

EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015
EDUCATION FOR ALL
2000-2015:
ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES
UNESCO, 2015

Introduction:

The 2015 *EFA Global Monitoring Report* provides a complete assessment of progress towards the Education for All goals established in 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal. The report takes stock of whether the world achieved the EFA goals and whether EFA partners upheld their commitments. It also explains possible determinants of the pace of progress and identifies key lessons for shaping a post-2015 global education agenda.

Taking stock of progress towards EFA

Goal 1 – Early childhood care and education: *Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children*

- Despite a drop in child mortality rates of nearly 50%, 6.3 million children under the age of 5 died in 2013 from causes that are mostly preventable.
- Globally, one in four children are still short for their age – a sign of chronic deficiency in essential nutrients.
- In 2012, 184 million children were enrolled in pre-primary education worldwide, an increase of nearly two-thirds since 1999.

Goal 2 – Universal primary education: *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*

- The primary school net enrolment ratio was 84% in 1999 and is estimated to reach 93% in 2015.
- Net enrolment ratios improved significantly, rising at least 20 percentage points from 1999 to 2012 in 17 countries, 11 of which were in sub-Saharan Africa.
- While some increases in enrolment ratios are evident, nearly 58 million children were out of school in 2012, and progress in reducing this number has stalled.
- In 32 countries, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, at least 20% of children enrolled are not expected to reach the last grade.
- By the 2015 deadline, one in six children in low and middle income countries – or almost 100 million – will not have completed primary school.

Goal 3 – Youth and adult skills: *Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes*

- Reflecting improved transition rates and higher retention rates, the lower secondary gross enrolment ratio increased from 71% in 1999 to 85% in 2012. Participation in lower secondary education has increased quickly since 1999.
- Inequality persists in the transition from primary to secondary school.
- A majority of the 94 low and middle income countries with information have legislated free lower secondary education since 1999. Of these, 66 have constitutional guarantees and 28 enacted other legal measures. As of 2015, only a few nations charge lower secondary school fees, including Botswana, Guinea, Papua New Guinea, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Goal 4 – Adult literacy: *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*

- There are about 781 million illiterate adults. The rate of illiteracy dropped slightly, from 18% in 2000 to an estimated 14% in 2015, which means the Dakar target of halving illiteracy was not achieved.
- Only 17 out of the 73 countries with a literacy rate below 95% in 2000 had halved their illiteracy rate by 2015.
- Progress has been made towards gender parity in literacy but is not sufficient. All 43 countries where fewer than 90 women for every 100 men were literate in 2000 have moved towards parity, but none of them will have reached it by 2015.

Highlight

Goal 5 – Gender equality: *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.*

- At the primary level, 69% of the countries with data are expected to have reached gender parity by 2015.
- Progress is slower in secondary education, with 48% projected to be at gender parity in 2015.
- Between 1999 and 2012, the number of countries with fewer than 90 girls enrolled in primary school for every 100 boys fell from 33 to 16.
- Amongst out-of-school children, girls are more likely than boys never to enrol in school (48% compared with 37%), while boys are more likely to leave school (26% compared with 20%). Once enrolled, girls are more likely to reach the upper grades.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, the poorest girls remain the most likely to never attend primary school. In Guinea and Niger in 2010, over 70% of the poorest girls had never attended primary school, compared with less than 20% of the richest boys.

Goal 6 – Quality of education: *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*

- Pupil/teacher ratios declined in 83% of the 146 countries with data at the primary education level. In one-third of the countries with data, however, less than 75% of primary school teachers are trained up to national standards.
- At the lower secondary education level, 87 of the 105 countries with data have a pupil/ teacher ratio below 30:1.
- In 1990, 12 learning assessments were conducted according to national standards, but by 2013 the number had increased to 101.

Financing education

- Between 1999 and 2012, 38 countries increased their spending by 1 percentage point or more of national income.
- Education is not a priority in many national budgets. As a share of government spending, expenditure on education has changed little since 1999 and at 13.7% in 2012, falls short of the recommended 15% to 20% target.
- Governments and donors have neglected to fund EFA goals outside of primary education. As a result, pre-primary education and adult literacy, in particular, remain underfunded.
- Donors have largely failed on their commitment to deliver aid more effectively, achieving just 1 of 13 aid effectiveness targets. Effective international coordination and distribution of aid to education have been almost entirely absent.

Conclusion:

- Since 2000, diverse types of knowledge, evidence and expertise have been communicated and used.
- Since 2000, there has been no shortage of national education plans and they have **strengthened national EFA policy and practice**.
- A key expected result of the Dakar process was that credible plans would help **effectively mobilize financial resources for EFA**.
- The decision to introduce an independent monitoring and reporting mechanism of progress towards the EFA goals may have been critical in keeping EFA high on the agenda.
- The EFA movement can be characterized as a qualified success, even if EFA partners may have not collectively lived up to their commitments. But a lesson re-emerging over the past 15 years is that, while technical solutions are important, gaining political influence and traction is of even greater significance, particularly to realize the scale of reform and action required to achieve EFA at the national level. The current discussions on the post-2015 agenda may be offering just such a chance.

Read the full report at the official website: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002322/232205e.pdf>

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