working together to ensure longer-term financing and using instruments that ensure predictability. Building on the findings of the FTI evaluation and on UNESCO's work, we look forward to improved country-specific analyses of education outcomes and impacts.

- The G8 will ensure stronger synergies across all actors in our countries – central and local governments, private sectors, philanthropic and civil society – to contribute effectively to development of partner countries' education systems.
- In line with the principles of the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, G8 will continue to support education in countries affected by conflict or crises by advancing cross-country coordination to ensure at least a minimum level of donor presence and external financing.