

BACKGROUND 2 – January 2008

Extracts from press release on the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008* launched by UNESCO November 2007:

- Primary school enrolment increased by 36% in sub-Saharan Africa and 22% in South and West Asia between 1999 and 2005.
- Between 1999 and 2005, governments in 14 countries abolished primary school tuition fees.
- The number of out-of-school children dropped sharply from 96 million in 1999 to 72 million in 2005.
- Between 1999 and 2005, 17 additional countries achieved gender parity in primary education, with equal numbers of boys and girls attending school.
- Gender parity in education was achieved in 63% of countries at the primary level and 37% at secondary in 2005.
- In 2005, low-income countries received US\$2.3 billion for basic education, up from US\$1.6 billion in 1999.
- 25 countries are far from achieving EFA. About two-thirds of these are in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Girls still account for 60% of out-of-school children in the Arab States and 66% in South and West Asia.
- Despite constitutional provisions in most countries guaranteeing free primary education, a majority of children in public primary schools face some type of charge, sometimes representing up to one-third of household income.
- Poor education quality is a global issue that is gaining increased policy attention.
- Although the proportion has improved slightly since 1999, less than 63% of pupils reached the last grade of primary school in 17 sub-Saharan African countries with data, while under 80% did so in half the countries of South and West Asia.
- In several African countries fewer than half the pupils who start primary school reach the last grade.
- Overall the world will need more than 18 million new primary education teachers by 2015. Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and the Pacific and South and West Asia will each require nearly four million new primary school teachers.
- Worldwide 774 million adults – nearly 1 in 5 - lack basic literacy skills. More than three-quarters live in only 15 countries.
- Women's literacy in particular has a strong influence on a child's education and health yet they still account for 64% of adults who are not literate worldwide.
- External financing for basic education remains far short of the US\$11 billion required annually to reach EFA in low-income countries. It is insufficiently targeted to countries of sub-Saharan Africa and to countries facing conditions of fragility. France, Germany, Japan, the United States and the United Kingdom are the five largest donors to education but the first three allocate less than one-third of their education aid to the basic level.

The full Report, summary report and additional information is available on www.efareport.unesco.org
The *EFA Global Monitoring Report* is an annual publication prepared by an independent team based at UNESCO. It monitors progress towards the six Education for All goals adopted in Dakar, Senegal in 2000.