Chapter 6

Meeting our international commitments

The *EFA Report 2002* concluded that progress in translating the international commitments made in Dakar into real resources, directed to priority ends, and turning the language of co-ordination into practice, remained limited and uneven. It suggested that the separate mandates and agendas of individual organizations continued to be more influential than a strong coalition working towards a shared objective. This chapter examines whether there are signs of improved performance in levels of aid flows to basic education, the extent to which international programmes such as the Fast-Track Initiative are making a difference, and the impact of post-Dakar co-ordination mechanisms on political commitment and resource mobilization.

EFA is variously conceived as a right, a vision, a movement or a process, as well as a framework for action.

As this report shows, EFA is variously conceived as a right, a vision, a movement or a process, as well as a framework for action. Given this spectrum of interpretation, the international events that have been responsible for defining and promulgating EFA (Chabbott, 2003) have given rise to a number of strategies, plans, forums, groups, initiatives and research.

For those charged with sustaining international momentum and improving co-ordination for EFA, this diversity is a potential strength, especially if it can be harnessed to support national and international policies in flexible ways. However, if, as is sometimes the case, the challenge is to bring together competing interests, the challenge of co-ordinating partners for effective EFA outcomes becomes more complex. It requires the ability to identify processes that will command strong public support, utilize sound technical solutions and implement approaches that match the scale of the challenge – the lives of hundreds of millions of people. As the president of the World Bank has noted, '...we are no longer talking about policy or arguing about framework, it is the moment for implementation' (UNESCO, 2003c).

With this message as the touchstone, three main topics receive attention. The analysis of aid flows to education has been updated to allow comparison between 1998–99 and 2000–01 data. The interpretation of these flows is supported by a brief survey of the education policies of a set of bilateral funding agencies.

EFA is the subject of a variety of international initiatives, some of which have evolved in significant ways over the last year, most notably the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI). This forms the second part of the chapter. Finally, progress in improving international co-ordination as an essential component of the global effort to achieve the EFA goals is re-assessed, particularly, but not exclusively, with regard to UNESCO's mandated role. The gender dimensions of the three strands are examined where the data makes this both possible and appropriate.

Table 6.1. Total Official Development Assistance (ODA), net disbursements, US$ billions

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Current prices												
Grand total	52.0	59.2	60.4	55.6	59.9	59.1	55.8	47.9	50.2	52.2	49.6	50.8
Bilateral	38.7	43.2	43.1	39.4	41.3	40.6	39.1	32.4	35.2	37.9	36.0	35.0
Multilateral	13.3	15.9	17.2	16.3	18.6	18.5	16.7	15.4	15.0	14.3	13.5	15.7
Constant 2000 prices												
Grand total	55.1	60.6	57.6	54.1	55.8	49.8	48.8	44.8	48.6	49.8	49.6	52.4
Bilateral	41.1	44.6	41.4	38.3	38.6	34.4	34.5	30.6	34.6	36.5	36.0	36.2
Total multilateral	14.0	16.1	16.3	15.8	17.2	15.5	14.2	14.2	13.9	13.3	13.5	16.2
European Commission (EC)	2.5	3.2	3.6	3.5	4.0	3.6	4.1	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.4	5.5
IDA (World Bank)	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.4	5.3	0.4	5.1	5.0	4.7	4.3	4.2	5.1
Inter-American Development Bank	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	4.2	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3
UNDP	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.3
UNICEF	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6
African Development Fund	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.4
Asian Development Fund	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.9	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.8
Other*	3.7	5.0	4.9	4.7	4.9	4.8	2.1	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.6	3.0

Notes: Figures are rounded.
Official Development Assistance comprises grants or concessional loans to developing countries.
Net disbursements are defined as total disbursements less any repayments of loan principal during the same period.
The DAC deflators used to calculate constant prices adjust for inflation in the domestic currency and for changes in the exchange rate between the domestic currency and the US dollar. The currency effect tends to dominate for the period 1992–99 and in 2001.
* Other includes other United Nations agencies, IFAD, Arab Funds and some IMF assistance.
Source: DAC on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003a, Table 2a).

Aid flows

## Total aid flows to developing countries

Aid flows to developing countries fell during the 1990s, although there has been an upward trend since 1997 (Table 6.1). The 2001 Official Development Assistance (ODA) disbursements represent a 5.7% increase in real terms (constant prices) compared with the year 2000. Nevertheless, the total flows of US$52.4 billion in 2001 are still below the levels attained ten years earlier when total ODA was US$60.6 billion. Bilateral agencies provided the majority of ODA during the decade – 69% of the total in 2001. The increase between 2000 and 2001 is, however, almost solely explained by a rise in multilateral aid. The World Bank (IDA) and the European Commission (EC) are still the main sources of multilateral assistance and both increased their flows in 2001.

Of the total ODA disbursements over the two biennia (1998–99 and 2000–01) almost one quarter went to sub-Saharan Africa, one-sixth to East Asia and the Pacific, and one-tenth to South and West Asia.[1] There was some decline in the disbursements for East Asia and the Pacific and small increases in those for sub-Saharan Africa, and South and West Asia (Figure 6.1).
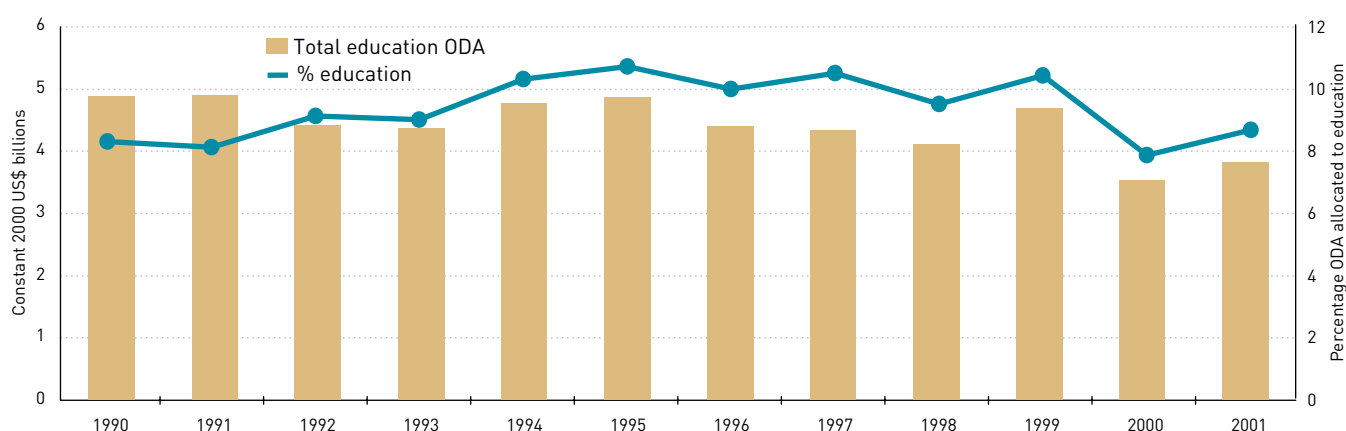
1. Note that a high proportion (more than 20%) of total disbursements cannot be allocated to any one of the EFA regions.

Figure 6.1. Percentage regional distribution of ODA disbursements, average (1998–99 and 2000–01)
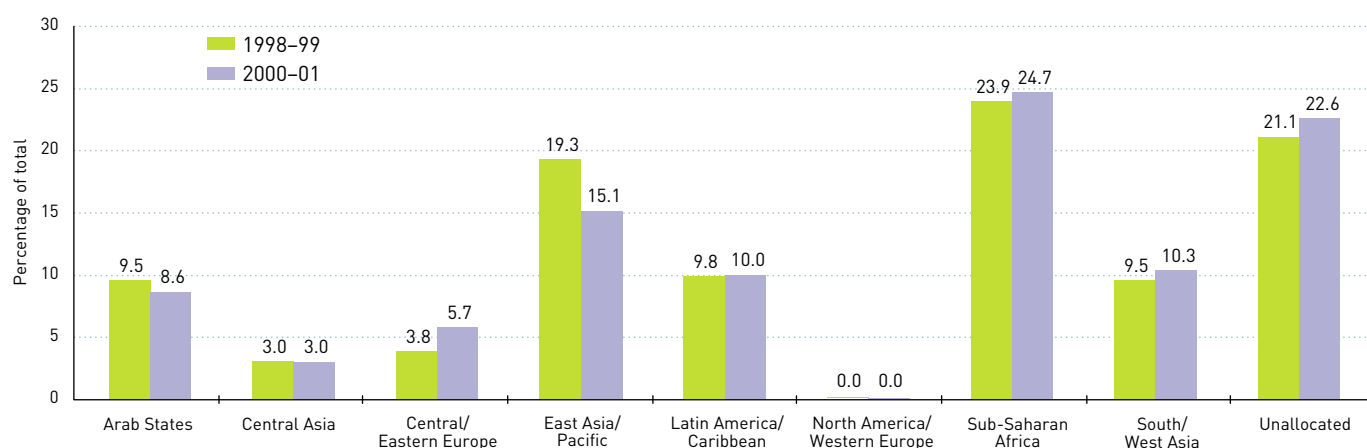
Source: DAC on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003*a*, Table 2a).

Figure 6.2. Bilateral aid to education (1990–2001)

Source: DAC on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003*a*, Table 5).

Bilateral aid flows to education declined during the 1990s.

Bilateral aid to education

As with total ODA, the trend for bilateral aid flows to education was downwards during the 1990s, from near US$5 billion at the beginning of the decade to slightly less than US$4 billion in 2001 (Figure 6.2). Although there was some improvement in 2001, as compared with the previous year, taking the two years together, bilateral aid to education fell by 16% between 1998–99 and 2000–01 (Table 6.2).[2]

Table 6.2 indicates considerable inter-country differences. Six countries accounted for more than three-quarters of the bilateral aid commitments to education in 2000–01 (France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States). A majority of the countries (thirteen) increased their aid to education over the two biennia, including two of the six largest providers – the Netherlands and the United States. Three countries – Denmark, Portugal and Spain – increased their education aid commitments very substantially, in

percentage terms, with changes of 238%, 75% and 61% respectively. In contrast, nine countries reduced their commitments to education, including France, Germany and Japan, among the biggest providers. Austria had the largest negative change (–44%) followed by France (–40%) and Japan (–24%).

Aid to education fell from 10% to 8% of total aid flows over the two biennia (Table 6.2). Some of the smaller countries, including Ireland, Luxembourg and New Zealand, allocate between one-fifth and one-third of their aid to education – as does France (23%). The United States, in contrast, allocates only about one-third of the average for all DAC countries.

Table 6.3 shows changes in the flows of aid to education and to basic education for the DAC member countries in 1998–99 and 2000–01[3]. As noted above, DAC countries as a whole reduced their aid to education from US$4,386 million to US$3,679 million, and as a percentage of total aid from 10% to 8%. In contrast, aid to basic

Table 6.2. Bilateral aid commitments to education in constant 2000 US$ millions (1998–99 and 2000–01)[1]

Country	ODA		Education			Education as % of total ODA		
	1998–99	2000–01	1998–99	2000–01	% change	1998–99	2000–01	Point changes
Australia	729	779	131	104	–23	18	13	–6
Austria	509	449	110	62	–44	22	14	–8
Belgium	443	512	51	65	28	12	13	1
Canada	1 274	1 343	97	131	35	8	10	2
Denmark	644	932	14	47	238	2	5	3
Finland	227	242	16	21	32	7	9	2
France	4 507	3 342	1 290	771	–40	29	23	–6
Germany	3 707	3 258	669	568	–15	18	17	–1
Greece	61	91	6	7	15	10	8	–2
Ireland	123	168	21	33	57	17	20	3
Italy	563	686	26	42	62	5	6	1
Japan	14 975	13 561	1 076	818	–24	7	6	–1
Luxembourg[2]	74	93	15	22	46	21	24	3
Netherlands	1 733	2 593	150	185	23	9	7	–2
New Zealand	87	86	31	28	–10	36	33	–3
Norway	967	941	81	63	–22	8	7	–1
Portugal	204	250	16	28	75	8	11	3
Spain	776	1 083	88	141	61	11	13	2
Sweden	985	1 137	57	45	–21	6	4	–2
Switzerland	522	634	22	28	27	4	4	0
United Kingdom	2 257	2 786	187	186	0	8	7	–1
United States	8 842	9 712	230	284	23	3	3	0
Total DAC countries	44 209	44 680	4 386	3 679	–16	10	8	–2

Notes: Figures are rounded.

1. In reporting to DAC, most bilateral agencies use commitments. Only a few, including the United Kingdom, provide disbursement figures. This complicates comparison across the agencies and with the ODA disbursement figures.
2. Luxembourg figures for 2000–01 cover only 2000.

Source: DAC on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003*a*, Table 5).

2. Data on aid commitments may fluctuate significantly from year to year because agencies record aid in the year in which funding is committed rather than in the year it is disbursed. Biannual averages are therefore more reliable.

3. The DAC definition of basic education covers primary schooling, basic life skills for youth and adults, and early childhood education.

Table 6.3. Percentage changes in bilateral aid flows to education and to basic education in constant 2000 US$ millions, average (1998–99 and 2000–01)

Country	Education 1998–99	Education 2000–01	Basic education 1998–99	Basic education 2000–01	Education as % of total aid 1998–99	Education as % of total aid 2000–01	Basic education as % of education aid 1998–99	Basic education as % of education aid 2000–01	Change in amount Education	Change in amount Basic education	Change in % Education/total	Change in % Basic education/education
Group I												
Belgium	51	65	2	6	12	13	4	9	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
Canada	97	131	5	31	8	10	5	23	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
Denmark	14	47	2	25	2	5	13	54	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
Luxembourg[1]	15	22	4	8	21	24	26	34	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
Portugal	16	28	<1	3	8	11	1	12	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
United States	230	284	81	195	3	3	35	69	Positive	Positive	NSC	Positive
Group II												
Spain	88	141	10	13	11	13	12	9	Positive	Positive	Positive	Negative
Netherlands	150	185	72	131	9	7	48	71	Positive	Positive	Negative	Positive
Group III												
United Kingdom	187	186	49	70	8	7	26	38	NSC	Positive	Negative	Positive
Australia	131	104	31	33	18	13	23	32	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive
France	1 290	771	6	119	29	23	0	15	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive
Japan[2]	1 076	818	48	68	7	6	11	13	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive
Group IV												
Finland	16	21	5	3	7	9	30	14	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Italy	26	42	<1	<1	5	6	1	0	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Switzerland	22	28	8	8	4	4	38	28	Positive	NSC	NSC	Negative
Group V												
Greece	6	7	<1	<1	10	8	0	0	Positive	NSC	Negative	NSC
Austria	110	62	2	1	22	14	2	2	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
Germany	669	568	82	53	18	17	12	9	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
New Zealand[3]	31	28	3	2	36	33	18	6	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
Norway	81	63	45	15	8	7	56	24	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
Sweden	57	45	32	16	6	4	56	36	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
Ireland	21	33	n.a.	n.a.	17	20	n.a.	n.a.	Positive	–	Positive	–
Total DAC countries[4]	4 386	3 679	486	800	10	8	13	24	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive

Notes: Figures are rounded. NSC – no significant change.

1. Luxembourg figures for 2000–01 cover only 2000.
2. The amount of aid reported by Japan by sub-sector amounted to only 41% of total education aid in 1998–99 and 63% in 2000–01.
3. New Zealand reported only 58% of its total education aid by sub-sector in 1998–99.
4. As a result of the under-reporting by sub-sector in the cases of Japan and New Zealand, the total for DAC countries by sub-sector constituted only 85% of total aid in 1998–99 and 92% in 2000–01. Aid for basic education as a percentage of total education aid has been calculated based on the reported sub-sector figure rather than the figure for total education aid.

Source: DAC on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003*a*, Table 5).

education increased by more than 60% (from US$486 million to US$800 million). As a proportion of the total, it almost doubled, reaching 24% in 2000–01.

Although the period concerned is too short to establish a trend, some patterns emerge from Table 6.3. Thus, independently of size of economy or of other political considerations, one group of countries had an unambiguously positive record. It can be seen from the last four columns of the table that in Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Luxembourg, Portugal and the United States, the absolute magnitude of aid to education and to

basic education increased. Furthermore, education received greater priority in the overall aid programme in these countries and basic education was given greater prominence in educational support. Elsewhere, experience was more mixed. In some Group III countries in the table (including France and Japan) education aid as whole fell, whereas aid to basic education increased. In other countries, aid to basic education fell, both absolutely and as a proportion of education aid. These are the countries shown in Groups IV and V, and include Austria, Germany, Switzerland and three Nordic countries.

More than a fifth of aid to education is classed as 'unspecified'.

However, the groupings and patterns presented in Table 6.3 should be interpreted with some care, in part because they offer only a short-term indication of the levels and trends of aid flows for education. In addition, a more detailed examination of the composition of bilateral aid to education, set in the context of changing aid policies and modalities, allows a more nuanced interpretation of patterns and trends to emerge.

Composition of bilateral education aid

Table 6.4 shows that support for basic education from all DAC countries increased from 13% to 24% of bilateral education aid. Nevertheless, these data need to be seen in the context of more than one-fifth of aid to education being classified as 'unspecified'. Even though this category decreased over the period, it still comprised more than half of total education aid in five countries. Strictly, the 'unspecified' category refers to education aid which cannot be classified by sub-sector.[4]

The category 'unspecified' is best understood by examining OECD-DAC's Creditor Reporting System (CRS, see Box 6.1). Its composition is shown in Figure 6.3 for five donor countries. In most of these cases the largest part is accounted for by education policies, administration and management. This is often the category to which general sector support is assigned, notwithstanding that a large part of such support may in fact be targeted at basic education. Furthermore, more careful reporting of sub-sectoral detail over time appears to be happening. Accordingly, the apparent increased level of support to basic education over the period shown in Table 6.4 may partly arise from a re-classification of aid flows from the 'unspecified' category. Replies to a survey of eight bilateral agencies,[5] conducted for this Report, suggested that this was the main explanation for the compensating movement of the shares of 'unspecified' and 'basic' between

Table 6.4. Percentage composition of bilateral education assistance (1998–99 and 2000–01)

Country	1998–99				2000–01				Point changes in basic education (B) - (A)
	Unspecified	Basic (A)	Secondary	Post-secondary	Unspecified	Basic (B)	Secondary	Post-secondary	
Australia	3	23	10	63	6	32	12	49	9
Austria	2	2	45	51	12	2	2	83	0
Belgium	27	4	12	56	18	9	12	61	5
Canada	43	5	2	49	22	23	10	44	18
Denmark	46	13	40	1	14	54	21	11	41
Finland	57	30	7	6	68	14	7	11	-17
France	36	0	35	29	21	15	6	57	15
Germany	7	12	18	63	5	9	9	76	-3
Greece	49	0	0	51	31	0	1	68	0
Ireland	–	–	–	–	100	0	0	0	-
Italy	75	1	3	21	55	0	25	20	-1
Japan[1]	48	11	9	32	24	13	16	47	2
Luxembourg[2]	49	26	14	11	37	34	28	0	8
Netherlands	19	48	5	29	17	71	1	12	23
New Zealand[3]	2	18	5	75	2	6	12	79	-12
Norway	28	56	6	10	13	24	2	61	-32
Portugal	24	1	27	48	27	12	17	44	11
Spain	36	12	13	39	53	9	10	28	-3
Sweden	21	56	4	20	40	36	2	22	-20
Switzerland	40	38	2	20	28	28	24	19	-10
United Kingdom	64	26	6	4	55	38	6	2	12
United States	20	35	19	25	1	69	0	31	34
Total DAC countries[4]	30	13	21	36	21	24	8	47	11

Notes: Figures are rounded.
1. The amount of aid reported by Japan by sub-sector amounted to only 41% of total education aid in 1998–99 and 63% in 2000–01.
2. Luxembourg figures for 2000–01 cover only 2000.
3. New Zealand reported only 58% of its total education aid by sub-sector in 1998–99.
4. As a result of the under-reporting by sub-sector in the cases of Japan and New Zealand, the total for DAC countries by sub-sector constituted only 85% of total education aid in 1998–99 and 92% in 2000–01.
Source: DAC on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003a, Table 5).

4. DAC education aid is classified according to three main sub-sectors: basic, secondary and post-secondary. What cannot be apportioned to any of these appears in a fourth category termed 'unspecified'.

5. A survey was conducted for this report amongst eight significant bilateral aid providers to education: Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. The survey was designed first, to ascertain agency perspectives on reported DAC education statistics and second, to clarify policy directions and the impact that these may have on types and levels of assistance.

Figure 6.3. Percentage composition of 'unspecified' education aid, selected countries, average (2000–01)
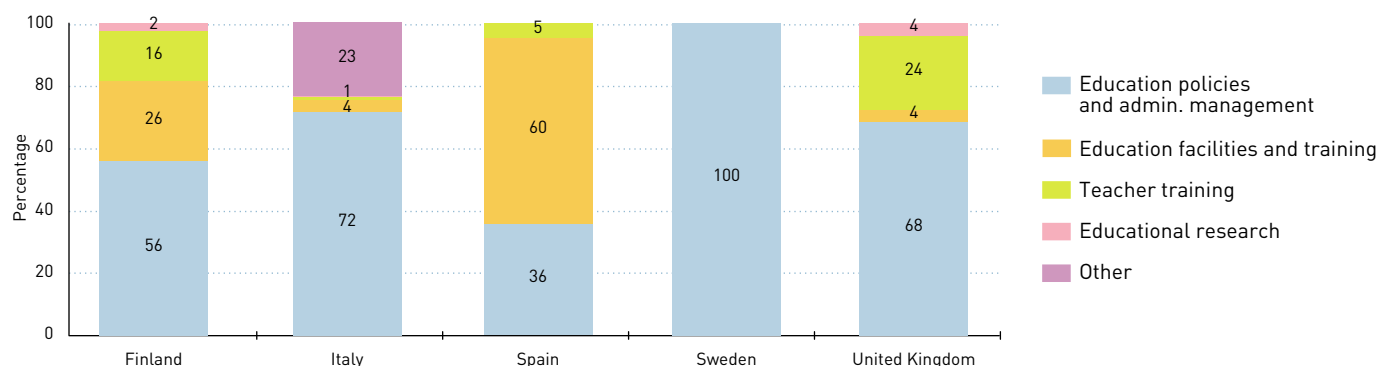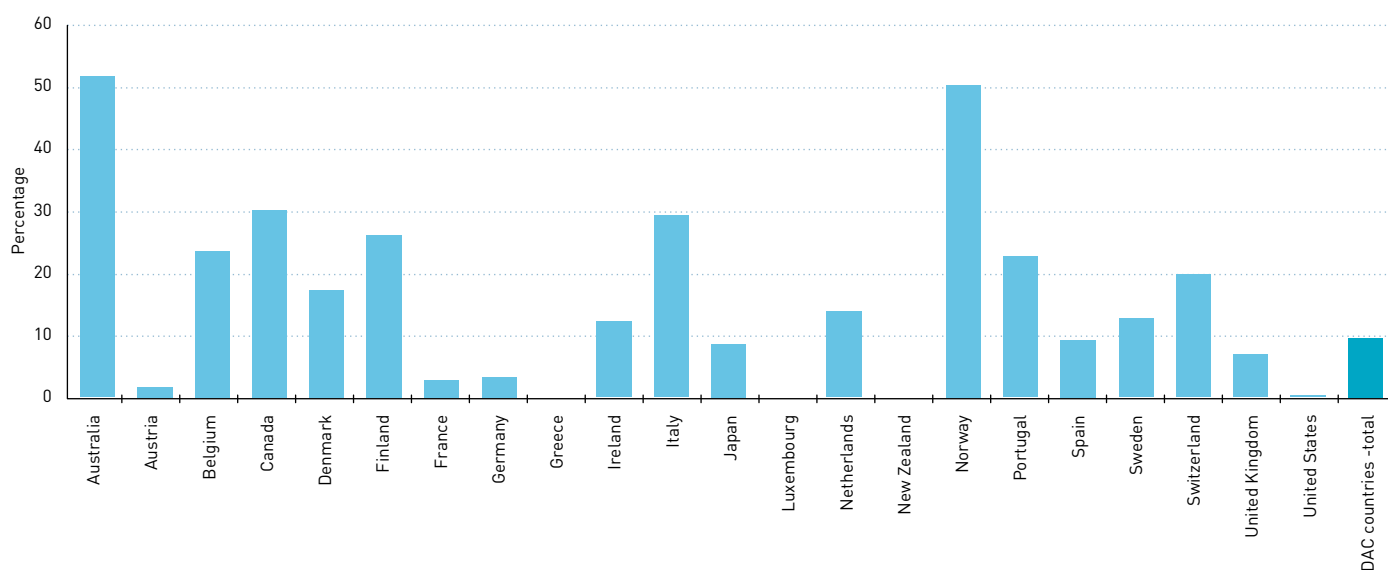

Source: CRS on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003*a*).

1998–99 and 2000–01 for the United Kingdom and – in the opposite direction – for Sweden.

Aid to education is also provided through other sectors, as Figure 6.4 shows. These flows are insignificant in some countries (such as the United States), but they constitute highly significant amounts in others (approximately 50% for Australia and Norway). These, of course, may be atypical rather than regular. For example, in the case of Norway, the figure was 30% in 1998–99. In addition, these allocations may reflect a limited number of activities. Thus 90% of the 2000–01 figure for Norway is

explained by two medical training projects in the United Republic of Tanzania. This considerable proportion of education aid allocated through other sector programmes may counterbalance the somewhat negative characteristics for Norway suggested by Table 6.3.

It is, then, necessary to take account of all DAC data sources in order to establish a full picture of aid to education and to explain changes in aid provision by individual member countries. This is particularly relevant for countries that have adopted the sector-wide approach or more general support to the budgets of governments

Figure 6.4. Aid to education through other sectors as a percentage of total aid to education, average (2000–01)

Source: CRS on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003*a*).

as their predominant aid modality, and for those that provide large amounts of aid for education under other sectoral programmes.

Reporting on aid to education

The previous sections have suggested that difficulties remain in obtaining a totally accurate picture of aid to education, and to basic education more specifically, but steady improvements in reporting to the OECD-DAC are being made, as Box 6.1 demonstrates. In the survey conducted for this report, all bilateral agencies acknowledged the value of the DAC education statistics as an official source on aid flows and as a basis for comparison across countries. However, some of them also indicated that the DAC figures do not provide the full picture of their support for education and that in some cases there are differences between what they record for the DAC and what they report nationally. This partly relates to difficulties in applying the DAC recording system, particularly

in the context of moving from specific projects to more general sectoral and budget support, and partly to other technical issues that vary in importance from country to country (see Box 6.2).

What remains of immediate interest is whether the data issues raised by the agencies may partly explain the patterns set out in Table 6.3, the extent to which support for basic education and the 'unspecified' sub-sectors are interrelated, and whether support provided through channels other than through the education sector can be considered as significant.

Aid trends, policies and commitments

In recent policy statements, the bilateral agencies participating in the survey for this report indicated strong support for education, stressing its role in poverty reduction, in sustainable development, and in the empowerment of women and girls. Table 6.5 summarizes the agencies' returns.

Box 6.1. Statistics on aid to education: the quality of reporting

The analysis of aid flows to the education sector presented in this report is mainly based on OECD *International Development Statistics* (OECD-DAC, 2003*a*). The data come from agencies, including the twenty-two member countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD, the European Commission and other international organizations. The statistics are compiled according to the definitions and classifications agreed by the DAC (OECD-DAC, 2003*a*).

Data on total *annual amounts of aid to education* extended by individual DAC providers are available from 1971 onwards. Basic education has been distinguished as a separate category in the statistics since 1993. Initially, reporting by level of education was difficult for several agencies, but the revision of the DAC sector classification in 1996 helped to clarify the definition of the education sector and its sub-categories. The rules on how to classify educational activities in other sectors (e.g. health, agriculture) or projects targeting several levels of education (e.g. basic and secondary education) were also clarified. For the biennium 2000–01, data on aid to education can be broken down by level of education for all DAC providers.

DAC members' reporting on *individual education projects and programmes* has also greatly improved over the last few years. The Creditor Reporting System (CRS) Aid Activity database of the DAC allows sector-by-recipient analyses and covers over 90% of DAC providers' bilateral ODA since

1999. Coverage is lower in the education sector (more than 70%). The data gaps (mainly concerning France and Japan) can, however, be remedied by aggregating aid to education by recipient, as reported in the annual DAC statistics.

The main problem encountered in the analysis of aid to education concerns multilateral agencies. Data on educational projects have been available for the World Bank and the regional development banks since 1973, and for UNICEF since 2000. As regards the European Commission (a member of the DAC), the total amount of aid to education is known for 2000–01 but activity-level detail is available only on European Development Fund and European Investment Bank activities. Improvements are expected in statistics on 2003 flows.

The aggregate and activity-level data in the DAC *International Development Statistics* are the main source of data on aid to education (OECD-DAC, 2003*a*). Whereas internal systems of member countries might provide more detailed information, the DAC statistics allow comparability. DAC members have urged that the remaining international providers not yet using the system – in particular the UNDP but also some other United Nations agencies – should report their aid activities to the OECD using the same format, definitions and classifications as the bilateral agencies. This will help to provide a complete global picture of aid efforts according to standardized definitions and classifications.

Source: Based on information provided by the OECD-DAC.

Box 6.2. Statistics on aid to education: reporting difficulties

DAC countries highlight a set of problems in reporting their aid flows to DAC, in particular:

Difficulties in reconciling figures reported to DAC and figures published by agencies:

- DAC reporting follows the calendar year whereas some countries report to their own parliaments for a fiscal year.

- Many countries report to their own parliaments using a sector classification which is not identical to the DAC classification.

- Whereas DAC compiles data from all national agencies, in some countries individual agencies submit separate reports to their own governments.

Difficulties in capturing all education aid through the DAC coding system

- DAC statistics report mostly commitments, although disbursement figures are considered to be the most reliable by the agencies.

- Education aid is not captured by the DAC education code when it is a sub-component of multi-sector programmes or is provided through other sectors.

- The 'unspecified' category hides some support for the basic education sub-sector.

- Education support and components provided for NGOs, as non-project grants, and as humanitarian aid are not captured in the DAC figures.

Source: Based on returns from eight bilateral agencies as part of the survey conducted for this report.

These indications of a renewed commitment to basic education have been accompanied by some announcements of new funding commitments. At the G8 summit in Kananaskis, Canada, in March 2002, both Japan and Canada announced additional funding for basic education. Japan indicated pledges of more than US$2 billion of ODA for the education sector over the next five years to support low-income countries faced with difficulties in achieving the EFA goals, and that it would strengthen its Basic Education for Growth Initiative (BEGIN) which focuses on access, quality and management. Canada declared that it would increase its investment in basic education in sub-Saharan Africa to CDN$100 million by 2005 and would maintain at least that level of investment annually thereafter. This was in addition to the CDN$555 million that Canada committed to invest in basic education in its Social Development Priorities Framework published soon after the World Education Forum in Dakar.

At the United Nations Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico, in March 2002, France announced an increase of its ODA to reach 0.5% of its GNP over the next five years, and 0.7% over ten years. This is expected to lead to increased support for education and particularly for basic education. The United States announced that it would increase its core assistance to developing countries by 50% over the next three years, resulting in a US$5 billion annual increase over current levels by 2006 (U.S. Government, 2002). The new fund, which will supplement the current assistance, would be placed in a Millennium Challenge Account and be available to countries that have demonstrated commitment to sound development policies. So far, Congress has approved US$800 million for 2004 (USAID, 2003*a*). Education is expected to benefit from this account. In addition, US support for basic education is expected to increase in the order of 50% during 2001–03 (U.S. Government, 2002).

More recently, the Netherlands announced its intention to spend €2.5 billion (approximately US$2.92 billion) on education in developing countries in the next five years, of which 76% will go to basic education (Netherlands, 2003*a*).

The Fast-Track Initiative (FTI), discussed later in this chapter, has also attracted funds from nine bilateral agencies. This, in association with IDA acceleration funds, is in the order of US$200 million for the period 2003–05.

**Education is expected to benefit from the Millenium Challenge Account.**

Table 6.5. Aid to education: policy orientation of eight bilateral agencies

	Priorities	Emphasis on EFA and MDG goals	Policy papers*
Canada	Working with other agencies at the country level as a partner to assist countries to prepare credible plans for their education sector. Assisting in their implementation.	Access for all to free and compulsory primary education. Elimination of gender disparities in education. Improving the quality of basic education.	*Social Development Priorities: A Framework for Action* (CIDA, 2000). *Action Plan on Basic Education* (CIDA, 2002).
France	Effective utilization of internal and external resources. Impact of educational policy on economic and social development (poverty alleviation). Co-ordination with other partners in sector programmes. Debt relief.	Corresponding MDG and EFA goals: Universal primary education by 2015. Gender parity by 2005 and equality by 2015.	
Germany	Country-specific sector support. The EFA goals and and MDGs are points of reference for policy formulation and quantifiable EFA goals are targets where relevant. Vocational education and training is a component of support strategies for economic reform and the development of market systems. Linkage with national education sector strategies and relevant EFA goals.	Free and compulsory primary education of good quality. Improved levels of adult literacy. Elimination of gender disparities/support to gender equality.	*Support to Basic Education in Developing Countries* (to be updated) (GTZ, 1999). Forthcoming position paper on support to basic education in the context of the Dakar Framework, the Millennium Declaration and related international initiatives. *Programme of Action 2015* (GTZ, 2001*a*); *The Art of Learning* (GTZ, 2001*b*).
Japan	Expansion of primary and secondary education. Reduction of disparities in education. Satisfaction of the educational needs of youths and adults. Expansion of infant care and early childhood education. Improvement of educational management.	All six EFA goals and the two MDGs, particularly: Universal primary education by 2015. Halving illiterate population by 2015. Improving all aspects of quality of education.	*Approaches for Systematic Planning and Development Projects – Basic Education* (JICA, 2002).
Netherlands	Strengthening civil society and transferring ownership of learning programmes to the governments of the countries concerned.	Maintain and improve the quality and relevance of basic education. Promote equality of access to education, especially for underprivileged population groups. Eliminate gender disparity in participation in education and promote equitable gender relations in society.	*Education: A Basic Human Right* (Netherlands, 2000).
Sweden	Participatory rights-based, learner-friendly and gender sensitive approaches to teaching and learning. Transparent and accountable management of education at all levels. Making primary education compulsory and truly free. Drawing up education legislation and policies in line with the human rights conventions and the EFA goals. Meeting the special needs of children with disabilities, illness or other learning problems. Removing gender-biased, language or ethnic barriers. Mobilizing rural communities to allow education for girls. Rehabilitation of education in emergency and post-conflict situations. Improving conditions for access and learning. Enhancing literacy for all. Enhancing formal, non-formal and informal life-long learning opportunities.	All six goals based on partner-country programmes.	*Education for All: A Human Right and a Basic Need. Policy for SIDA's Development Cooperation in the Education Sector* (SIDA, 2001).
United Kingdom	Importance of governments being 'seriously committed'. High priority to UPE, abolition of user fees and other direct cost barriers. International agencies: better co-ordination and attention to the capacity of countries to use aid effectively.	The two education related MDGs – UPE and gender equality in the context of the reduction of poverty.	*The Challenge of Universal Primary Education* (DFID, 2001*a*). *Children Out of School* (DFID, 2001*b*).
United States	Holistic approach vis-à-vis Dakar Framework and EFA goals. Education a driver of economic growth and poverty reduction. Responsive to education and training needs of countries. Integration with PRSPs, partnerships under the Monterrey compact and the policy framework of the Millennium Challenge Account. HIV/AIDS pandemic. Public private civil society alliances.	Moving into early childhood, workforce and skills development, adult literacy, higher and secondary education activities, while continuing and/or expanding ongoing primary level efforts, particularly for girls.	New worldwide strategy for education currently being drafted.

* These exclude policy papers specifically on gender and girls' education that appear in Box 6.4.
Source: Based on returns from eight bilateral agencies as part of the survey conducted for this report.

Figure 6.5. Regional distribution of bilateral aid to education, average (2000–01), adult illiterates, school-age population and out-of-school children (2000), percentage.
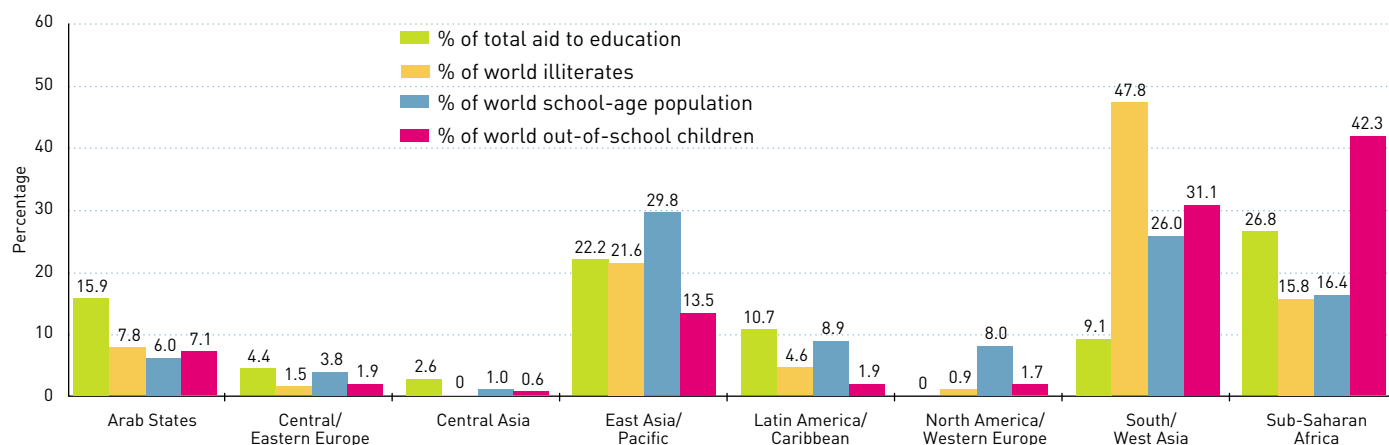
Note: Total education aid does not add up to 100% because of aid that cannot be allocated to one region.
Source: Compiled from CRS on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003a) and Statistical annex, Tables 2 and 5.

Regional distribution of bilateral education aid

Figure 6.5 shows the regional distribution of bilateral education aid.[6] The highest proportion is provided for sub-Saharan Africa (approximately 27%), followed by East Asia and the Pacific (approximately 22%) and the Arab States (approximately 16%). These regions all face difficulties in meeting the Dakar goals by 2015 as reported in the *EFA Report 2002* (UNESCO, 2002b). Other regions, however, face similar difficulties, but receive far less education aid. This is particularly the case with South and West Asia, which, despite having one-third of the world's out-of-school-children, received less than 10% of aid to education. More aid than this was received by Latin America and the Caribbean, where the scale of educational problems is significantly less intense.[7]

Although the distribution of education aid cannot be disentangled from broader economic and political considerations, most, if not all, funding and technical assistance agencies acknowledge the right to education and its significance for empowerment and development (Table 6.5). From this perspective, a distribution of aid reflecting comparative needs might be expected. However, as Table 6.6 shows, this is far from the case. The Arab States, Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean all receive more

Table 6.6. Education aid by region and national characteristics (2000–01)

	Adult illiterates (15+)[1]	Out-of-school children[1]	Education aid[2]	Aid per capita[3]	Aid per school-age child[3]	Aid per illiterate[3]	Aid per out-of-school child[3]
Arab States	67.5	7.4	544.6	2.0	14.0	8.1	73.5
Central and Eastern Europe	12.5	1.9	150.9	0.4	6.1	12.1	77.7
Central Asia	0.2	0.6	90.1	1.2	13.4	405.7	144.5
East Asia and the Pacific	186.4	14.0	761.3	0.4	4.0	4.1	54.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	39.3	1.9	368.3	0.7	6.4	9.4	189.0
South and West Asia	412.2	32.4	313.6	0.2	1.9	0.8	9.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	136.0	44.0	919.7	1.5	8.7	6.8	20.9
Unallocated[4]			283.6				
World	862.0	104.2	3 432.5	0.6	5.3	4.0	32.9

Notes: Figures are rounded
1. In millions
2. In constant 2000 US$ millions
3. In constant 2000 US$
4. 'Unallocated' refers to aid which was not classified by recipient, or which straddled more than one EFA region.
Source: Compiled from CRS on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003a) and Statistical annex, Tables 2 and 5.

6. The regional distribution of bilateral education aid has been calculated from information in the CRS, adjusted for data gaps, and compared with official DAC development statistics (see Appendix 3).

7. The regional data obscure the needs of individual countries whose out-of-school populations and adult illiteracy rates may be relatively insignificant in global terms but constitute an overwhelming problem at the national level. This, for example, is the case of the Comoros, whose 49,761 out-of-school children constitute approximately half of the primary school-age population.

education aid per capita, per school-age child, per illiterate, and per out-of-school-child than the global average, whereas South and West Asia receives much less. Sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand receives more than the global average on each indicator, with the exception of aid per out-of-school child.

A closer analysis of country data confirms that aid is attracted by better-performing education

systems. An analysis of 77 countries for which the net enrolment rate and the amount of bilateral aid per out-of-school child are available shows that the amount of aid per out-of-school child increases with the level of net enrolment (Figure 6.6). Similarly, for 120 countries having these data, a positive non-linear relationship is apparent between literacy rates and aid per illiterate adult (Figure 6.7).

Figure 6.6. NER in primary education and bilateral education aid per out-of-school child (in constant 2000 US$), average (2000–01)

$$y = 0.927e^{0.0549x}$$
$$R^2 = 0.4151$$
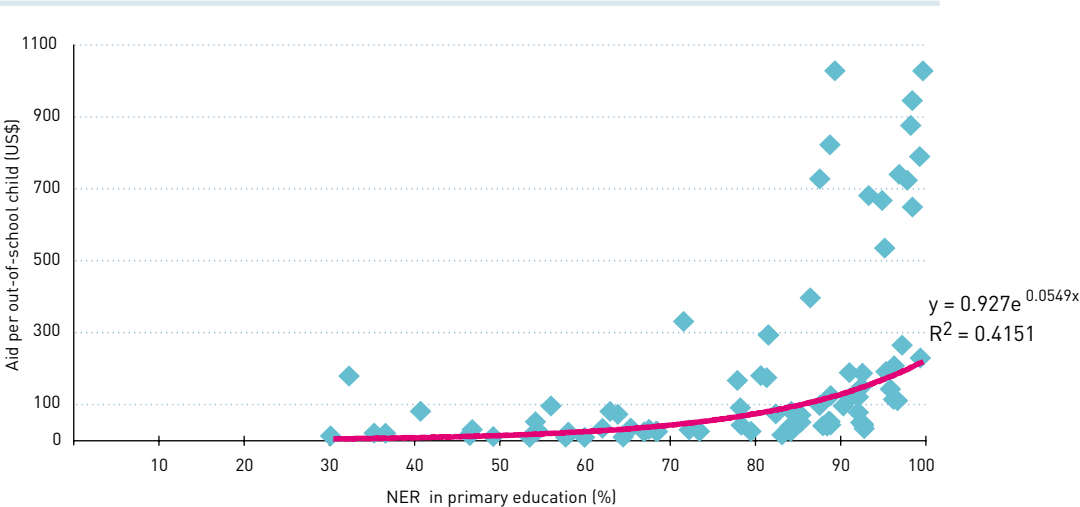
Note: Data for NER and out-of-school children are for 2000.
Source: Compiled from CRS on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003a) and Statistical annex, Table 5.

Figure 6.7. Adult literacy rate and bilateral education aid per adult illiterate (in constant 2000 US$), average (2000–01)

$$y = 0.882e^{0.0337x}$$
$$R^2 = 0.278$$
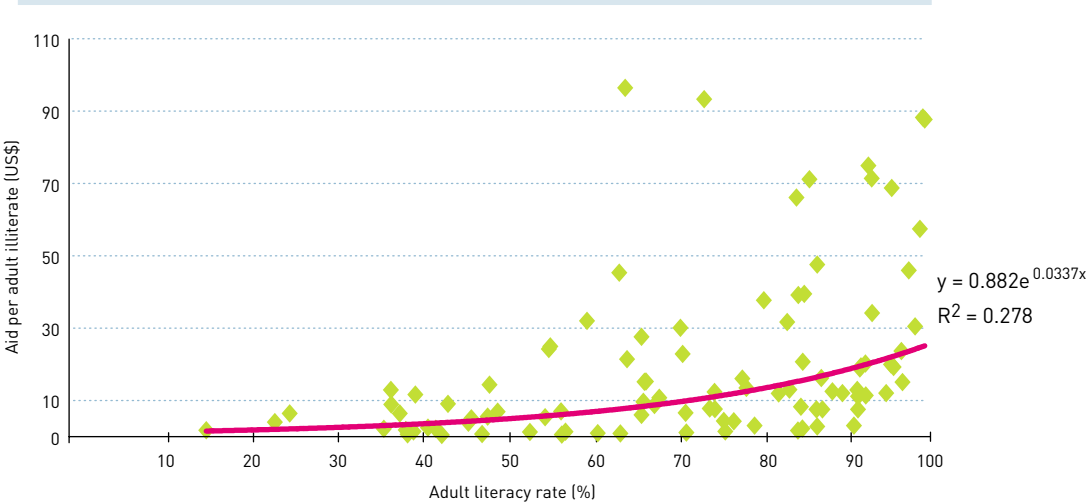
Note: Data for illiterates and adult literacy rate are for 2000.
Source: Compiled from CRS on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003a) and Statistical annex, Table 2.

Multilateral aid to education

Support to education from multilateral agencies (excluding the World Bank and the EC) fell over the periods 1998–99 and 2000–01 (Table 6.7). This decrease is explained solely by the decline in support from the regional development banks. Support for basic education involves all education aid in the case of UNICEF, some 86% for UNRWA and 47% for the European Commission.[8]

As regards World Bank funding for education, trends in concessional finance (IDA) have followed a similar pattern to the Bank's commercial lending (Figure 6.8). Having remained relatively stable throughout the first half of the 1990s, both then became more variable, and have subsequently been in decline. Furthermore, education has also declined as a proportion of total lending in recent years, and the IDA element now constitutes only half of its level in the mid-1990s.

In terms of its regional distribution, high priority is given to sub-Saharan Africa and to South Asia in total IDA lending, and for education (Figure 6.9). IDA lending to South Asia to some extent counterbalances the comparatively lower allocations from bilateral agencies for that region.

Table 6.8 summarizes total bilateral and multilateral aid to education and to basic education in 1998–99 and 2000–01. The bilateral flows dominate the picture. Both bilateral and

multilateral aid to education decreased between 1998–99 and 2000–01. In contrast, there was a positive development for basic education, with aid increasing by between one-fifth and one-quarter under high and low assumptions, respectively. The multilateral agencies allocated a comparatively higher proportion of their total aid for basic education than did the bilateral agencies. However, these levels of support of around US$1.5 billion per year remain small when compared with the estimated level of additional aid of US$5.6 billion per year needed to reach the major EFA goals (UNESCO, 2002*b*: Chapter 4).

8. The breakdown for basic education is unavailable for the regional banks.

Table 6.7. Multilateral ODA commitments, excluding the World Bank, in constant 2000 US$ millions, average

	Total		Education		Education as % of total	
	1998–99	2000–01	1998–99	2000–01	1998–99	2000–01
African Development Fund	774	407	120	41	15.5	10.1
Asian Development Fund	1165	1072	108	84	9.3	7.9
Inter-American Development Bank	578	487	36	27	6.2	5.6
European Commission (EC)	n.a.	6445	n.a.	306	n.a.	4.7
UNICEF	445	586	43	53	9.6	9.1
UNRWA	301	326	169	171	56.2	52.3
Others	81	93	4	7	4.9	7.1
Total multilateral	3345	9416	481	687	14.4	7.3
Total multilateral (excluding EC)*	3345	2971	481	381	14.4	12.9

Note: Figures are rounded.
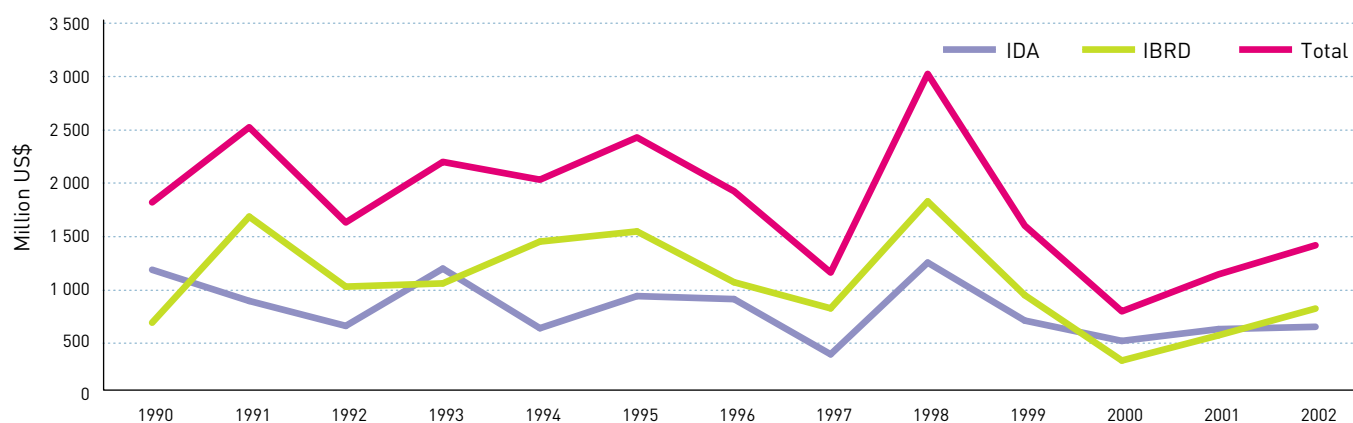The DAC deflator for the United States has been used for all multilateral agencies except for the EC.
* Total multilateral (excluding EC) permits comparison between the two biennia as data are unavailable for the EC for 1998–99.
*Source*: DAC on-line database (OECD-DAC, 2003*a*), Table 5.

Figure 6.8. World Bank lending to education, constant 2001 prices in US$ millions (1990–2002)

Note: The DAC deflator for the United States has been used to produce constant prices series.
Source: http://devdata.worldbank.org/edstats/worldbanklending/wblsum_02.xls

Figure 6.9. Percentage regional distribution of IBRD and IDA cumulative lending total and for education (1990–2002)
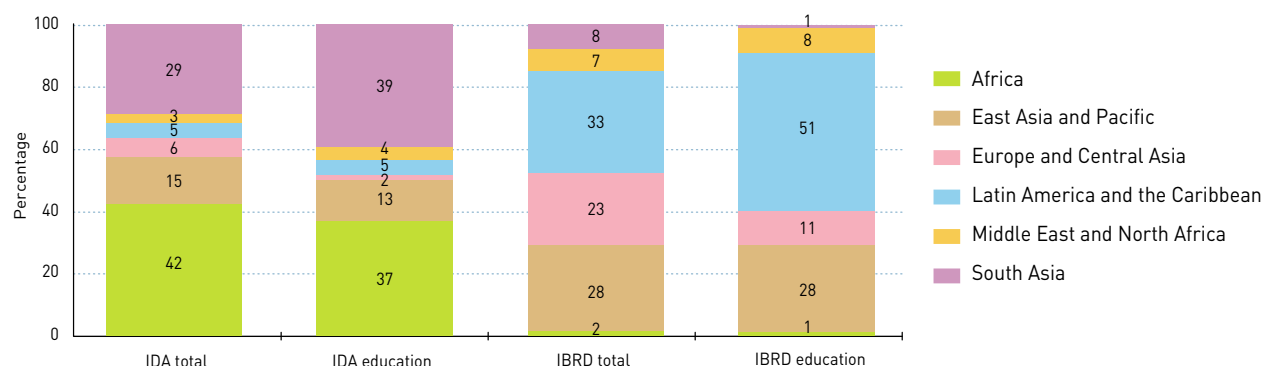
Note: These regional divisions follow the World Bank classification which does not match exactly with the EFA regions.
Source: World Bank (2002*f*, pp. 131–2).

**Table 6.8. Bilateral and multilateral assistance to education
in constant 2000 US$ billions (1998–99 and 2000–01)**

	Education		Basic education			
	1998–99	2000–01	1998–99		2000–01	
			High	Low	High	Low
Bilateral[1]	4.39	3.68	0.57	0.57	0.87	0.87
Total multilateral of which	1.49	1.32	0.74	0.57	0.67	0.58
IDA[2]	0.91	0.51	0.40	0.27	0.22	0.15
European Commission (EC)[3]	n.a.	0.31	n.a.	n.a.	0.14	0.14
UNESCO[4]	0.10	0.12	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.04
Inter-American Development Bank	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01
Asian Development Fund	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.03
African Development Fund	0.12	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.01
UNICEF	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.05
UNRWA	0.17	0.17	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15
Other multilateral	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	5.88	5.00	1.31	1.15	1.55	1.45

Notes: Figures are rounded.
1. Of the bilateral education aid accounted for by sub-sector, 13% (in 1998–99) and 24% (in 2000–01) was committed to basic education (Table 6.3). It is assumed that these proportions also applied to the remaining education aid.
2. IDA commitments cover fiscal and not calendar years. Two estimates have been used to calculate IDA education commitments allocated to basic education: a high estimate of 44% and a low estimate of 30% (see data provided in UNESCO, 2002*b*, note 9, p. 172). The same estimates have been used for the Inter-American Development Bank, the Asian Development Fund and the African Development Fund.
3. 47.2% of EC aid to education was allocated to basic education in 2000–01.
4. UNESCO commitments are for fiscal and not calendar years. It is assumed that 30% of the UNESCO education budget goes to basic education.
Sources: Calculated from Tables 6.3, and 6.7; Figure 6.8; UNESCO (1998*a* and 2000*c*).

Summary

The gap between rhetoric and reality in support for education seems to persist, although it may well be too early to see stated commitments since Dakar reflected in DAC recorded figures. Analysis of the most recent data shows that overall support for education from both multilateral and bilateral agencies has been declining in recent years. Multilateral support for basic education has also gone down. In contrast, support for basic education from bilateral agencies has increased and is possibly at a higher level than that captured by the DAC data because of recording deficiencies and allocations outside the basic education sub-sector. It is

particularly important to recognize that increased allocations through the sub-sector 'unspecified' may compensate for decreased contributions to the basic education sub-sector in countries that strongly support sector-wide approaches. Nevertheless, even this more encouraging trend in support of basic education must be understood in the context of a smaller overall aid budget for education in general. It also remains small in comparison with projected needs for EFA.

The analysis has also shown a persistent pattern of regional distribution of Official Development Assistance and support for education, targeting

particularly sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia and the Pacific. South Asia receives a comparatively smaller proportion of both overall and education aid, although allocations of IDA funding for this region – both in general and for education – are more favourable than bilateral support. While all targeted regions have difficulties in terms of large numbers of out-of-school populations and adult illiterates, those countries with the greatest needs in these terms do not generally receive an aid allocation that reflects their circumstances. This is further reflected in the aid per capita data which suggests that aid is attracted to better performing systems.

Aid, education and gender

Chapter 4 concluded that the promotion of gender parity and equality in education requires strong leadership from governments in order to redistribute resources within the education sector to meet the specific needs of girls. It also highlighted the need for more effective multi-sector partnerships and the direct engagement of women and girls in the processes of social change.

The extent to which the existing commitments of the international community are directed to these ends is not easy to ascertain. An interrogation of OECD-DAC project data would be a useful exercise in this respect but has not been possible for this report. However, it is clear that gender equality, in and through education, has an increasingly prominent place in the policies of a good number of funding agencies. The Partnership on Sustainable Strategies for Girls' Education[9] is one indication of this interest. UNICEF continues to provide leadership internationally in promoting girls' education (the subject of the *The State of the World's Children 2004* report), and other organizations and programmes are giving increased attention to gender in their work (e.g. in the Task Force on HIV/AIDS and Education[10] and at the Commonwealth Secretariat[11]). Box 6.3 highlights the thrust of the work on gender and education by some bilateral agencies.

A growing technical literature pays attention to the extent to which gender is being addressed in education sector projects and programmes, especially in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

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Box 6.3. Bilateral agencies: gender and education

Many bilateral agencies have issued policy statements on basic education that reflect the Millennium Development and EFA Goals. Some agencies have overarching gender policies (e.g. CIDA, 1999; DFID, 2000; BMZ, 2001), which inform their education sector policies. Thus, Canada's *Action Plan on Basic Education* (CIDA, 2002), in which the elimination of gender disparities is one of three main goals, is a component of CIDA's *Social Development Priorities: A Framework for Action* (CIDA, 2000).

Most statements on basic education, the EFA goals and/or the MDGs, cite gender equality as a major objective. The Netherlands document *Education: A Basic Human Right* (Netherlands, 2000) has as one of three goals 'to eliminate gender disparity in participation in education and to promote equitable gender relations in society'. USAID places a special emphasis in all basic education activities on 'improving opportunities for girls, women and specially disadvantaged populations' (USAID, 2003c). The UK Department for International Development (DFID) has 'made girls' education a central tenet of its education work in line with achieving the MDG goal on parity and equality' (DFID, 2003; DFID 2001b). France and Japan are both giving increased weight to the two MDG education-related goals (AFD, 2003; JICA, 2003).

In support of this growing attention to gender in education, and for a more specific focus on girl's education, many agencies are undertaking work to strengthen their own capacity to contribute to the development of national policies and programmes. CIDA's *Educating Girls: A Handbook* (CIDA, 2003), BMZ's ongoing work on gender-budgeting and DFID's guidance notes for its education advisers on *How Can Education Advisers Help to Achieve the Public Service Agreement (PSA) Gender Equality Targets* (Newbigging and Derbyshire, 2003) are examples.

Source: Based on returns from eight bilateral agencies as part of the survey conducted for this report plus personal communication.

(PRSPs) and Sector Wide Approaches (SWAs). Although many guidelines for the development of these approaches stress the central significance of gender equality (e.g. World Bank, 2001b), the extent to which PRSPs and SWAs are underpinned by good gender analysis remains unclear.

One recent study of four PRSPs concludes that the twin requirements of broad-based participation and consultation on the one hand, and endorsement by the boards of the World Bank and the IMF on the other, have given rise to contradictions in both the content and the formulation of PRSPs. This is most evident in the limitations of the consultation process with civil society organizations and stakeholder communities and in the under-representation of women's voices. This weakens the analysis of gender perspectives on poverty (Whitehead, 2003). As Box 6.4 indicates, this may be the cause, or the consequence, of confusion about

9. A partnership of the World Bank, UNICEF and DFID (see World Bank, 2003e).

10. HIV/AIDS Impact on Education Clearinghouse (see UNESCO-IIEP, 2003a).

11. Commonwealth Secretariat series on gender mainstreaming (e.g. Commonwealth Secretariat, 2003).

Box 6.4. Gender, education and PRSPs

A study of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) for Bolivia, Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Yemen found that 'attention to gender was shockingly limited' (Whitehead, 2003), a view supported by some other studies of gender in PRSPs, including by the World Bank (2001*b*). Strategies for addressing gender were often fragmented, with 'piecemeal policies dealing with an aspect of women's disadvantage, not set within any wider analysis of the gender bases for these dimensions of vulnerability' (Whitehead, 2003). Another study noted that girls' education is either addressed under gender issues, or under education, but not across both. This has implications for the translation of gender strategies into education planning, strategies and actions (Winter and Burnett, 2002). And even when girls' education is treated under gender, or under education, the level of analysis remains very general. Thus, Chad's PRSP states that the country will improve access and equity within education by 'promoting schooling for girls' and 'reducing regional and gender-related disparities'.

PRSP analysis which is fully gender-inclusive should encompass issues of reproduction, household structures, and women's livelihoods, incomes and employment. Other dimensions are important too, including vulnerability, powerlessness, and male-bias in governance systems. And examination of the implications and the impact of national budget priorities and allocations is essential for a comprehensive analysis of the gender dimensions of poverty.

The absence of sound gender analysis in PRSPs has significant implications for achieving gender equality within and through education. Given that gender disparities in education are heavily influenced by socio-economic conditions, a gendered poverty analysis contributes to a much clearer understanding of gender based educational inequalities. At present, PRSP strategies for girls' education are often focused on supply side issues without reference to, or analysis of, the demand side constraints that inhibit girls' full participation in schooling. The four PRSPs mentioned above made no reference to the material aspects of well-being – such as income, wages and livelihoods – and their relevance to women's poverty, yet these issues have a major impact on gender parity in education.

The lack of priority and target setting, as well as more general analytic limitations, reflect broader problems with PRSP documents, on which many authors have commented. These include the lack of linkage between priority statements and resource allocations or planned actions. This failure may reflect several factors: lack of political will to act on gender inequalities; a lack of capacity to translate policy intentions into actions; weaknesses inherent in the processes of developing PRSPs, which are often time-bound; and lack of consultation to ensure that women's perspectives on poverty are understood and incorporated into strategy formulation.

Sources: Whitehead (2003); Winter and Burnett (2002); World Bank (2001*b*).

how to address women as a specific group, and, in turn, broader gender issues within the education sector.

As Box 6.5 shows, the weakness of gender analysis in the PRSPs re-surfaces in national MDG reports, while a survey of gender in EFA National Plans in Africa, Asia and Latin America raises similar concerns (Kanno, 2003).

Literature on SWAs and education is broadly of four types: national monitoring and evaluation reports on education sector programmes; comparative studies of SWAs across countries; agency and research studies on the mechanics of SWAs; and analysis that focuses on the extent to which SWAs address, or meet, specific goals of access, inclusion, gender and quality. An initial review of this literature conducted for this report suggests that a number of studies (e.g. Elson and Evers, 1998) find that limited attention is paid to both gender outcomes and the inputs that affect them.

A recent comparative study on Ghana, India and Uganda concluded that while sector programmes do have the potential to enhance the provision and quality of girls' education, attention needs to be given to a set of major constraints:

- 'Evaporation' of national policy as gender objectives travel down the bureaucratic chain.
- Failure to promote gender policy by development partners for fear of undermining local SWA ownership.
- Focus on the expansion of girls' enrolment in primary education (access) at the expense of attention to gender issues in education provision (quality) and a neglect of linkages to, and the promotion of, girls' post-primary education.
- Insufficient dialogue amongst development partners, and poor communication within agencies between gender and education specialists.
- Lack of attention to power relations in the countries concerned and to women's rights groups (Sibbons et al., 2000).

In order to positively influence gender equity, SWAs need to be coherent, and agencies need to have a shared understanding of what constitutes an appropriate gender strategy in education. The very process of preparing and agreeing on an SWA provides an opportunity for the establishment of gender mainstreaming,

Box 6.5. Gender and MDG reports: results of a 'scan'

A recent 'scan' of country-level Millennium Development Goals reports through a gender lens was conducted by UNDP. The review of thirteen country reports examined the extent to which gender equality considerations were mainstreamed into reporting on the MDGs.

Central to all the MDGs is Goal 3, which is to 'promote gender equality and empowerment of women'. Unlike the other MDGs, Goal 3 is not specific to any particular sector or issue, as gender equality and women's rights underpin all the other goals. Equally, gender equality and women's rights will not be achieved without achieving the other MDGs. Thus, the scan focused on both reporting against Goal 3 as well as the tracking of gender gaps and inequalities against each of the other MDG targets.

The study concluded that:

- The inadequacy of gender mainstreaming is a feature shared by reports irrespective of authorship. Seven of the reports were prepared by United Nations country teams, four by independent expert groups, one by a national government and one by the government and the country team in partnership.
- Wide variations were found in the presentation and analysis of data. The reports seldom drew the lines between cross-cutting gender issues and sectoral policies in a satisfactory way.

With regard to the gender analysis of Goal 2, 'to ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling', it was found that gender issues had been mainstreamed to a certain extent, possibly because gender parity is explicitly mentioned in the goal. Seven of the thirteen country reports identified bridging the gender gap in education as a national priority. However, not all reports provided sex-disaggregated data on enrolment, retention and literacy, and three reports made no mention of gender issues in education, referring to 'children' as an undifferentiated category.

The report recommends strengthening the reporting process through the following measures:

- **Consultation and capacity**: Involving members of women's groups and gender experts in consultations across goals, to ensure that gender issues are discussed and integrated into all sections of the final report, and ensuring that draft reports are reviewed by independent gender experts familiar with country context.
- **Data collection and analysis**: Gender awareness training for statisticians involved in collating and processing data for the MDG reports to strengthen the gender dimensions of reporting on mandatory indicators. The report also recommends supporting the collection of sex-disaggregated data on key indicators.

Source: Menon-Sen (2003).

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provided that those in the partnership have a common understanding of what can be achieved. Where harmonized dialogue is lacking there are invariably differing definitions of gender concepts and approaches to gender equality. And where gender priorities are not matched by budget allocations, progress is further limited, although SWAs should provide the opportunity to undertake resource-based planning, driven by policy priorities and outcomes.

International initiatives

Global commitments are giving rise to global initiatives, funds and broader international developments for enhanced aid flows and the harmonization of aid procedures. The Global Fund to AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria[12] is a case in point. The Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development (United Nations, 2002*b*) is providing the framework for inter-national dialogue on increasing aid flows while the *Rome Declaration on Harmonization* (OECD-DAC, 2003*b*) reflects the growing consensus on

the need to harmonize the operational policies, procedures and practices of funding agencies.

The Fast-Track Initiative (FTI)

The Fast-Track Initiative (FTI), which was launched in June 2002, is comparable in its scope and ambition with these global projects. Designed as a major initiative to help to achieve the MDG of Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015, the FTI has reached a critical point in its development. It was conceived as a new international compact, able to mobilize significant new funds for countries that have the commitment but not the resources to achieve UPE, but to date FTI has yet to receive substantial and concrete international support for its activities. If it is to become a significant force in meeting the Dakar commitment that 'no countries seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources' (UNESCO, 2000*f*), then the expectations that have been raised in the process of its development will need to be met or reviewed.

12. Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (2003) http://globalfundatm.org/overview. html

Since the FTI was launched, efforts have been made by financial and technical assistance agencies and by participating countries to adhere to the principles of the Monterrey Consensus.

Led by the World Bank, the FTI also involves the European Commission (EC), UNESCO, UNICEF, the multilateral development banks and all the major bilateral development agencies in its planning and development. So far, these activities have focused on defining a Framework for the Initiative that covers eligibility criteria, the nature of country proposals, review processes, financing and operational modalities, and governance structures. But it has not proved easy to finalise and reach consensus on this Framework. There has also been debate about the inclusion and ownership of the Initiative by the countries that have been invited to participate and the extent to which the full EFA agenda, including gender, is part of the FTI endeavour.

Definition and objectives
The FTI was endorsed by the Development Committee of the World Bank as a 'process that would provide quick and incremental technical and financial support to countries that have policies but are not on track to attain Universal Primary Completion by 2015' (World Bank Development Committee, 2003a). Its primary frame of reference is the Monterrey Consensus (March 2002). This commits governments and international financial and technical assistance agencies to work through new 'development partnerships' based on mutual accountability and responsibility for achieving the MDGs, including UPE by 2015. Within the compact, countries implementing policy and institutional reforms and having the means to be accountable for their results can expect to receive additional and better-co-ordinated external assistance in support of their development plans.

Within this framework, countries with a PRSP and an agreed 'credible' education sector plan are eligible to develop proposals to join the FTI. In practice, other plans can be acknowledged as an Interim PRSP and an education sector plan can cover only the primary or basic education sub-sectors. Nevertheless, even where such plans are acknowledged, countries have so far had to develop separate proposals for FTI funding, although this is understood to be a catalyst for support to education sector plans through existing mechanisms, and not as a parallel process with its own separate funding.[13]

Plans are evaluated by using criteria from the Indicative Framework, developed by the World Bank. This provides targets or benchmarks that

have been derived from an analysis of experiences of developing countries that have either attained UPE or made considerable progress towards it. This achievement, according to the Bank study, has been based on a positive combination of factors related to financial sustainability, service delivery and expansion (World Bank, 2002a; Bruns et al., 2003).[14]

However, the simulation model that underpins the framework has been criticised on grounds that insufficient recognition has been given to the limitations of poor-quality data, the unpredictability of economic growth and unreliable population projections (Takala, 2003; Rose, 2003c). It has also been suggested that it is based on 'flimsy evidence related to experience in ten diverse 'successful' countries, with a wide variation in the indicators' (Rose, 2003c).

Main advances
Since the FTI was launched, efforts have been made by both financial and technical assistance agencies and by participating countries to adhere to the principles of the Monterrey Consensus. The FTI Secretariat established at the World Bank, which includes staff from other partners in the Initiative, has monitored the development of the FTI in the light of issues emerging from within FTI countries and agencies. Agency partners have met on several occasions to discuss systemic issues and to mobilize resources for the Initiative.[15] The announcement of the FTI action plan and initial international resource mobilization through the Development Committee and the G8 has brought high-level political attention to the Initiative and to the EFA agenda.

In the first tranche of countries that have applied to participate, governments have developed proposals for support from the FTI. These have been reviewed by country-based funding agencies taking into consideration costing, national capacity and aid absorption and levels of incremental financing required. Policy and resource issues that have emerged as a result of these processes have been brought to the international FTI meetings through the FTI Secretariat. Recently a proposal was made that in the future, local consortia of funding and technical assistance agencies should approve funding in response to plans developed by governments and only where insufficient funds were available would the shortfall be brought to

13. As emerges from the discussion below, in reality parallel processes have occurred although it was recently proposed that countries should no longer have to develop separate FTI plans (Bruns, 2003).

14. The benchmark criteria are: (1) Financing reforms: Public revenues 14-18% of GDP; Education expenditures 20% of revenues; Primary education expenditures 50% of total education expenditures. (2) Quality reforms: Pupil/teacher ratio of 40:1; Non-salary costs 33% of recurrent expenditure. (3) Efficiency reforms: Average teacher salary 3.5 times per capita GDP; Repetition of 10%.

15. Since the Amsterdam Conference in April 2002, partners have met in Brussels in November 2002 and in Paris in March 2003. The next meeting is scheduled for November 2003 in Oslo when a second tranche of country proposals for participation in the Initiative are expected to be ready.

the attention of the international forum of the FTI (Bruns, 2003).

Of the eighteen countries that initially applied to participate, seven were endorsed for funding in November 2002 (Burkina Faso, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Mauritania, Nicaragua, the Niger). Three more proposals were endorsed in March 2003 (the Gambia, Mozambique, Yemen). The remaining eight countries are working on PRSPs and sector plans and seeking clarity on what the FTI can offer (Albania, Bolivia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Zambia). As the selected countries have a relatively small proportion of the world's out-of-school children, special attention is also being paid to five high-population countries (Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Nigeria and Pakistan) which together account for approximately half of all out-of-school children in the world. These countries have been selected for a preparatory phase of interim capacity building, and the development of sector plans underpinned by analytical work – the so-called Analytical Fast-Track. Furthermore, special efforts are being considered for countries with poor short-term prospects for FTI eligibility but great need for support, the so-called Low-income Countries under Stress (World Bank Development Committee, 2003a). Additional discussions concern the possible creation of a multi-partner facility to provide flexible funding in countries with low development partner presence. The overall aim is to ensure that all low-income countries form part of the Initiative within the next two to three years (Bruns, 2003).[16]

The first seven FTI proposals
The basis for inclusion of the first seven countries was country proposals assessed by agencies working in-country, according to guidelines developed by the FTI Secretariat in Washington. These included the seven major benchmark criteria, four broad areas of concern identified in the design of the FTI (gaps in policy, financing, capacity and knowledge) and some consideration of factors identified in the Dakar Framework for Action (evidence of country ownership, inclusion of stakeholders in the development of the proposal, innovative approaches and attention to monitoring and evaluation). Finally, the possible risks to the implementation of the proposal, including the need for capacity development, were highlighted.

Nevertheless, the benchmark criteria were – and have remained – the most important consideration (Rose, 2003c).

The Indicative Framework Criteria have been considered in all of the targets set by the seven endorsed countries. There are, however, variations among the individual countries, underlining the fact that criteria have been interpreted in some cases as a guideline, and in others as more of a conditionality. For example, while in the Niger, civil service salaries, including teachers salaries, are retained at 8.1 times per capita compared with the benchmark of 3.5. (Table 6.9), in Burkina Faso, the Indicative Framework parameters have been followed rather more closely. However, the assessment of the Burkina Faso FTI proposal questions the rigid application of the benchmarks both because of their narrow focus on primary education and of their disregard for demand-side issues. The importance of adult literacy and non-formal education as vehicles for achieving UPE and gender parity and equality is neglected.

Some of the adjustments to the benchmark criteria have major policy implications. In the case of the Niger, the FTI targets are more ambitious than those of the country's envisaged education sector programme. This is because, according to the FTI assessment, only the FTI proposal has taken into account the Niger's capacities for domestic and external resource mobilization. The adjustment of public revenues from 9.2% to 14% of GDP by 2015 has been based on a simulation model that rests on assumptions concerning the average annual rate of economic growth, a tax/GDP ratio, and specific allocations of the national budget to the education sector and to basic education. Interestingly, although the estimated resource mobilization has been termed realistic in the assessment of the proposal, macro-economic vulnerability is also identified as a major risk to implementation.

Similarly, the planned adjustment of teacher salaries is comprehensive in the cases of Burkina Faso and Honduras. In Honduras, the adjustments of salaries for regular teachers and the adoption of lower salary levels for new teachers rest on the demanding assumption that the government will manage to eliminate political influence in the hiring of teachers and to delegate labour negotiations to an entity outside the ministry of

Some of the adjustments to the FTI benchmark criteria have major policy implications.

16. A provisional analysis of priority countries undertaken by the FTI Secretariat shows that funding and technical assistance agencies tend to continue to support countries for which they already provide assistance. This leaves little or no attention to some of the selected FTI countries (for example Albania, the Gambia, Guyana and Mauritania – Information from FTI Secretariat, 5 August 2003).

Table 6.9. Indicative Framework benchmark criteria and FTI proposal targets for 2001 (base year) and 2015

	Burkina Faso 2001 2015	Guyana 2001 2005[1]	Guinea 2001 2015	Honduras 2001 2015	Mauritania 2001 2015	Nicaragua 2001 2015	The Niger 2001 2015
Public revenue 14-18% of GDP	12.5% 14-18%	35% 33.9%	11.5% 16%	18.1% 18%	27% 23%	23% 18%	9.2% 14%
Education expenditure 20% of revenues	21% 20%	21.2% 23.6%	15.7% 20%	22.8% 22%	14% 20%	14% 20%	20% 28.6%
Primary educ. expenditure 50% of total educ. expenditure	58% 50%	30% 40%	40.6% 50%	51.6% 52%	47% 50%	65% 65%	49% 50%
Pupil: teacher ratio 40:1	51:1 40:1	27:1 27:1	45.7:1 40:1	42:1[2] 29:1[3] 37.5:1	43.5:1 40:1	36:1 35:1	41:1 40:1
Non-salary costs 33% of recurrent expenditure	n/a	14% 20%	32.7% 33%	10.56% 32%	19% 33%	35% 35%	28% 33%
Average teacher salary 3.5 times per capita GDP	7.6/3.6[4] 3.5	3.4/2.9 3.5/1.8 4.0/3.5[5]	1.9/3.5 3.2[6]	6/3.7/3.3[7] 3.5-4	4.7 4.2	2.6 3	3.9/8.1 3.9/8.1[8] = 4.3 (aver.)
Repetition of 10%	18% 8%	n/a	20.3% 5%	8% 2%	15% 10%	25%[9] 6%	n/a

Notes:
1. The second benchmark date for Guyana is in all instances 2005, not 2015.
2. Rural.
3. Urban.
4. 7.6 for current teachers, 3.6 for new teachers.
5. 3.4-4.0 for existing teachers, 2.9-3.5 for new teachers, 3.5 for trained teachers, 1.8 for untrained teachers.
6. 1.9 for contractuals, 3.5 for full-time staff.
7. 6 for regular teachers, 3.7 for new teachers, 3.3 for community-hired teachers.
8. 3.9 for contractuals, 8.1 for civil servants.
9. 1st grade.
Source: *Individual Country Assessments* (www1.worldbank.org/hdnetwork/efa).

education. The reduction of teacher's salaries is potentially the most controversial issue in the context of the FTI. This is illustrated in the case of the Niger and the non-FTI country, Côte d'Ivoire (Box 6.6). Otherwise, the most important factors to threaten successful implementation in most of the countries are institutional and management capacities which (except for the case of Guinea) are not specifically linked in the assessments to the issue of absorption of new funding through FTI.

In the case of Mauritania, the development of the FTI proposal seems to have led to a constructive process of readjustments of existing targets in the national education plan, and in Honduras, to the first quantitative targets being set. In both the Niger and Mauritania more equitable funding for poorer rural regions and/or for disadvantaged groups including girls and disabled children receives attention. Improvement in the quality of education figures prominently in Honduras and Nicaragua while Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mauritania, and the Niger all plan to advance access, enrolment and completion of primary education for girls by 2015.

FTI proposals are considered to reflect country ownership because they are set in the context of nationally owned PRSPs and education plans – an understanding that has been questioned because of the strong involvement of external partners in the development of these plans, and it is a general criticism of the development of FTI proposals as well (Rose, 2003*c*). In the case of Nicaragua, the FTI process has been criticized as running parallel to the national education review planning process and co-ordinated by different ministry officials,[17] casting doubt on the degree of national consultation involved in the process and of national ownership of the product. In the case of Burkina Faso, one NGO observer questioned the FTI approach as reinforcing an educational development programme that first needed to be debated in the country (*Education Today*, 2003).

17. Raised by the regional adviser of UNICEF-TACRO at the annual meeting of the Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development held in Washington D.C. 19–22 May 2003.

Box 6.6. Salaries and teachers' unions: the Niger and Côte d'Ivoire

The Niger implemented measures to reduce the teachers' wage bill in the 1990s as it could not ensure regular payment. The inadequacy of public resources led the government to pay salary arrears in the form of land. This caused other problems, in particular the expropriation of land in peri-urban areas. In 2003, there were vigorous strikes against the ordinance (introduced in 2000) that planned the retirement of all civil servants after thirty years of service or at the age of 55.

There is continued dissatisfaction about the unreliability of payments. The Confédération Démocratique des Travailleurs du Niger (CDTN) trade union has called national strikes of all civil servants on a range of issues related to conditions of service. The implications of the Fast-Track Initiative concerning differential payment of new teachers presents significant political risks.

As long as unions continue to react to unpopular measures, the stability of the education system is jeopardized.

In Côte d'Ivoire, austerity measures introduced in the 1990s included limiting teachers' service to thirty years, voluntary retirement and differentiated wage levels. Teachers hired before 1991 would keep their wage levels while those hired after 1991 would receive lower wages (up to half or less for some university teachers). This was based on the harmonisation of civil service salaries, teachers traditionally earning more than other government workers. These measures led to major disturbances and have been contentious ever since. The government abandoned this practice in 2001 and reintroduced an earnings differential in favour of all teachers relative to other civil servants.

Sources: Proteau (2002); Odunfa Kouadio (2003); Afrikeco (2003); Geocities (2001).

The first seven – funding

The FTI has not found it easy to attract substantial amounts of new funding quickly. By August 2003, US$208 million had been committed for the first seven countries for the period 2003–05 (Table 6.10). These commitments (and there is some question as to whether they all represent new money) are in addition to the estimated aid commitments of US$368 million for the same three-year period. They represent a 56% increase in existing levels of aid to primary education. Viewed a little differently, the new commitments represent 48% of the total of the original FTI submissions by the governments of the seven countries but 64% of the revised FTI estimates made by funding agencies. Accepting the very different circumstances of the seven countries, the overall FTI financing gap could be met in different ways – by an increase of 11% in government funding, 32% in agency funding relative to their commitments prior to FTI or a 57% increase in current FTI commitments. Or a combination of the three.

However these figures are interpreted, it is clear that these sums are insignificant in the context of Monterrey commitments and small in relation to the actual pledges made to basic education during 2002, which have been estimated at about US$1.2 billion in additional annual assistance (UNESCO, 2002b). Furthermore, the gap remains significant relative to the agreed needs of the first seven countries. There is clearly some way to go if the FTI is to be conceived as being in the mainstream of development assistance to education.

**Table 6.10. Financing commitments for FTI endorsed countries[1]
(August 2003 in US$ millions)**

	2003	2004	2005	Total
Government and funding agencies' commitments prior to the FTI				
Government financing for primary education	355	377	395	1127
Existing funding agencies' commitments (bilateral and multilateral)[2]	127	124	116	368
Total resources available for primary education	482	501	511	1495
FTI proposals				
Additional resources required – FTI country submissions (A)	104	151	174	429
Additional resources required – revised by agencies (B)	55	122	149	326
(B) as a percentage of (A)	52%	81%	86%	76%
FTI commitments[3]	50	75	83	208
France	0	29	45	74
Netherlands	12	10	10	32
Germany	6	9	6	20
Sweden	6	6	5	17
Japan	11	5	0	15
Belgium	1	4	4	9
Canada	0	3	3	6
United States	5	0	0	5
Norway	3	0	0	3
IDA acceleration/potential pipeline	7	10	10	27
Financial gap after FTI (rounded)[4]	5	47	67	119
Financial gap as a percentage of government financing	1%	13%	17%	11%
Financial gap as a percentage of funding agencies' commitments prior to the FTI	4%	38%	57%	32%
Financial gap as a percentage of current FTI commitments	9%	63%	81%	57%

Notes:
1. Data are estimates and subject to change.
2. Commitments are based on DAC data for historical figures and on information from donors for 2003–05. Estimates do not include HIPC debt relief, which is included in the government's resource envelope.
3. New commitments estimated by FTI Secretariat. These are provisional.
4. Additional resources required, revised by agencies minus FTI commitments.
Sources: Bruns (2003); Global Campaign for Education (2003b).

the purpose of the Analytical Fast-Track is to enable countries to qualify for Fast-Track financing in the mainstream of the Initiative.

Analytical Fast-Track

In their letters of invitation to the five high-population countries, World Bank country directors (June 2002) indicated that the purpose of the Analytical Fast-Track is to enable countries to qualify for Fast-Track financing in the mainstream of the Initiative. A technical team would work with national personnel to articulate strategies for accelerating UPE-related outcomes and ensure that the eligibility criteria for participation in the mainstream Initiative would be met as soon as possible. In other words, funding for the Analytical Fast-Track would be catalytic. While expressing general interest, the five countries have requested further details on what their participation would actually imply and what would constitute the graduation criteria from the Analytical to the mainstream Fast-Track.

Bilateral funding agencies see this analytical work as a means to promote better in-country co-ordination. For most of the FTI countries, existing PRSPs, Interim PRSPs or sub-sector primary education or basic education plans would be used as the basis on which to determine the steps needed to make maximum progress towards the UPE goal. Work would be undertaken in three important areas whose relative importance would depend on the country context:

(1) Building policy consensus for reforms in line with the Indicative Framework. This would include enhancing civil society and private sector participation in the FTI and considering the implications of decentralized government with respect to, for example, PRSPs and education sector strategies.

(2) Enabling countries to accelerate progress towards completion of UPE within a sustainable financial framework with clarification on the overall funding gap, the possible need for increased domestic financing and improvements of the efficiency and effectiveness of government expenditure.

(3) Strengthening national and sub-national management capacity and data.

In all five cases, insufficient discussion seems to have taken place about the purpose of the Analytical Fast-Track both with the governments in question and within the agencies, between

headquarters and their field offices. This perhaps explains the different reactions to its potential in Nigeria. On the one hand, it has been considered an opportunity for setting guidelines and negotiating conditionalities.[18] On the other hand, it has been a source of frustration among some ministry officials because it has appeared as a repackaging of the existing Universal Basic Education Programme, supported by the World Bank and DFID, rather than as a basis for additional technical or financial support. According to one agency official, 'the government is justifiably sceptical, because analytical is a euphemism for no extra money' (ActionAid, 2003).

In the case of India, its Tenth Five-Year Plan has already been acknowledged as the basis for eligibility to the mainstream FTI, leaving uncertainty both about the purpose of the Analytical Fast-Track and how countries move from the preparatory phase to the mainstream Initiative. If the Analytical Fast-Track is taken up and once technical support has ensured that eligibility criteria are met, it appears likely that the financial proposals may well exceed the levels of funding for the first set of countries by a considerable margin. So, seen in the context of the difficulties of securing adequate financing even for the first seven countries, it seems doubtful that access to the Analytical Fast-Track would easily translate into access to additional funding through the mainstream Fast-Track Initiative.

Ways forward

FTI is perceived by many as a potentially significant response to Dakar. It has received considerable international attention and expectations have been raised in many parts of the world. Yet the FTI has not captured the support of many agencies in a way which is commensurate to the task.

The main difficulties appear to be the following:
- Many agencies do not appear to be in a position to commit levels of additional funding for basic education consistent with the level of estimated funding needs for UPE – whether this is through the FTI or not.
- Agencies appear unwilling to allocate significant levels of bilateral funding towards an unproven global initiative, as opposed to using existing bilateral channels.
- Prioritising a sub-sector may conflict with general budget or programme support through

18. Interview with Amina J. Ibrahim, National EFA Coordinator (*Education Today*, 2003, p. 6).

education sector programmes. Another aspect of concern is that UPE is only one part of the EFA Framework for Action.

- There is a perceived risk that the FTI will create parallel planning processes within countries.
- Some agencies are concerned that a new central bureaucracy may move decision-making away from countries.
- Uncertainties remain about some of the logic and the evidence underlying the Indicative Framework.
- An emphasis on rapid results has led to commitments being made before the Framework for the Initiative has been agreed.

These issues need to be debated and resolved at an early date. The September 2003 meeting of IMF/World Bank Development Committee asked for a progress report on funding and lessons from the implementation of the FTI at its next meeting (World Bank Development Committee, 2003c).

The FTI can still become a real and practical response to the Dakar commitments. In its absence, its critics need to demonstrate how aid for education can be mobilized for countries that have the poorest educational indicators, the least resources and the weakest capacity, in a well co-ordinated manner in the immediate future. The diversion of relatively small sums from bilateral aid budgets through the FTI may show some measure of commitment. But they are, as yet, a completely inadequate response to the Dakar pledge.

Projects, decades and campaigns

In addition to the FTI, a number of international projects and activities are designed to promote international support for basic education. These include the task forces dedicated to education in both the Millennium Project and the Global Governance Initiative (Box 6.7). Both activities provide significant opportunities for the identification and promotion of strategies that work well in meeting the challenge of the MDGs and the EFA goals, including through the dissemination of the findings of this Report.

United Nations Decades
International Decades, a feature of United Nations activity since 1985, are designed to draw attention to issues of global significance and

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Box 6.7. Initiatives and campaigns of relevance to EFA

The Millennium Project

Launched by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, the project is designed to recommend the best strategies to meet the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2003b). By June 2005, Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on Millennium Development Goals, will present the final recommendations of the Project to the Secretary-General. The project focuses on operational priorities, organizing the means of implementation and financial structures. There are ten theme task forces, one of which is on Education and Gender Equality, led by Nancy Birdsall (Center for Global Development). The Task Force has already strongly endorsed the underlying concepts of EFA, voiced support for the partnership embodied in the Fast-Track Initiative and highlighted the need for a substantive increase in current levels of external support and improvement in the effectiveness of the mechanisms by which this is channelled. Task Force papers are available on the project website (e.g. Levine et al., 2003). www.unmillenniumproject.org/html/about.shtm

The Global Governance Initiative

The World Economic Forum has launched this Initiative to monitor progress in the global effort to implement the goals in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000). Each year the Initiative will highlight the gaps between the goals endorsed by the international community and the effort that is being made to achieve them. It will provide a factual summary of progress, a qualitative assessment of changes in the level of effort by, and co-operation among, governments, international organizations, civil society, and business in the pursuit of each goal. This assessment will take the form of an overall rating of progress in effort and co-operation during the preceding year, accompanied by a discussion of the significant developments, initiatives, or problems. One of the seven groups is devoted to education (World Economic Forum, 2002). www.weforum.org/

Global Campaign for Education

Set up in 1999, the Campaign is a membership organization (nineteen national and seven regional coalitions, and ten international networks and organizations) that promotes education as a basic human right. It mobilizes public pressure on governments and the international community to fulfil their promises to provide free, compulsory public basic education for all people; in particular for children, women and all disadvantaged, deprived sections of society. It produces briefing and position papers on a regular basis (e.g. Global Campaign for Education, 2003b). www.campaignforeducation.org/_html/home/welcome/framset.shtml

Global March Against Child Labour

The movement began as a physical march in 1998 and culminated with the adoption of the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 1998. It has partners in 150 countries. Its mission is to mobilize world-wide efforts to protect and promote the rights of all children, especially the right to receive a free, meaningful education and to be free from economic exploitation. http://globalmarch.org

Box 6.8. Literacy and sustainable development

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the **Literacy Decade** at its 56th session in 2001 and charged UNESCO with co-ordinating activities at the international level.

According to the International Plan of Action for the Literacy Decade (United Nations, 2002*d*), the Decade must be seen as an integral component of Education for All, given that literacy is 'the common thread that runs through the six goals'. Creating literate environments and societies is also essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The Action Plan states that Literacy for All should be the central focus of all Education for All plans and programmes and that work will be undertaken within existing Education for All co-ordination mechanisms. The expected outcomes include:

● Significant progress towards the Dakar goals in terms of a recognizable increase in the absolute numbers of those who are literate among: (i) women; (ii) excluded groups in countries that are otherwise considered to have high literacy rates; (iii) regions with the greatest needs, namely sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and E9 countries.

● Attainment by all learners, including children in school, of a mastery level of learning in reading, writing, numeracy, critical thinking, positive citizenship values and other skills.

● Dynamic literate environments, especially in schools and communities of the priority groups, so that literacy will be sustained and expanded beyond the Literacy Decade.

● Improved quality of life (poverty reduction, increased income, improved health, greater participation, citizenship awareness and gender sensitivity) among those who have participated in the various educational programmes under Education for All.

The **Decade of Education for Sustainable Development** was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2002, following the endorsement at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002) and will commence in 2005. UNESCO has been assigned to be lead agency in the promotion of the decade as well as playing a substantive role in its implementation.

According to the Framework for a Draft International Implementation Scheme for the Decade (UNESCO, 2003*c*) the primary goal will be to promote education as a basis for a more sustainable human society, balancing human and economic well-being with cultural traditions and respect for the earth's natural resources. The Decade is designed to help to integrate sustainable development into education systems at all levels and to strengthen international co-operation for the development and sharing of innovative policies, programmes, and activities. All six EFA goals and the objectives of the Literacy Decade are conceived as integral parts of education for sustainable development. Equally education for sustainable development should be incorporated within EFA and the Literacy Decade strategies. Four major thrusts are envisaged:

● Promotion and improvement of basic education.

● Reorienting existing education programmes.

● Developing public understanding and awareness of sustainability.

● Training.

Note: E9 countries account for 50% of the world's population but 70% of the world's illiterates. They are Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan.

Sources: United Nations (2002*d*); UNESCO (2003*d*).

encourage co-operation and international action. Two new Decades are of direct relevance to EFA, the United Nations Literacy Decade 2003–12 and the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005–14 (Box 6.8).

The value of a United Nations Decade is undoubtedly its potential to raise awareness and focus action on a critical global issue. In the case of the two new Decades, it has been made clear that there should be a strong and well-defined relationship with the EFA Framework for Action. The benefits of this potential and necessary synergy will require effective co-ordination, internationally and nationally, in order to avoid parallel planning, monitoring and evaluation. Given its leadership role in all three areas, this will be a considerable challenge for UNESCO.

Campaigning for education

The role of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) in campaigning for education and becoming much more prominent in international discourse with governments and international agencies (Chabbott, 2003) is an important characteristic of the last twenty years and especially the last decade. This reflects a growing technical professionalism in NGOs, the power of the Internet, increased public awareness of global issues and the willingness of governments to fund and support NGOs, including to support their own policy work.

One study identifies five major effects of a 'new and unanticipated leadership in international EFA efforts' by INGOs (Murphy and Munday, 2002):

● A coherent and independent network of national and international NGOs with a common EFA agenda.

- The Global Campaign for Education has raised the visibility and status of basic education across the international community.
- A more focused and sustained discussion among bilateral agencies, international organizations and G7 countries about the financing of EFA and its relationship to debt relief.
- An international environment where pressure is exerted for concrete commitments of resources for EFA.
- A place for civil society in policy planning and monitoring at national and international levels.

In tactical terms, INGO networks have defined a gap between international rhetoric and reality, bypassed international education channels to go directly to the heads of governments and international organizations, promoted global approaches about how EFA goals might be achieved and pushed for high-level declarations of intent (Murphy and Munday, 2002). This work influenced the development of the *Dakar Framework for Action* and, since the World Education Forum in Dakar, the deliberations of G8, the World Bank and the European Community's education and development policies. It is a significant new force in support of EFA which seeks to heighten a sense of accountability for the goals that have been set internationally.

The Global Campaign for Education (see Box 6.7) is also active in raising public appreciation of EFA issues. For example, in April 2003, with strong backing from the United Nations, *The World's Biggest Lesson* was organized to highlight the importance of education for girls and women on the third anniversary of the World Education Forum. More than 1 million people took part worldwide. In 2004, the EFA Action Week will focus on the children who are missing any kind of education. A mass lobby *by* children *for* children is planned.

Strengthening international co-ordination

International efforts to find ways of working together more effectively underpin much of the current global impetus to enhance aid flows, improve the use of aid, collect and analyse better data and learn from research. In the context of

EFA, UNESCO has a primary responsibility to promote international co-ordination and is therefore the main focus of this section.

UNESCO and EFA co-ordination

The *EFA Report 2002* (UNESCO, 2002*b*) suggested that UNESCO had interpreted its challenging Dakar co-ordination role in a relatively conservative manner. This continues to be the case.

At the request of the World Education Forum, the Director-General of UNESCO established the EFA High-Level Group. This meets annually with a membership that is re-established each year. UNESCO has also created the Working Group on Education for All which has met on four occasions since Dakar.

Both groups work to a set of publicly stated objectives. In particular, the *small and flexible* High-Level Group is mandated to *serve as a lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilization* (UNESCO, 2000*d*). UNESCO has also determined that the Group should be a vehicle for reviewing progress towards the Dakar goals and for assessing the extent to which international commitments are being met. The EFA Report 2002 influenced both the structure and the content of the second meeting of the group in Abuja, Nigeria, in 2002 – a model for the next meeting in New Delhi (India) in 2003.

However, on current evidence, it is not clear that the High-Level Group is yet proving to be influential in meeting its primary purpose. Neither the communiqués (Box 6.9) nor the reports (UNESCO, 2002*d*; UNESCO, 2003*f*) from the first two meetings (Paris, 2001 and Abuja, 2002) have had any visible international impact, either in generating political commitment or in mobilizing the resources required to achieve EFA. The group has however, offered a broad commentary on progress and on international commitments.

The apparent limitations of the High-Level Group are not a failure of good intentions. Indeed, in principle, the Group has the potential to deliver a strong message, underpinned by the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. However, UNESCO is faced with a difficult conundrum. Even with a strong message, the Group has no internationally

UNESCO has a primary responsibility to promote international co-ordination

Box 6.9. The text of the recommendations from the EFA High-Level Group 2002

- Governments in the South must ensure that free and compulsory primary education is a right reflected in national legislation and in practice. National strategies to achieve the goals of Education for All must receive their necessary share of government budgets and benefit from all possible funding sources, including debt relief.

- Strong and committed action is required by Governments to improve the status and working conditions of teachers to address the anticipated shortages signaled by the monitoring report. This anticipated shortage is being exacerbated by the impact of HIV/AIDS, conflict and emergencies. This action is particularly important as young people are no longer attracted to the teaching profession in some countries.

- Regional and sub-regional forums, starting with the Proyecto Regional de Educación para América Latina y el Caribe (PRELAC) (November 2002), the Conferences of the Ministers of Education of African Member States organized by UNESCO (MINEDAF) (December 2002) and regional initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) that promote South-South collaboration are important opportunities for mobilizing political commitment and resources for EFA.

- The meeting of funding and technical assistance agencies in Brussels (November 2002) offers an important opportunity for bilateral and multilateral agencies to co-ordinate their commitment to deliver on the promises made at Dakar and Monterrey.

- The G8 meeting in Evian, France, in 2003 presents a critical opportunity for this influential body to continue and to accelerate the valuable contribution made through its Task Force on Education.

- An advocacy strategy on EFA must be designed and co-ordinated by appropriate agencies, to address specific areas of concern in different countries and regions (for example girls' education by UNICEF and teachers' conditions by UNESCO).

- Every advantage should be taken of the coming UN Literacy Decade and the proposed UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development to advance the EFA agenda.

- Maximum use must be made of opportunities presented by the High-Level Group, the annual monitoring report, the annual EFA week and high-level international events on development issues to underline the importance of education for global development.

- UNESCO should strengthen urgently its capacity to fulfil its international co-ordination role.

- UNESCO and other key EFA agencies must devise and implement a strategy to ensure that subsequent High-Level Group meetings have higher-level representation with stronger capability of mobilizing political commitment for the EFA goals.

Note: The EFA High-Level Group first met in Paris 29-30 October 2001 (UNESCO, 2002*d*) and then in Abuja, 19-20 November 2002 (UNESCO, 2003*f*).

recognized authority beyond its Dakar mandate, nor does it have clear lines of communication with the wider United Nations system, except through UNESCO's own governance bodies. Therefore, the extent to which the group's pronouncements are influential is highly dependent on the quality of its output, upon UNESCO's own external political relationships, and the degree to which members of the Group are themselves pro-active in support of its outcomes. On this last point, because the membership changes each year, at least in part, a largely different Group assembles to assess the impact of the previous year's conclusions and recommendations. This has the merit of widening the opportunity for different countries to participate in the discussions of the Group. However, its weakness is that such an arrangement is less likely to sustain a strong, critical and consistent voice in support of EFA.

A related challenge is how to secure global attention for the messages from the High-Level Group. Broad injunctions to governments, regional bodies and agencies (such as the Abuja communiqué, Box 6.9) that are little different from those emanating from other international conferences on education have a limited lifespan.

The EFA Working Group has met on four occasions (Table 6.11), in each case with over fifty participants. The Group has been described as 'an informal mechanism to provide technical guidance to the EFA movement. It creates and sustains partnerships, supports regional and sub-regional networks, and ensures linkages among inter-agency flagship programmes in the follow-up to Dakar. It deliberates on key issues and recommends priorities for collective action to follow up the World Education Forum. It also prepares the High-Level Group meeting on EFA' (UNESCO, 2003*a*). This is a weighty agenda, particularly for an informal group, meeting over a day and a half with only partial continuity among its membership.

Table 6.11 suggests that in fulfilling its very broad role, the EFA Working Group has vacillated somewhat between a pro-active task-force approach, exemplified by work on *An International Strategy to Put the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All into Operation* (UNESCO, 2002*a*; UNESCO, 2003*a*) and a more general sharing of experience. The product of its discussions on technical issues, such as the financing of education, has not added greatly to the substantive debate. Group recommendations are recorded in the report of the Working Group but these are not subject to follow-up or report-back discussions the following year. Moreover, the idea that the Working Group might be influential in the design and development of the High-Level Group has been modified, so that since 2002, a group of 'sherpas', which is broadly representative of the membership of the Working Group, has been convened by UNESCO to help to design the agenda and possible outputs of the High-Level Group.

There is clearly a price worth paying for evidence-based, international consultation, networking and dialogue. This is a well-established UNESCO function and to a degree it sustains a certain momentum through becoming a fixture on the annual calendar. However, as presently constituted it is difficult to see how either of the two groups can deliver on their respective mandates and make a tangible contribution to international co-operation. If this judgement is justified, either the mandates or the mechanisms deserve re-examination. The following possibilities might be considered:

The High-Level Group:

- Membership: The Dakar mandate of small and flexible has been interpreted to require a group membership of approximately twenty-five countries, agencies and NGOs invited on a broadly representative basis and partly changing each year. One option would be for the Director-General of UNESCO to convene a smaller group of high profile, ex-officio members, whose reputation would attract global attention to their findings. They would be invited to serve for a minimum of three years.

- Product: the group's product (a declaration perhaps) should be known for its independent voice, vision, and proposals for action underpinned by rigorous analysis and research, supplied in large part by the *EFA Monitoring Report*.

- Pathways: The output of the High-Level Group would be formally presented to the United Nations Secretary-General or to a committee of the General Assembly. Clear channels for the group's findings to influence the World Bank, the G8 and major regional forums would need to be identified.

- Dialogue: A new approach to facilitating Group dialogue is needed and to generate collective responsibility for its outcomes.

The Working Group:

- An option that is consistent with the suggestions for the High-Level Group is for the Working Group to become much more of a technical committee of the High-Level Group. It would monitor progress and actions arising from the previous year's High-Level Group. It would help to prepare for High-Level Group meetings by advising on agenda, emphases and follow-up. It would help draft communiqués or declarations and liaise with High-Level Group members as necessary between meetings. The broad sharing of information, which is the primary function of the current Working Group, could be pursued in a range of existing UNESCO conferences and forums.

It remains the case that UNESCO is under-resourced for the role that is has been asked to play. This is increasingly recognized (e.g. Bertrand, 2003). The existing EFA co-ordination capacity in UNESCO cannot undertake much more than the administrative function required to organize the meetings of the Groups. A larger and more technically diverse secretariat is needed. Involving UNESCO institutes more thoroughly in the process could also make a difference.

The above analysis suggests that both Groups have settled into a particular way of working that can best be described as 'consultative arenas' (Little and Miller, 2000). In their review of The International Consultative Forum on Education for All (which operated in the 1990s), Little and Miller made the distinction between an 'arena' and a 'platform'. The former is described as 'a

The output of the High-Level Group would be formally presented to the UN Secretary-General.

Table 6.11. The Education for All Working Group

Year/Participation*	Objectives and Outcomes
2000 51 (F 17 - M 34) Countries 6 Regional organizations 4 Bilateral agencies 6 Multilateral and regional agencies 6 CSOs/NGOs/foundations 8 OECD	**Focus** ● A common framework of knowledge and understanding of what is happening in specific countries, regions and organizations, in particular what has happened since Dakar. ● To (a) link EFA plans with other plans nationally; (b) examine how to mobilize international support for EFA; (c) how to monitor EFA goals and targets. **Recommendations** ● Sub-groups to be established on what constitutes a 'good' plan, integrating EFA in wider development frameworks and criteria for 'target' or 'eligible' countries. ● UNESCO to develop (a) a website for country plans and planning processes; (b) to act as a facilitator of 'truly participatory and inclusive' preparation of plans. ● UNESCO to involve NGOs in the 'Dakar process'. International agencies should provide support for capacity building and monitoring. ● Task force to be set up on financing for EFA.
2001 51 (F 20 - M 31) Countries 6 Regional organizations 6 Bilateral agencies 6 Multilateral agencies 6 CSOs/NGOs/foundations 7	**Focus** ● Urgent attention to meeting the 2002 deadline for the preparation of EFA plans. ● A comprehensive global EFA strategy. ● *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. ● High-Level Group. **Recommendations** ● Peer review processes of national EFA plans should be put in place by the end of 2001. ● A task force will draft a comprehensive strategy – a final draft by April 2002. ● 'Flagships' for teachers, quality and disability proposed. ● *Monitoring Report* should be aimed at all stakeholders and enable the High-Level Group to maintain the impetus for EFA.
2002 64 (F 26 - M 38) Countries 12 Regional organizations 5 Bilateral agencies 9 Multilateral agencies 7 CSOs/NGOs/foundations 10	**Focus** ● Planning and implementing EFA. ● Financing EFA. ● Strengthening partnerships. ● *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. ● The High-Level Group. **Recommendations** ● Planning for EFA takes place in a number of frameworks. Processes must be inclusive of all goals and civil society. ● Creative communication strategies needed. ● Fast-Track Initiative should be negotiated within country contexts. Financing beyond UPE needs urgent attention. ● *Monitoring Report* to provide high-level tool. ● High-Level Group will be effective if it is action-oriented. EFA international strategy may serve as a tool in structuring national and international partnerships.
2003 58 (F 20 - M 37) Countries 10 Regional organizations 4 Bilateral agencies 8 Multilateral agencies 5 CSOs/NGOs/foundations 11	**Focus** ● Overview and common understanding of 'flagship' programmes. ● Updates on the Fast-Track Initiative. ● Third High-Level Group. ● *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. ● Strengthening global alliances. **Recommendations** ● Not available at the time of writing (UNESCO, 2003*g*).

The EFA Working Group meets in Paris. It has issued four reports.
* Not including observers.
Sources: UNESCO (2000*d*, 2001, 2002*e*, 2003*e*).

loosely-organized coalition, in which participants act on the basis of shared assumptions about general purpose and desirable outcomes, but are driven by different imperatives and employ different strategies.' The latter is conceived as a 'stage, a display place, raised area, political manifesto or political programme'. Within this framework, they characterized the multi-party, multi-agency Consultative Forum as an 'arena', a focal point and the symbol of the shared global vision and the area within which that shared vision has been kept alive.

The post-Dakar evidence suggests that UNESCO has sustained the idea of 'consultative arenas', inviting people from different constituencies, on a broadly representative basis, for an annual dialogue and examination of progress. This is similar to many conference activities around the world. It is neither threatening nor intrusive. Nevertheless in a world that is highly competitive in the attention that it gives to different issues and priorities, and to the resources allocated to them, a strong, well-coordinated, well-publicized 'platform' for EFA is almost an essential prerequisite for success. This is not provided by the current mechanisms. Significant change is required to generate an impact appropriate to the scale of the EFA challenge, and to the responsibilities assigned to the High-Level Group.

Better data – better monitoring

A consistent message in nearly all reports on EFA is the critical importance of accurate and timely data if education policy is to be evidence-based and if the monitoring of progress and evaluation is to be meaningful. This is one example of a broader international concern for better indicators of development outcomes. For example, work is underway to develop a global framework to monitor the policies and actions of developing countries and development agencies for achieving the MDGs (World Bank Development Committee, 2003*a*). This draws on MDG reports orchestrated by UNDP, the work of the Millennium Development Project (Box 6.7) and of the United Nations agencies that contribute to the Secretary-General's reports on the Monterrey Consensus and the Millennium Declaration. The work of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and the findings of this report have a contribution to make in support of these efforts, in addition to monitoring progress towards all of the EFA goals.

In the education sector, it remains the case that many countries and international bodies are constrained in their ability to promote well-informed planning and programming by the lack of accurate and comprehensive data. This problem, as noted elsewhere in this report, is particularly acute with regard to literacy but remains a fundamental difficulty for education systems more generally. It is also a key issue if gender equality in education is to be realized, as the lack of disaggregated data remains a significant problem in developing gender-aware policy.

For this situation to improve, there is an indisputable requirement to improve the collection and the quality of information. The problems of doing this have been set out by the UIS (Lievesley, 2003), including recognition that without enhanced capacity in many countries only limited progress is possible, both in the

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Box 6.10. Monitoring progress towards EFA

Monitoring Education for All

- The *EFA Global Monitoring Report* is issued annually by UNESCO. It derives its mandate from the World Education Forum and, in its funding, staffing and development is an international partnership between agencies, and is facilitated by UNESCO. www.unesco.org/education/efa_report

- The EFA Observatory in the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is charged with collecting, analysing and disseminating up-to-date information on the state of education required by countries, regions and the international community in order to monitor progress towards the goals of EFA. Its tasks include mapping the needs for statistical data in countries and regions, conducting training workshops, developing new indicators, helping countries improve their capacity to collect and analyse data and promoting awareness of the need to use data to inform policy-making. (UNESCO-UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2003) http://portal.unesco.org/uis/

Monitoring Progress Towards the MDGs

- Each year, the Secretary-General of the United Nations reports on the Implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The first such report was in 2002 (United Nations, 2002*a*).

- The United Nations Statistics Division works in close collaboration with United Nations agencies and funds, the World Bank, the IMF and OECD. It co-ordinates data analysis and maintains the database containing the series related to the forty-eight basic MDG indicators, as well as other background series to enable more in-depth analysis (see, for example, United Nations, Statistics Division, 2002).

- Millennium Development Goals country reports are co-ordinated by UNDP. By the end of 2004 every developing country will have produced at least one MDG report (UNDP, 2003*a*). Twenty-seven such reports had been prepared by mid-2003 (e.g. Guinea, 2003). www.undp.org/mdg/country reports.html

World Education Indicators

- Starting in 1997, and with funding support from the World Bank, the World Education Indicators (WEI) project has been a joint UIS-OECD activity for the development of policy-relevant education indicators from nineteen middle-income countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Malaysia, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tunisia, Uruguay and Zimbabwe, representing 70% of the world's population). Outputs to date include a comparative dataset of education indicators for 1998–2001, studies of national education systems and reports on *Investing in Education* (OECD-UNESCO, 2000); *Teachers for Tomorrow's Schools* (OECD/UNESCO, 2002); and *Financing Education – Investments and Returns* (OECD/UNESCO, 2003).

International Aid

- The OECD (DAC) issues an annual set of comparative statistics and information on international development (OECD-DAC, 2003*b*). Time-series cover: volume, origin and types of aid and other resource flows to over 180 recipient countries; individual aid activities on bilateral and multilateral Official Development Assistance or Official Aid commitments by sector type – including education, donors and recipients, with textual and numerical information on projects; the amount and composition of the external debt of 168 recipient countries; key development indicators; aid charts for DAC members and recipient countries/territories and regions. www.oecd.org

Other EFA relevant databases include:

- USAID's *Global Education Database* which draws on UNESCO and household survey data and is available on-line or on CD-ROM (USAID, 2003*b*) www.oecd.org

- Data collated for UNICEF's *The State of the World's Children* (UNICEF, 2002*b*).

- World Bank database on MDGs for 207 country tables covering countries with a population of more than 300,000 (and for smaller countries that are World Bank members). They present time-series data for four of the last ten years, as available. (World Bank, 2003*c*)

collection and use of administrative data and household surveys.

While there is a regular and justifiable call on UNESCO and the international community to strengthen UIS, the scale and complexity of the issue of improving the quality of data requires well-coordinated international partnerships. Box 6.10 provides a brief summary of some of the activities and programmes that are designed to enhance co-ordination in support of monitoring educational progress, some of which derive their authority from EFA mandates and others from particular regional and institutional interests and programmes. In promoting and strengthening these partnerships, UIS has suggested that five principles should underpin the collection and co-ordination of international data:

National statistical priorities should not be distorted by international demands.

- No duplication. Collaboration across agencies with agreements to have joint data collection where feasible and to share data rather than collecting it anew.
- Data collection should reflect national needs, with national statisticians consulted about the international database. National statistical priorities should not be distorted by international demands.
- International agencies should be temperate in what data are requested.
- The idea of 'key' data is attractive. Equally, concentration on too small a set of data can mislead.
- International databases should utilise existing sources of data within countries rather than requiring new data collection. Building capacity is a critical part of all data strategies.

These and related topics have been the subject of debate over the past year between UIS, the World Bank, USAID and UNICEF and were discussed informally at the International Working Group on Education meeting in Finland in June 2003. These consultations augur well for stronger and more coherent partnerships but require more funding.

In a different but related context, OECD-DAC is co-ordinating the collection of education-related aid data, a topic in which this Report has considerable interest and which has led to a fruitful dialogue reflected earlier in this chapter about ways of strengthening the reporting and analysis of aid to education.

Box 6.11. Major international reports of relevance to EFA in 2003–04

- *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2003/4* (UNESCO)
- *Human Development Report 2003. Millennium Development Goals: A Compact Among Nations to End Human Poverty* (UNDP, 2003*b*)
- *World Development Report. Making Services Work for Poor People* (World Bank, 2003*d*)
- *The State of the World's Children 2004* focusing on girls' education. (UNICEF, 2003*b*)

Finally, brief mention needs to be made of the growing number of international reports issued each year. In 2003–04 four major reports will be published with relevance for EFA, including the EFA Report. *The Human Development Report* focuses on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, *The World Development Report* on public services and *The State of the World's Children* on girls' education (Box 6.11). This is healthy in helping to ensure that EFA is given priority attention in international debate and policy dialogue.

Flagships: the benefits of inter-agency co-ordination

The World Education Forum in Dakar emphasised the benefits of international and regional agencies working together on major cross-cutting themes that have a strong bearing on the achievement of EFA. Fourteen thematic studies prepared for Dakar – the product of inter-agency co-operation – showed relationships between access, equity and quality in education and gender, technology, aid, conflict, HIV/AIDS, health and governance. These connections are reflected in the twelve strategies included in the Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000*f*). In addition, there was a strong and practical demonstration of agency co-operation with the launch by the United Nations Secretary-General of the Ten-Year United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI).

In the immediate aftermath of the World Education Forum, UNESCO identified the potential benefits of recognizing, supporting and linking inter-agency programmes and activities.

It came up with the idea of 'inter-agency flagship programmes'[19] as one way of consolidating international co-operation (UNESCO, 2000*d*). At that time, six existing initiatives were identified as demonstrating a strong inter-agency approach: FRESH (Focusing Resources on Effective School Health); AIDS and education; early childhood care and education; literacy in the context of the then-proposed United Nations Literacy Decade; UNGEI; and education in emergency situations (UNESCO, 2000*d*). UNESCO also suggested that new inter-agency initiatives should be encouraged in other areas such as inclusive education, education and child labour, women and education, new information technologies, and education statistics. By the time the EFA Working Group met in July 2003 to review EFA flagships, there were nine partnerships in place following the initiation of inter-agency activities on 'The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion', 'Education for Rural People' (ERP), and 'Teachers and the Quality of Education'. Basic information on each of these nine flagships is provided in Table 6.12.

A clear strength of the EFA flagships idea is that significant cross-cutting activities are given a status and a profile that might otherwise be lost as individual agency programmes. They provide a focal point for the wide array of agencies that are active in the different theme areas and it is clear that the idea has, in itself, given impetus to new partnerships, for example, on disability.

The flagship programmes work in different ways – from formal initiatives with time-bound objectives to loosely-structured information networks. Some emphasise activities designed to offer direct technical support to country-level strategies and programmes, for example FRESH, ERP and UNGEI. Others place greater emphasis on advocacy, research and information exchange. This is true, for example, of ECCE and Education in Emergency and Crisis. But there is no hard and fast dividing line as each partnership defines its own comparative advantage. This diversity of function and activity is illustrated in Box 6.13 for a sample of four of the programmes: UNGEI, Disability and Inclusion, HIV/AIDS and Emergency and Crisis.

> A clear strength of the EFA flagships is that cross-cutting activities are given a status and profile that might otherwise be lost as individual agency programmes.

Table 6.12. Inter-Agency flagship programmes

Flagships	Lead agency	Main source of online information
HIV/AIDS and Education	UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP).	www.unesco.org/iiep (This provides access to IIEP's HIV/AIDS Impact on Education Clearinghouse)
The Initiative on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)	Consultative Group on ECCD (a consortium of UN, bilateral and multilateral agencies, foundations and NGOs).	www.ecdgroup.com
The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion	Joint leadership: UNESCO and the University of Oslo.	www.unesco.org/education/inclusive
Education for Rural people (ERP)	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).	www.fao.org/sd
Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis	Joint leadership: CARE USA, the International Save the Children Alliance, the International Rescue Committee, the Norwegian Refugee Council, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF and the World Bank.	www.inee.org
Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH)	Joint leadership: UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, World Bank, FAO, UNODC and several NGOs.	www.freshschools.org
Teachers and the Quality of Education	Joint leadership: ILO, UNESCO and Education International.	No website
The Ten-Year United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)	UNICEF	www.undg.org
Literacy in the Framework of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD)	UNESCO	www.unesco.org/education/litdecade

Sources: UNESCO (2003*b*) and 'flagship' sources.

19. EFA flagship programmes were subsequently defined as a structured set of activities, carried out by voluntary partners to provide a better understanding of EFA and to contribute to the elimination of specific obstacles to the Dakar goals through targeted and co-ordinated action (UNESCO, 2002*d*).

Box 6.12. Four flagship programmes

The Ten-Year United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)

UNGEI was launched at the World Education Forum in 2000 by the United Nations Secretary-General. Thirteen United Nations agencies and bilateral and non-governmental organizations work co-operatively to help governments meet their commitments to ensure quality education for girls everywhere. Since its launch, several activities have been undertaken in the field of advocacy, capacity building and research. One country, Egypt, has officially signed a UNGEI compact. This is designed to ensure that political and resource commitments are made at the highest levels of government to end gender inequality in education and that United Nations and all other partners support the country in the development of a coherent and realistic strategy.

At the end of the 2002, the '25 by 2005' Initiative was launched by UNICEF, lead agency for UNGEI. This aims to accelerate progress on girl's education in twenty-five countries, to meet the goal of gender equality in primary and secondary education by 2005. In part, it represents an attempt to overcome some of the challenges faced by the UNGEI partnership, including the need to adopt a more pro-active approach in supporting countries which face the greatest challenges and to assist them with sufficient human and financial resources.

The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion

This flagship programme was launched in April 2002. The process of its development represents a significant breakthrough in establishing a common international platform based on a conceptual framework to which a broad community of agencies and organizations that work for the disabled can subscribe. By expanding its membership through the flagship programme, the International Working Group on Disability and Development (IWGDD), a loose alliance of some twenty agencies and NGOs, including UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, became an alliance of global disability organizations, United Nations and bilateral agencies and disability experts from the South and the North. Adopting the status of EFA flagship helped to trigger new funding commitments, notably from the World Bank, Finland and Norway. Indeed, the concept of a flagship was seen as more dynamic and action-oriented that the previous 'working group'. While still at a planning stage, the flagship has started to collaborate on inclusive education issues in the context of the second Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (2003–12) and the OAU African Decade of Disabled People (2000–09).

HIV/AIDS and Education

This initiative represents the work undertaken by the UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on Education (IATT). In May 2003, the team published *HIV/AIDS and Education: A Strategic Approach**. This recognizes that the EFA and MDG goals may not be achieved in many countries because of HIV/AIDS, in many cases for lack of a coherent education sector strategy designed to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It identifies policies with the potential to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS on individuals, education processes and systems and use education for preventing HIV infection. With funding from several partners, the UNAIDS IATT has spearheaded an *initiative to accelerate the education sector response to HIV/AIDS in Africa*. This calls for a multi-partner effort from the United Nations system, bilateral agencies, countries, NGOs, and the private sector at three levels: advocacy at ministerial level to promote understanding and political will, capacity-building through facilitative seminars at the technical level to promote understanding of feasible actions and technical assistance from regional task teams to help ministries of education develop and implement prioritised country implementation plans. The initiative seeks to share experiences among countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Eleven countries have been involved so far (Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia).

Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis

This programme draws attention to the educational needs of populations affected by crises and man-made or natural disasters and promotes improved collaboration and effectiveness in education responses during crisis, post-crisis and early reconstruction, through communication, information/knowledge and resource sharing, and advocacy. The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) was formed in November 2000 to serve as a major vehicle for reaching out to education practitioners around the world working in situations of emergency and crisis. Since its launch, INEE has operated at the global level through its website for sharing of information, best practices and training materials. While it has no mandate to implement projects or co-ordinate agencies during crises, it does enable network members to work more effectively, including through training opportunities and by encouraging collaboration. The partnership now has over 530 individual members and 85 organizations.

* An initial draft was produced by a UNAIDS Inter-Agency Working Group on HIV/AIDS, Schools and Education.
Sources: UNESCO (2003*g*); UNICEF (2003*a*); UNESCO-IIEP (2003).

It remains too early to say whether the flagships, individually and collectively, will add significant value to the achievement of the EFA goals, over and above existing international partnerships in areas such as HIV/AIDS and emergencies. The idea of flagships certainly gives a sense of collective endeavour and partnership in pursuit of a common goal, and it offers an international framework with the potential to recognise and exploit linkages, for example, in the relationship between girls' education and HIV/AIDS. But ultimately it is the extent to which the programmes contribute to the achievement of significant outcomes at a country level which is key and this requires a very clear strategy as to how the interface between 'flagships' and national education strategies actually functions, especially if a number of these inter-agency partnerships are active in the same country. National as well as international co-ordination is required.

As UNESCO is the lead agency of two flagships and joint lead of five, it has the potential to play a central role in strengthening the overall impact of flagship programmes. This would suggest the importance of ensuring a pro-active co-ordination role in its own participation across the flagships, backed by provision of an appropriate level of resources and the mobilisation of its sectors, field offices and institutes in support of flagship activity.

The issue of whether there should be formal co-ordination *across* the flagships by UNESCO, including a strong flow of information about all of the flagships (which are neither well known nor well understood internationally), was the subject of some discussion at the fourth meeting of the EFA Working Group on EFA (UNESCO, 2003*e*) but still remains largely unresolved. If there is a demand for UNESCO to take on a stronger, central co-ordinating function, this has to be balanced against the need to respect the diversity and flexibility that is the hallmark of the flagship partnerships. It also has resource and staffing implications for UNESCO.

Summary

It is clear from this overview of aid flows, initiatives, campaigns, and efforts to improve co-ordination that there is no lack of international activity on basic education. Indeed if success were to be judged by the range of commitments, initiatives, projects and publications, it would appear that EFA is receiving the attention it rightly deserves. But of course that is not the basis on which to make well-founded judgements. Three years after Dakar, the international response to enabling every girl, boy, woman and man to enjoy their right to a basic education remains well short of their needs and the commitments that have been made. This is not to deny the central role of national governments in achieving EFA, but it is recognition of the significant gap between international rhetoric and reality, relating both to levels of funding for EFA and to a real willingness to work together in a well-coordinated manner. There are many political and technical constraints to making the leap of faith and practice required but it is difficult to be optimistic unless that leap is made. As the United Nations Secretary-General noted in his recent report to the UN General Assembly, albeit in a slightly different frame of reference, 'Member states [of the UN] need at least to take a hard look at the existing 'architecture' of international institutions and ask themselves whether it is adequate for the tasks we have before us' (United Nations, 2003*a*).

There is a significant gap between international rhetoric and reality.