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Round Table on Challenges
and Opportunities

Overcoming the Obstacles to EFA

by

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ARV	Anti-retroviral
BREDA	UNESCO Regional Office in Africa
EFA	Education for All
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non governmental organization
ORACLE	Opportunities for Reducing Adolescent and Child Labour
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
PRSP	Poverty reduction strategy paper
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nation Programme on HIV AIDS
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal primary education
UFE	Universal free education
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WFO	World Food Programme

1. ABSTRACT

1. Over the past years, great efforts have been made to increase the number of children that have access to education in Africa. A good number of countries have succeeded in increasing significantly the number of children enrolled in very few years. They have done so by abolishing school fees and also encouraging the development of community schools, and/or by recruiting teachers at lower costs. More funds have been mobilized for education and national and international development. On the whole, countries spent a lot more on education in 2002 than they did in 1990 and this movement is expected to accelerate. These examples illustrate that when there is political will, it is possible to increase education provision and access relatively quickly with the support of the international community. The challenge now is to increase the quality of education.

2. A closer scrutiny of enrolment ratios in countries which have high gross enrolment ratios shows, however, that a certain proportion of school-age children still do not have access to primary education. This proportion varies between 30 per cent and 60 per cent of the lowest income group. Some serious factors outside of the immediate scope of action of ministries of education are preventing fulfillment of the objective of Education For All (EFA). These are extreme poverty, HIV and AIDS, conflict and emergency situations, and corruption and ineffective use of resources. This paper analyzes how each of these factors can slow down or even prevent the implementation of EFA and provides some suggestions on how to tackle such problems.

3. The attention of policy-makers and agencies has to be drawn the case of the least privileged sections of the population (the poor, AIDS orphans and victims of numerous conflicts), and special measures have to be devised and difficult decisions made if Education for All is to become a reality. It is a challenge for governments and educators to provide equal learning opportunities for all. It is a further challenge for governments to tackle the issue of ineffective use of resources and corruption. This will require serious political will, collaboration among various ministries and actors in society, and support from the international community.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4.   Over the past ten years, great efforts have been made to increase the number of children that have access to education in Africa. While in 1998 46 per cent of all school-age children were still out of school, this proportion was reduced to 37 per cent in 2002. Several countries, starting with Malawi, Uganda, Lesotho, Tanzania, have adopted a policy of free primary education and have succeeded in increasing significantly the number of children enrolled in a period of very few years. These countries have been followed by many others since 2002. Other countries have increased enrolments and reached high gross admission ratios by recruiting teachers at lower costs in primary schools (volunteer and contract teachers), encouraging the development of community schools and developing accelerated learning opportunities at basic education level. These examples illustrate that when there is political will it is possible to increase education provision and access relatively quickly with the support of the international community.

5.   More funds have been mobilized for education at national and international levels. Government spending on education as a proportion of GDP increased from 3.1 per cent in 1990 to 4 per cent in 2000 and 4.3 per cent in 2002. The international community has also started mobilizing itself. Should the commitments made in different meetings be fulfilled, countries should be able to train more teachers and build more classrooms, and more children should have the possibility of enrolling in primary school. But the lack of funds is not the only factor impeding the implementation of EFA. Certain groups still have no access to education or drop out before finishing the six years of basic education that would in principle guarantee that they become literate. Some serious factors not associated to education are preventing fulfilment of the objective of Education for All in African countries. These are: extreme poverty, HIV/AIDS, conflicts and emergencies, and, last but not least, corruption and ineffective use of resources.

6.   An overwhelming number of children who do not attend school or who enter late and drop out before finishing basic education come from poor households and do not have the means to pay the expenses that schooling entails. Some of them suffer from malnutrition and are in no condition to learn. Older children work and families can not afford to forgo the income thus generated. Most of them live in rural areas. They often walk long distances to reach a school. The education they receive is often poor or irrelevant to their needs, so they drop out.

7.   The HIV/AIDS epidemic has increased the number of people living in poverty. The number of infected children and AIDS orphans continues to rise. Many of them can no longer afford the cost of schooling and/or have to work to have an income. They no longer attend school, or do so irregularly. The operational capacity of education systems itself is undermined and quality deteriorates at a time when education should, on the contrary, be improved so as to prepare all youngsters to protect themselves.

8.   Ten states among the 17 African countries which had declining or low enrolment rates in 2001 had been affected by or were recovering from a conflict situation. In these countries many children suffer from displacement, severe psychological trauma, and are sometimes physically handicapped as a result of their experiences. Organizing education in countries which are in situations of crisis is a big challenge; providing education to psychologically or physically traumatized children and reintegrating child soldiers is another challenge following the conflict.

9.   **Extreme poverty is a serious obstacle to EFA**. Several measures can be introduced that will encourage low-income families to send their children to school. Abolishing school fees is one of the most powerful in this respect. But it has some drawbacks as it can lead to rapid deterioration of the quality of the education provided. It is also an expensive measure. Funds need to be found externally, and also within the country, that can support such an initiative. It

also requires careful planning and management so as to avoid poor education being provided to poor people. Last, but not least, it may not be enough to encourage the last 20 or 30 per cent who live in the most abject poverty to go to school and finish primary education. Other actions have to be taken that focus on:

- the quality of education: Ensure that children learn, and that what they learn is relevant to their needs.

- The capacity of children to learn: This is linked to their health and nutrition levels. School meals can help, particularly if they are complemented with food rations. Any other measures that would improve the health of parents and children, increase their capacity to make an income (increase access to water, land), and contribute to empowerment of the poor and of women in particular would eventually contribute to raising children's capacity to learn.

- The economic, political and social environment: Another incentive to attend school is knowing that there will be work and income opportunities available to them when they leave school. This depends on adequate actions being taken that create possibilities for economic growth and development.

10. **Additional measures specific to HIV/AIDS affected children** include:

- Student guidance scheme to replace family guidance, after-school homework clubs, mentor schemes to provide intellectual support to youngsters;

- Community care programmes;

- Zero-tolerance towards stigma and discrimination;

- Training teachers and learners on infection.

11. A systemic response to HIV and AIDS, which is integrated in an overall HIV and AIDS plan, has to be developed, otherwise there is a great danger that the quality and coverage of education provision in AIDS infected countries will deteriorate. This overall response should ensure that all decisions take full account of relevant HIV issues. It should go way beyond curriculum interventions in formal and non-formal education and aim at protecting and strengthening managerial capacities in an HIV/AIDS context. It requires, among others, the development of a manageable response to the epidemic in terms of:

- teacher management, appointment and replacement;

- treatment, counselling and support;

- workplace policy and codes of conduct;

- Educating and caring for orphans.

12. **Emergencies and conflict present an ongoing challenge to the achievement of EFA** in Africa. Circumstances of crisis present a unique set of hurdles to continuous and quality education provision. Years of civil war can leave African countries with poverty-stricken, traumatized populations excluded from educational opportunities. Education issues that countries in reconstruction or emergencies must confront and resolve vary from a lack of physical infrastructure to reduced ministerial capacity and curriculum content to refugee and internally displaced populations (IDPs).

13. Systems for inclusive education also need to be developed. The growing prevalence of child soldiers in conflict situations, for example, poses the question of how to draw such children back into the classroom and how to offer them the proper academic, as well as social and rehabilitative, services. Being able to identify the number of child soldiers, determining

what education they have previously acquired and the nature of the trauma experienced during conflict lay the foundation for a sound response to their needs.

14. At the centre of the education process are teachers and learners. How rapidly a country can manage to respond to the educational needs of its affected populations and how effectively it can use education as a means of inclusion will indicate how solid the reconstruction process will be.

15. If all the funds allocated to education were to effectively reach those who are ultimately supposed to receive them, more children would be in school, there would be fewer inequalities, and policies and development programmes would have better results. **Inefficiency and corruption are other problems that slow down the move towards EFA**. There are many examples of corruption in the education sector, in a variety of domains. They range from apparent petty corruption (scholarships not being allocated to the right people; schools being built where they are not really required) to more serious cases of corruption involving large sums of money (on public procurement for school construction or on textbook production or purchase).

16. An education 'free of corruption' would certainly contribute to increasing the resources available, as well as access, quality and equity in education. There are several success stories in the fight against corruption in the education sector. Successful strategies to eliminate ghost teachers have been experimented with the organization of nation-wide 'headcount' exercises; leakages in the non-wage funds reaching schools have been significantly reduced in Uganda thanks to the publication of the monthly intergovernmental transfer of capitation grants in the press and by asking primary schools to post information on the funds they received by the school for all to see.

17. Improving transparency and accountability in the long term involves the design of comprehensive strategies, including:

- the creation and maintenance of regulatory systems: this involves adapting existing legal frameworks for them to focus more on corruption concerns (rewards/penalties), designing clear norms and criteria for procedures (with regard to fund allocation or procurement for instance), developing codes of practice for the education profession, and defining well-targeted measures, particularly for fund allocation.

- strengthening management capacities to ensure the enforcement of these regulatory systems: this involves increasing institutional capacities in various areas, particularly information systems, setting up effective control mechanisms against fraud, as well as promoting ethical behaviour.

- the encouragement of enhanced ownership of the management process: this involves developing decentralized and participatory mechanisms, increasing access to information, particularly with the use of ICTs, and empowering communities to help them exert stronger 'social control'.

18. Can we continue doing business as usual, focusing on providing quality education to a majority of average ordinary children, or should we try to provide quality education to all, including those who are most difficult to reach and require very specific attention? This is a serious but difficult political dilemma. Education For All is a commitment of the international community which requires that all problems, even those that we prefer to ignore, be mentioned and discussed and that appropriate solutions be found. Effective planning, an understanding of immediate response strategies, consensus over education's key role in responding to emergencies by international agencies and donors, national governments, NGOs and local communities, and strengthened managerial capacities may help keep the achievement of EFA within reach.

3. INTRODUCTION

19. Over the past ten years, great efforts have been made to increase the number of children that have access to education in Africa. While in 1998 46 per cent of all school-age children were still out of school, this proportion was reduced to 37 per cent in 2002. Several countries, starting with Malawi, Uganda, Lesotho, Tanzania, have adopted a policy of free primary education and succeeded in very few years in increasing significantly the number of children enrolled. These countries have been followed by many others since 2002. Other countries have increased enrolments and reached high gross admission ratios by recruiting teachers at lower costs in primary schools (volunteer and contract teachers), encouraging the development of community schools and developing accelerated learning opportunities at basic education level. These examples illustrate that when there is political will it is possible to increase education provision and access relatively quickly with the support of the international community.

20. More funds have been mobilized for education at national and international levels. On the whole, low-income countries spent a lot more on education in 2002 than they did in 1990. Government spending on education as a proportion of GDP increased from 3.1 per cent in 1990 to 4 per cent in 2000 and 4.3 per cent in 2002. The international community has also started mobilizing itself. The downward trend in official development assistance as a proportion of national income, which was noticed until the year 2000, has been reversed, and ODA increased by 23 per cent between 2000 and 2002. Following the commitments made in the G8 meeting, ODA should continue to increase until 2010. Aid to education and aid to Africa in particular is expected to double. Should this commitment be fulfilled, countries should be able to train more teachers, build more classrooms, and more children should have the possibility of enrolling in primary school.

21. But the lack of funds is not the only factor impeding the implementation of EFA. Indeed a number of countries have stagnant or even declining enrolment rates. Some are getting close to universal primary education as far as gross enrolment rates are concerned, but their net enrolment rates are still relatively low, as are their primary completion rates[1]. This means that certain groups have no access to education or drop out before finishing the six years of basic education that would in principle guarantee that they become literate. Some serious factors not associated to education are preventing fulfilment of the objective of education for all in African countries. These are: extreme poverty, HIV/AIDS, conflicts and emergencies, and, last but not least, corruption and ineffective use of resources.

22. An overwhelming number of children who do not attend school or who enter late and drop out before finishing basic education come from poor households and do not have the means to pay the expenses that schooling entails. Some of them suffer from malnutrition and are in no condition to learn. Older children work and families can not afford to forgo the income thus generated. Most of them live in rural areas. They often walk long distances to reach a school. If the education they receive is poor or irrelevant to their needs they will drop out. Unless some efforts are made to provide good quality education to the lowest income groups, the objective of EFA will not be fulfilled.

23. The countries with the highest rates of HIV/AIDS prevalence – up to 25 per cent of the total population – are found in Africa. HIV and AIDS affect the economic, social and cultural environment in all infected countries. Enterprises, farms and social services are experiencing serious workforce losses and lower productivity, which lead to reduced national product. Affected families face reduced income and higher expenditures as more and more resources are spent on health expenses. The number of children infected continues to rise, as does the

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[1] Some countries have a GER close or above 100 but low net enrolment ratios, e.g. Botswana (81%); Kenya (66%); Lesotho (86%); Madagascar (79%); South Africa (89%); Swaziland (75%); Tanzania (82%); Togo (91%) (UIS, 2005).

number of AIDS orphans who are often entrusted with new family responsibilities. Many of them can no longer attend school or do so irregularly. The operational capacity of education systems itself is undermined and quality deteriorates at a time when education should, on the contrary, be improved so as to prepare all youngsters to protect themselves.

24. Ten states among the 17 African countries which had declining or low enrolment rates in 2001 had been affected by or were recovering from a conflict situation. In these countries many children suffer from displacement, severe psychological trauma, and are sometimes physically handicapped as a result of their experiences. Organizing education in countries which are in a situation of crisis is a first challenge; providing education to psychologically or physically traumatized children and reintegrating child soldiers is another challenge following the conflict.

25. None of the problems mentioned above have their roots in education or in the organization of education systems. Can education nevertheless contribute to solving these problems? The answer is hopefully "yes". Educated persons have a much lower chance of being poor than uneducated persons. In the absence of a real cure or vaccine, preventive education is the best way of protecting youngsters and adults against HIV. Similarly, peace education, which emphasizes 'learning together' and the reduction of inequalities in education provision, can help reduce conflicts. But education alone can not solve all of these problems. Educational managers have to work hand in hand with their counterparts in other ministries (in ministries of finance and economic development, planning, labour, agriculture and health) as well with representatives of local governments, communities and NGOs to tackle the issues.

26. At the same time, providing good and relevant education to all, to children from poor households, to AIDS orphans and to children suffering from trauma after a conflict, requires devising special programmes and paying due attention to their specific circumstances. This is a challenge for governments and educationists to provide equal learning opportunities and to design educational programmes that respond effectively to their needs, in terms of content and delivery. Providing quality education for these groups may call for more funds than are required for ordinary children. Several studies have shown, however, that schools in remote rural areas and those attended by the poor receive less funding than others. Hence the need to review the mechanisms of resource allocation, improve efficiency in their use and fight against corruption at all levels.

27. We shall review in the first chapter the problem of poverty in Africa and how it affects the chances of reaching EFA. We shall then review some of the policy measures and interventions that have been taken in some countries and that can help reach the unreached and educate the poor. In a second chapter we shall analyze the specific challenges that HIV and AIDS create for the education sector and some of the possible solutions that need to be envisaged if the epidemic is not to undermine education provision in the most infected countries. In a third chapter we shall similarly examine the problem of emergencies and other crises and provide some recommendations on how to tackle the issue of reconstructing the education system after a crisis. In a fourth and final chapter, the problem of ineffective use of resources and corruption will be discussed together with some examples of good practices of how corruption could be curbed.
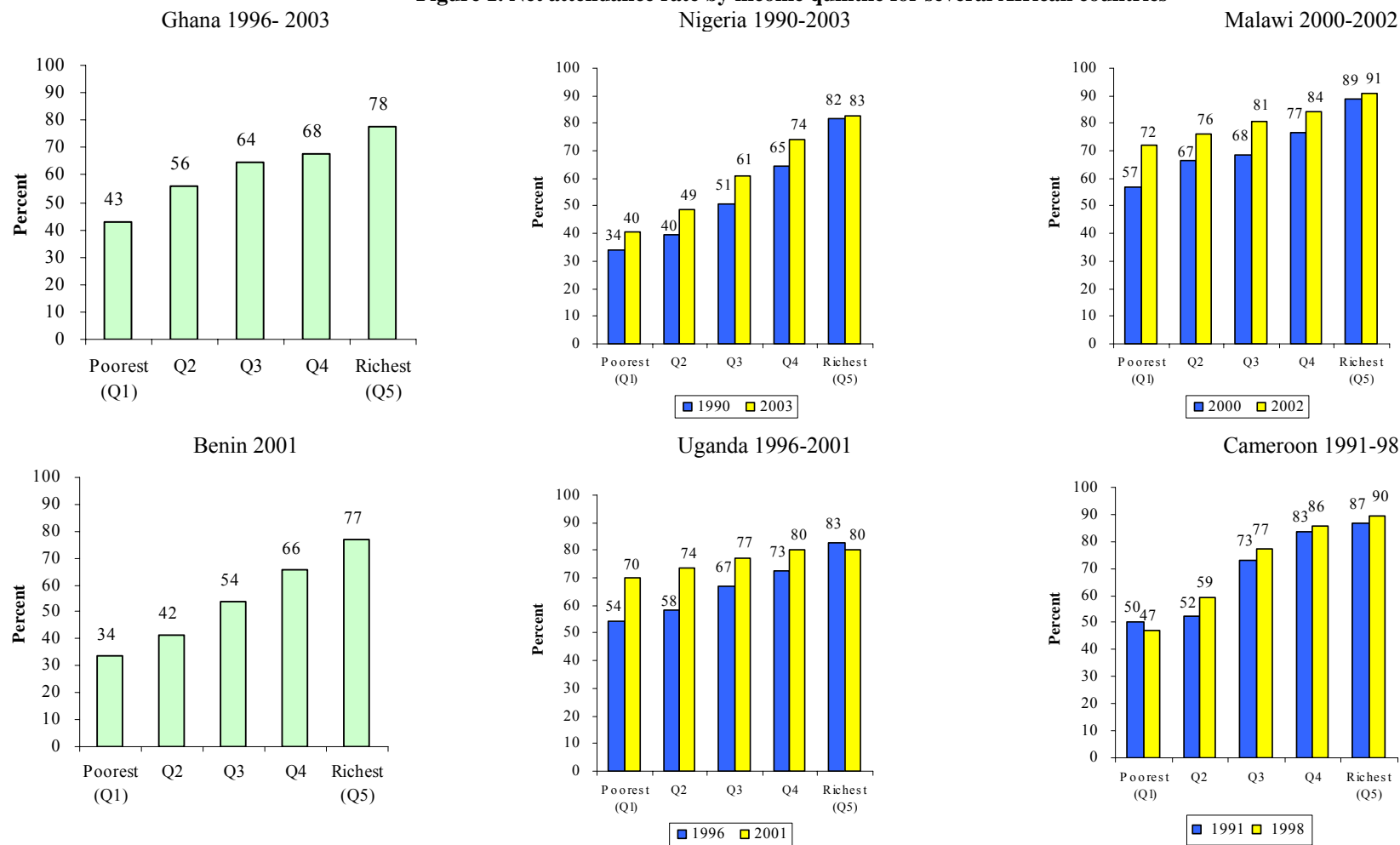
28. Poverty is a complex multidimensional phenomenon. Although it is traditionally associated with low income and material deprivation, it can not be defined or measured with one single indicator. "To be poor is to be hungry, to lack shelter and clothing, to be sick and not cared for, to be illiterate and not schooled" (World Bank, 2000: 15). The poor often work long hours for a low income. They are more vulnerable to outside events such as wars and conflicts. They are generally powerless, having little to say on the sort of life they are living. Most of the dimensions of poverty interact with one another: a hungry youngster is more likely to be ill, less likely to go to school and learn, and less likely to make a good income. On the contrary, an educated person is more likely to be fed, to have a healthy life, a good job and a decent income.

29. Africans are poor on several of the above dimensions. Income wise, Africa is the continent with the highest proportion of people living on less than 1 USD a day: 46.6 per cent of the population in 1998. Life expectancy was 48 years in 2001, having dramatically declined in some Southern African countries due to the AIDS pandemic. Only 57 per cent of the population used improved drinking water and 53 per cent had adequate sanitation facilities in 2000 (UNICEF, 2002). According to FAO estimates, about 44 per cent of the population living in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa are undernourished (FAO, 2002). Although extremely poor people are found in cities, most of them live in rural areas. It is estimated that the chance of being poor is two to three times higher in rural than in urban areas.

4.1. Educational participation of the poor

30. Educationally, Africa has some of the lowest performance indicators in the world: the lowest net enrolment ratios at primary level, the lowest primary completion rates, and the lowest literacy rates. Inequalities are high, however, and the situation of the 40 per cent richest among the population is much better. The low participation rate of the poorest fifth of the population, of girls, and of children in rural areas is what is preoccupying. Some figures given in Figure 1 illustrate this point. In Benin, Ghana, Nigeria and Malawi, between 77 and 91 per cent of school-age children in the richest income group were enrolled in primary education around 2001 (2001/2003). These children are not all still in school – some may have dropped out – but enrolling them should not be too difficult. This is not the case for the children of the lowest income group in Ghana, Nigeria and Benin, whose net participation rate in primary education was then only 33 to 42 per cent. Greater effort will have to be made to ensure that they participate in some kind of education. The good news is that countries like Uganda and Malawi succeeded in boosting the net primary attendance rate of their lowest income group (the poorest 20 per cent) and the gap between income groups has been significantly decreased. Yet 28 to 30 per cent of them are still out of school. Beyond providing them access, greater effort will have to be made to keep them in school until the end of primary education. The primary completion rates of 15-19 year olds in the lowest income group is low, particularly in Benin – much lower than the completion rates of those from the highest income group (Annex 1). Also, inequalities further widen at secondary level. The gap in participation between income groups is increasing as one moves from primary to secondary and then to higher education. As primary education is losing its market value, as it becomes clearer that secondary education does consolidate the knowledge and skills acquired at primary and prepare youngsters to live in a globalized economy, the pressure will soon be to expand access to secondary education, where inequalities are striking.

Figure 1. Net attendance rate by income quintile for several African countries

Ghana 1996- 2003

Nigeria 1990-2003

Malawi 2000-2002

Benin 2001

Uganda 1996-2001

Cameroon 1991-98

Source: World Bank. DHS indicators on Education: http://devdata.worldbank.org/edstats/td16.asp

4.2. Why do the poor not have access to school?

31. The poor are less likely to enrol in school; when they do they are more likely to enter late and to repeat where repetition exists, and they are more likely to drop out early. Figure 2, which shows data on Mali, illustrates this point: the attendance rate of the poorest 20 per cent is three to four times lower than that of the richest 20 per cent; none of them enter school early (i.e. before the official age of entry), but a higher proportion of them are overage; later on hardly any have access to secondary education.

Figure 2. Mali. School attendance rate by income group
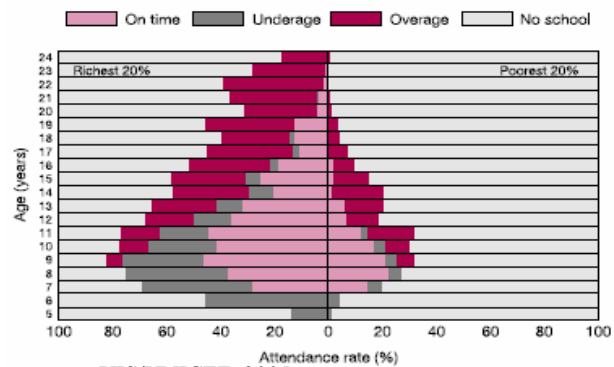
Source: UIS/UNICEF, 2005

32. There are many reasons why the poor do not have access to or do not complete primary education. The first reason is that schools are not always available in rural areas and children have to walk long distances to attend school. But even where schools exist, various economic and social obstacles prevent children from attending. Thus the second, and probably most important, reason why poor children do not participate in schools is that their parents can not afford to pay the direct and indirect expenses that school attendance incurs. In several countries many fees and charges still exist, be they legal or illegal: tuition fees, examination fees, purchase of uniforms and textbooks, game fees, contribution to school repairs, school guards, book keeping, teacher resource centres, cooks, food, etc. For a family with several children, sending all of them to school is a real burden. To these direct costs it is necessary to add the opportunity cost – that is the income or services that families would derive from their children's labour in the field, in the home, in the informal sector or in other work places – and that they lose when their children attend school. In view of the immediate need of ensuring survival, school learning is not a priority. It is even less of a priority if the education provided in schools is considered to be of bad quality and irrelevant. Malnutrition and child labour are considerable obstacles to EFA. Spending more on low-income groups, introducing more flexibility in the delivery system for those who are working, and improving the quality of the education provided to all could go a long way in facilitating the move towards EFA.

33. For the time being, far from spending more on low-income groups, governments tend to spend much less on children from the lower income groups than on those from the higher income groups.

- Various studies have shown that rural schools and schools attended by the poor receive much less funding than other schools. Teachers in these schools are not as well educated, trained and experienced as they are in schools attended by urban and better off families. Buildings tend to be provided by communities and they are poorly equipped.

- Poor families spend a higher proportion of their income on their children's education. Community schools and community teachers who rely heavily on parents' contributions are more often found in rural areas than in urban areas. Many ordinary government schools are built by the communities in rural areas, while they are built by governments in urban areas. Fees and contributions to parent-teacher associations represent a much higher share of the poorest families' incomes than of the relatively well off.

- Not only do governments spend more on primary schools attended by children of urban and well off families, they also heavily finance secondary, TVET and higher education where

children from poor households are rarely represented and which are much more costly. According to some estimates, governments would pay more than 70 per cent of their resources to educate the 10 per cent most educated in ten African countries, and more than 50 per cent of their resources in 17 countries (Statistics document for MINEDAFF VIII).

34. Realizing that families were spending an inordinate proportion of their income on education and that this was deterring them from sending their children to school, some countries have suppressed all school fees at primary level. Other measures to encourage participation of the poorest children have to do with the supply of education: increasing quality, relevance, and flexibility of delivery. As measures regarding supply may not be enough, it was felt necessary to provide incentives to encourage parents to send their children to school, partly compensating the opportunity cost of child labour: school meals and food programmes are one among such incentives. They also help fight child hunger while at school and facilitate concentration and learning. The impact of such measures are briefly described below. A longer list of possible measures is provided in Appendix 2.
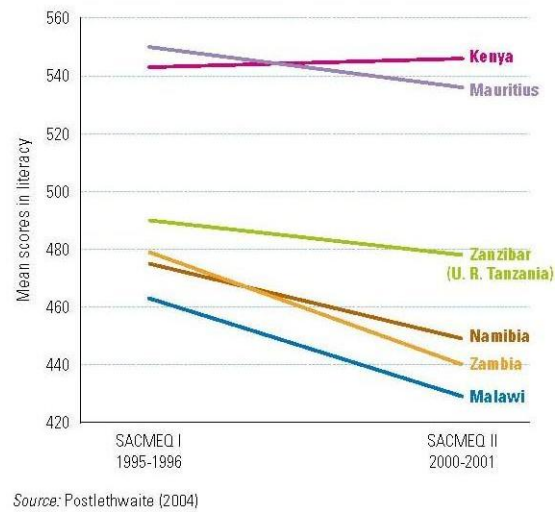
4.3.   Measures likely to encourage school participation of the poor: Abolition of school fees

35. The second objective of the Dakar Framework of Action mentions that "All children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities (should) have access to <u>free</u> and compulsory education of good quality". Many countries still have fees of different kinds at the primary level – sometimes legal, sometimes illegal. In addition to direct tuition fees, families pay several indirect fees or charges to cover: uniform – often compulsory –, books, materials, pens and pencils. Some countries have abolished school fees, the first of which was Malawi in 1991, which did so grade by grade, and free primary education for all grades was declared in 1994. Uganda was the next country to follow, implementing UPE in all grades in 1997, followed by Cameroon (1999), Lesotho (2000), Tanzania (2001), Zambia (2002), Madagascar and Kenya (2003). More countries followed this trend in 2004 (Benin, Mozambique, …).

36. The experience followed by each country varies according to whether they abolished fees grade by grade or all at once, the kind of fees they abolished and the kind of fees that remain, whether the abolition of fees was effective and sanctioned or whether some schools continued to charge fees, the level of support they received from international agencies, and the resources that the countries were able to raise and allocate to primary education. The impact on families was flagrant and overwhelming. In Malawi, following the abolition of all fees gross enrolment ratios increased from 89 per cent to 133 per cent. Enrolment numbers increased by 68 per cent during the first year in Malawi and Uganda; by 75 per cent in Lesotho; and by 22 per cent in Kenya. This clearly shows that there is a strong demand for education among girls, rural and low-income groups, and that the cost of education is a major deterrent to schooling. The removal of fees has also improved equity. The rapid increase in the net primary attendance of the lowest income groups in Uganda and Malawi, as shown in Figure 1 above, and the reduction in the gap between income groups confirm this. But this was not achieved without problems.

37. In all countries – at least the first ones – the decision to abolish fees was taken at the highest level following an election or a change of government. It was a top level initiative which left little time for planning and preparation before implementation, or for consultation with different stakeholders such as teacher unions, teacher trainers, etc. Yet accommodating 2.3 million additional children in one year as in Uganda, 1.5 million as in Tanzania, or 1.3 million as in Kenya requires planning and management skills (World Bank, 2005*b*): new teachers have to be recruited, trained and appointed in the different schools; new classrooms have to be built; textbooks have to be prepared, printed and distributed. Funds have to be sent to schools through proper mechanisms, limiting wastages. And additional resources have to be

Figure 3. Changes in literacy scores between SACMEQ I and II in six African countries (from UNESCO, 2004)

Source: Postlethwaite (2004)

found to finance all this. This was not the case in most countries, and this has created quite a number of problems in terms of the quality of the education provided. There were not enough classrooms to accommodate all these pupils, nor teachers to teach them. The number of pupils per class increased to incredible levels, and many teachers taught in non permanent classrooms. In spite of innovative teacher training schemes, such as in the Malawi integrated in-service teacher education programme (MIITEP), which offers short orientation courses, distance courses and school-based training and mentoring, most teachers were not trained (Kunje, 2002). Textbooks were not available in sufficient numbers, etc. The end result was a dramatic deterioration in learning achievement, which declined quite rapidly in a country like Malawi (Figure 3). To what extent the deterioration of quality and low learning achievements lead to children eventually dropping out is not clear, but it is very probable that they contributed quite significantly.

38. Another problem is that in spite of the tremendous increase in enrolments following the abolition of fees, not all children – particularly not girls or children from the poorest families – were able to stay in school until the end of primary. Clearly not all costs have been suppressed: other charges such as textbooks, stationary, pens and pencils, meals, examination fees and contributions to the parent-teacher association remain. It is possible also that not all fees have been removed at school level. Targeted exemptions on these charges (for girls, children from poor families, AIDS orphans) can be considered, but unless they are compensated by funds coming from other sources, such as government, anecdotal evidence suggests that these exemptions may lead to some schools excluding certain groups. In Ghana, for example, AIDS orphans are exempted from paying certain fees, but in order to deliver the certificates some schools ask the students to pay the fees. Finally one important cost remains: the opportunity cost. Also, parents may not be convinced of the need to forego the income or services that their children can generate if the education provided is of insufficient quality.

4.4. Measures likely to encourage school participation amongst the poor: Increase quality and flexibility in delivery

39. Measures to increase quality, relevance and school effectiveness will be discussed at length in other papers and sessions of the biennale: they do not need to be developed here. What can be stressed here is that a lot more flexibility has to be brought to the formal education system before it can successfully enrol and retain working children. Flexibility is required in terms of:

- The school calendar and teaching hours, so as to allow children to work or assist their families at home when they have to.

- Content, to take into account children's and youngsters' specific needs and characteristics, using local languages, but also introducing more contextualized content and emphasizing life skills.

- Regulations, i.e. not excluding girls when they are pregnant or poor pupils if they have missed several sessions or can not pay certain fees.

- Organization: allowing certain pupils to take additional courses after class if needed or if they missed certain courses, and not asking them to repeat, allowing non-formal classes, peer clubs, etc. to be organized in schools after class.

40. In recent years, formal education has been subject to changes as a result of greater community involvement, decentralization, and more diversified sources of financing. In some countries' communities, local authorities have become more involved in the organization of schooling, in the interpretation of the curriculum, in the recruitment of teachers, and in financing. As a result, formal education has become more diversified and less rigid, administrative control is also willingly or unwillingly less rigid – sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse. Formal education has come to resemble more non-formal education. Following decentralization, some flexibility has been introduced, for example in the school calendar and timetable of certain schools in Mali, Senegal and Guinea to take into account specific weather conditions, or in the curriculum in Senegal (Lugaz and De Grauwe, 2006). The involvement of communities in community schools also allows some adaptation to local needs (Marchand, 2000).

41. On the other hand, some non-formal education programmes continue to develop and try to establish stronger links and equivalency with the formal system (such as the community schools mentioned above, or the COBET programme in Tanzania for the un-schooled). Other NFE programmes provide supplementary support services to specific groups of disadvantaged children who can attend normal school but definitely need additional support. This is the case of children in vulnerable conditions as a result of conflict, refugees, and AIDS orphans. "By combining formal education with an external non-formal support component these programmes not only link the school more effectively with its social and institutional environment but also make a cost-effective use of the advantages of both formal and non-formal components within a single overall programme" (Hoppers, 2006). Other NFE programmes continue to develop learning opportunities parallel to the formal education system to tackle the needs of the most vulnerable groups which would have difficulty studying within formal schools in view of their specific personal or family circumstances. This is the case of programmes that deal with street children (such as the Undugu society in Kenya), abandoned children and the hard-to-reach children and youth in nomadic and pastoralist communities (shepherd schools in Botswana and Ghana or mobile schools in Kenya) (Hoppers, 2006).

42. The challenge is to be sure that these programmes do not provide 'poor education for the poor', but that they effectively articulate personal and social needs in curricula, pedagogical practices and learning organizations, and that they offer an education appropriate to the needs of highly vulnerable children, allowing them to return to school, to take advantage of other non-formal education or vocational programmes, or to make a living.

4.5. Measures likely to encourage school participation of the poor: Incentive programmes and school meals

43. The greatest incentives for children to go to school is when learning is enjoyable and what they learn relevant to their situation and to that of their families and communities. However, there are cases of abject poverty, where families are faced with the choice of deciding who should go to school, who should stay home and take care of the siblings, and who should work outside. In order to encourage families to send all of their children to school, and to compensate for the cost of schooling as well as the opportunity costs, some governments, with the support of international organizations and some NGOs, are setting up scholarship schemes for certain specific target groups, and more frequently organize in-school meals.

44. Scholarships schemes are quite frequent outside Africa: in Asia and Latin America. Increasingly stipends are given directly to families as long as their children stay in school. As much as scholarship they become social funds with an education orientation, such as the 'Bolsa Escola' and 'Bolsa Familia' schemes in Brazil, or other cash-transfer programmes elsewhere in Latin America. These programmes appear to be quite effective in increasing school attendance of the low-income groups[2], but they are expensive and require quite an infrastructure to distribute funds and to check attendance. Scholarships are regularly mentioned to encourage girls' enrolment at primary and secondary levels in Africa, but such schemes are expensive and their sustainability is not clear. As a result they are limited to certain countries and target groups (such as AIDS orphans in South Africa, for example), they concern few families, sometimes at post primary level, or specific expenses, e.g. books and teaching materials.

45. A more frequent scheme in Africa is that of school feeding programmes, organized by the World Food Programme (WFP), governments and some NGOs. WFP distributes in-school meals to some 6.3 million boys and girls in 30 African countries. The objectives of such programmes are several:

-   First, to provide children from low-income families with fortified food that complements what they receive at home and gives them the micronutrients they need. It is a way of improving the nutrition of the most vulnerable children at a critical time in their lives.

-   Second, to encourage families to send their children to school: Children are fed only when they attend; thus they are encourage to do so regularly.

-   Third, to increase the quality of learning: When children are hungry they can not concentrate and therefore can not learn. Studies have also shown that diet and nutrition play a critical role in the physical and intellectual development of children. Providing better food to hungry children should improve their capacity to learn. Encouraging them to stay longer in school should also help increase their learning achievements.

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[2] But they do not allow to improve learning achievements, even though poor children spend more time in school. This would be due to the fact that not enough attention has been paid to the quality of education and the type of programmes to be provided to economically and culturally deprived children (Schwartzman, 2005; Reimers, 2006). Another criticism is that some of these funds are not well targeted. They go to families that would send their children to school in any case.

46. The effect of school meals on access and attendance rates is quite demonstrated, but the impact on learning is more mixed. To have an impact on intellectual development, it would probably be necessary to provide food to children at an earlier age, hence the need to complement school meals with take-home rations; second if the education children receive is not appropriate to their needs, attendance alone will not guarantee learning. The method of implementing such programmes is the subject of much debate: when should the food be given to children? Should it disrupt the class and take time away from learning? Is the food of good quality? Is it competing with local production? Is it reaching the right people? Better targeting is an issue. WFP targets regions and schools where low-income children can be found, but not poor children within schools. This is so as to avoid stigmatization as well as resentment, violence and robbery.

4.6. Conclusion

47. Extreme poverty is a serious obstacle to EFA. Several measures can be introduced that will encourage low income families to send their children to school. Abolishing school fees is one of the most powerful in this respect. But it has some drawbacks as it can lead to rapid deterioration of the quality of the education provided. It is also an expensive measure. Funds need to be found externally, but also within the country, that can support such an initiative. It also requires careful planning and management so as to avoid poor education being provided to poor people. Last, but not least, it may not be enough to encourage the bottom 20 or 30 per cent who live in the most abject poverty to go to school and complete primary education. Other actions have to be taken that focus on:

-   The quality of education: Ensure that children learn, and that what they learn is relevant to their needs.

-   The capacity of children to learn: This is linked to their health and nutrition levels. School meals can help, particularly if they are complemented with food rations. Any other measures that would improve the health of parents and children, increase their capacity to make an income (increase access to water, land), and contribute to empowerment of the poor and of women in particular would eventually contribute to raising children's capacity to learn.

-   The economic, political and social environment: Another incentive to attend school is knowing that there will be work and income opportunities available to them when they leave school. This depends on adequate actions being taken that create possibilities for economic growth and development.

In other words, many of the conditions lie outside of the domain of action of the education policy-makers. But efforts have to be made to co-operate better with other sectors.

5. IMPACT OF HIV AIDS ON EFA

48. HIV and AIDS are arguably the greatest tragedy to have affected Africa. According to the latest AIDS epidemic report (UNAIDS/WHO, 2005) 25.8 million adults and children were living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa in 2005 (900,000 more than in 2003). Around 3.2 million had been newly infected between 2003 and 2005, and 2.4 million died of AIDS in 2005. No matter how accurate the data is[3], the magnitude of the problem is staggering and urgent action is required. A decline in HIV prevalence can be seen in certain countries such as Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe, but adult prevalence rates remain very high in Southern African countries (20-35 per cent). According to the UNAIDS report, women remain disproportionately infected by HIV, but in spite of all the education programmes and campaigns they remain poorly informed about the epidemic. Education makes a big difference to the level of information of youngsters and adults: more educated youngsters and adults are better informed on ways of protecting themselves[4] and are more likely to change their behaviour, and prevalence rates tend to diminish the higher the educational level. Hence, in the absence of a vaccine and a real cure, preventive education in formal, non-formal and informal settings remain the best methods of protection.

49. Most countries have developed new curricula[5] and new textbooks, but the very education system, which is meant to disseminate preventive education, is in danger: teachers and administrators are ill, die or leave without being quickly replaced; pupils and students themselves are affected by the epidemic; some of them attend more irregularly and others drop out. Unless a systematic strategy is put in place to mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS, the epidemic will undermine the provision of education and slow down the implementation of EFA. At the same time, EFA can contribute to finding solutions to the issue of infected and affected teachers and pupils.

5.1. HIV and AIDS as obstacles to EFA

50. HIV and AIDS impact on education systems in many different ways:

- By reducing people's productivity and increasing the loss of skills, the growth of the economy, the income and the resources available for the education sector are all affected.

- On the other hand, the replacement of teachers, the eventual purchase of anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment, the production of materials, participation in funerals, and the additional support to be given to affected pupils lead to an increase in education sector costs.

- As administrators at central, regional and local levels get sick and die, or leave the education systems to replace professionals that are lacking in the rest of the economy, HIV and AIDS threaten the capacity of ministries of education to function adequately and to provide bureaucratic support to schools.

- As infected teachers are absent without replacement or die, the epidemic threatens the capacity of the schools to operate properly and to offer quality education.

- HIV and AIDS have an impact on the learners: on the one hand they may be fewer as falling fertility rates have led to a decline in school enrolment in some countries. On the

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[3] Hopefully the method of data collection overestimates the extent of the phenomenon.

[4] This seems to be particularly true since better knowledge is available on how to avoid infection by the virus.

[5] although it is not known to what extent they are implemented in the classrooms.

other hand, many infected and affected students traumatized by the loss of a parent drop out. The disease may also affect their ability to attend school or to learn. According to UNAIDS (2004), 12 million AIDS orphans in 2003 were living in SSA. The largest numbers[6] of such orphans live in Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, RDC, and Ethiopia.

51. The impact of HIV/AIDS on EFA can be interpreted through the supply and demand model developed by Michael Kelly (2000). The lack of resources of governments and families also has an impact on quality. The drop in learning achievements in several Southern African countries, as illustrated in Figure 3 above, is a matter of serious concern. It is not clear what it is to be attributed to, but lower attendance of pupils and teachers as a result of HIV and AIDS could well be partly responsible for that.

Box 1. Impact of HIV/AIDS on supply and demand of education

Supply
- Teachers fall ill due to HIV/AIDS and their absences bring immediate consequences to EFA. As absences increase and illnesses progress, they are put on sick leave and a replacement teacher must be found. In worst case scenarios, teachers are not replaced for long periods of time or the classes are cancelled altogether.
- The infrequent attendance of the teacher fragments the content and learning for students.

Demand
- When family members fall ill with AIDS or die, children may be required to stay at home and help perform chores or care for younger siblings. In some cases, they must work to supplement family incomes.
- Household resources are strained to pay for medicines for sick family members or to support relatives, and education becomes too expensive for most families. They can no longer buy textbooks and materials. Nor can they pay fees of any kind.
- As more adults are dying due to AIDS there will be less children born who will need schooling.
- Without parental support, children are less likely to complete their schooling. As the number of HIV/AIDS affected children and orphans increases in Africa, these children will have to overcome many challenges, including discrimination, in order to finish their schooling.

5.2. Impact of HIV and AIDS on teachers

52. Contrary to what was said in earlier years, teachers are not more vulnerable to HIV infection than the rest of the adult population. In fact, some studies indicate that they actually have slightly lower mortality rates than other adults (Bennell, 2003). There are however no reliable statistics on this matter. Education personnel records and education management and information systems (EMIS) if they are well kept can give fairly reliable information on the number of personnel who die while in service, but they do not specify the causes of death. Teachers are protected by confidentiality rules and are not obliged to declare being HIV positive. In brief it is fairly difficult to estimate the proportion of teachers who die every year of AIDS and whether the figure is on the increase or not. Although they remain tragically high, the attrition rates due to AIDS have started falling in Zambia, Uganda and Malawi and have stabilized in Botswana (Bholer, 2004). On the whole "mortality rates (due to AIDS) among teachers are much lower than has been estimated by most expert commentators and reported in the media" (Bholer, 2004). Overall, all attrition rates in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa remain very high, whatever their cause, and this is a problem for EFA.

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[6] Above 700,000.

53. Teacher absenteeism is another problem which is not at all well documented. It is a common problem in many countries and it contributes to lowering quality. It also has a negative impact on student learning. SACMEQ studies identified teachers' "lateness" as a problem that negatively influences student achievements.

54. Although it is known that AIDS infected teachers may be regularly sick or too tired to teach, it is not possible to say how many of all absences can be attributed to HIV/AIDS. There are several causes of teacher absences, the most common ones being :

- transfer to other classes or schools;

- travel to obtain their monthly pay;

- taking a second job to supplement insufficient salaries;

- participation in in-service training;

- sickness, including HIV/AIDS.

55. Data is scarce and is only available on absences whatever the reasons. According to some recent studies, up to 45 per cent of teachers in Ethiopia had been absent at least one day during the week prior to a World Bank survey visit, and 10 per cent had been absent three days or more (World Bank, 2004); in Uganda and Zambia, the share of teachers who had been absent the previous week were 26 per cent and 17 per cent respectively (World Bank, 2004). In another study on four provinces in Zambia, primary head teachers reported that 40 per cent of the teachers had been absent at least once in the previous month; 35 per cent of those absences were related to teacher sickness and 27 per cent related to funeral attendance and caring for sick family members. In a study on two provinces in South Africa, school principals reported 1.5 per cent and 2.6 per cent of all staff employed in each province to be absent for more than 30 consecutive days in the year. In Namibia, absenteeism due to illness or funeral attendance was reported by school principals to be on the increase, particularly in the north of the country.

56. According to IIEP studies on HIV/AIDS and education (Percy and Allemano 2006), and the discussions held in the 2005 IIEP/ADEA seminar in Uganda the most common practices when a teacher is absent are: first, students are taken care of by another teacher or join another class. They can also be placed under the supervision of older learners or community members, or they are left by themselves. There are, in general, no substitute teachers. This leads to students being left unattended or placed in overcrowded classes (sometimes with up to 100 pupils) with another group not necessarily following the same content.

57. As a whole, most absenteeism goes unreported if it is considered legitimate by the head teacher. Teachers on long sick leave (more than 90 days) will lose part of their salary, and after several additional months of absence may be made redundant. Often, head teachers tend not to report missing teachers out of compassion, or the teacher comes back periodically for a short period of time. Sick leave, funeral attendance and taking time off to attend to sick relatives are generally considered 'legitimate' reasons by head teachers, who then do not record them. The same goes for participation in in-service training, which is considered an official absence.

58. As long as a teacher is not deceased, a new teacher cannot be appointed in his/her place. Actual regulations concerning sick leave, retirement and pension benefits create incentives for teachers to stay in school and prevent head teachers from appointing new ones.

59. *What can be done?* Different causes of absenteeism require different solutions. Financial incentives and stronger accountability, for example, can not be a solution when serious illness is the problem. Treatments and financial mechanisms to support such treatments would be

more adequate. More studies have to be carried out, but among all the possible solutions the following could be envisaged:

- Consider free distribution of, or affordable access to, ARVs as in Botswana and Namibia.

- Organize confidential voluntary counselling and testing services.

- Decentralize the appointment of teachers to school level and provide grants to head teachers which would allow them to recruit volunteer teachers when necessary.

- Review entitlements, arrangements and practice for funeral attendance and other family matters.

- Better monitor teacher absenteeism and mortality.

- Strengthen supervision, support and tools for managers (check that absences are really due to serious illness; in the later case organize school or community support).

- Reduce delays in appointing replacements; streamline the recruitment and appointment system; encourage a reservoir of substitute teachers at regional level.

- Encourage local recruitment of teachers and facilitate family regroupment.

- Pass anti-discrimination laws.

5.3. Problem of infected and affected children

60. Not much is known about the education of infected pupils[7]; it probably depends on the seriousness of their illness. Some of them may not attend school at all. More is known about the way the AIDS epidemic affects the lives of affected children, whose number is increasing in the whole of Africa[8]. When one parent is sick and dies, the family resources decline and the family is less likely to be able to pay school expenses; the opportunity cost increases as well. Hence some children continue to go to school but many have to contribute to the family income. Family support to education and parental guidance and care may decrease, and this may have to be taken into consideration.

61. When both parents die, the consequences are even more dramatic. Some children go to live with a guardian or a foster family (in the extended family) who takes care of them and pays for their education. This may be the leading practice in the majority of cases depending on the country. Children are often asked to contribute one way or another to the new family's income. In some other cases there may be only one grand parent/aunt/uncle left who is not in a position to help a great deal, or one of the children becomes the head of the household. In the last two cases the children and youngsters may fall into extreme poverty; it is then that they – girls in particular – may become engaged in risky behaviour such as prostitution. Many leave their families, start living independently on the streets, and become subject to exploitation, sexual violence and abuse. Some studies have shown that orphans may be forced to opt for such a solution, having been ostracized or disowned by their relatives or exploited in different ways such as child domestic workers (Evans, 2003).

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[7] The number of infected children (aged 0-14) in sub- Saharan Africa is around 1,900,000, most of them living in Nigeria and South Africa and the other countries mentioned above.

[8] High level of AIDS infected teachers is not yet a big problem in French speaking countries such as Burkina Faso or Togo but the increasing number of AIDS orphans is (Akpaka, forthcoming) .

62. Several of the measures described above for poor and extremely poor children would apply to children in such circumstances, such as:

- Removal of fees;

- Providing scholarships and bursaries to cover fees in the country where they exist or other school expenses (uniforms and learning materials);

- Providing in-school lunch programmes, snacks and take-home rations;

- Offering student guidance to replace family guidance, after-school homework clubs to provide guidance and support, mentor schemes to provide intellectual support;

In some countries, more specific measures are put in place for AIDS orphans, such as:

- Scholarships to cover fees and textbook expenses financed by NGOS with support from the Global Fund

- Providing grants for foster families

- Developing community care programmes

- Encouraging zero tolerance towards discrimination

- Training teachers and learners on infection

In all interventions it is necessary to pay attention to the problem of stigmatization.

5.4. Conclusion: Articulating a systemic response to HIV and AIDS

63. Unless a systemic response to HIV and AIDS, which is integrated in an overall HIV and AIDS plan, is developed, there is a great danger that the quality and coverage of education provision in AIDS infected countries will deteriorate. This overall response should ensure that HIV concerns take centre-stage and that all decisions are informed by, and take full account of, the relevant HIV issues. This response should go way beyond curriculum interventions in formal and non-formal education and integrate such aspects as:

- Developing an overall strategy and vision

- Developing and mainstreaming HIV/AIDS education in and outside the school

- Providing teacher training and in-school support

- Developing a manageable response to the epidemic:

    • teacher management, appointment and replacement

    • treatment, counselling and support

    • workplace policy ; preparation and advertisement of a teachers' code of conduct

    • school response

- Addressing the issue of stigma

- Educating and caring for orphans and OVCs

- Planning the impact of HIV/AIDS and anticipating costs

- Managing education in an HIV/AIDS context and implanting policies

- Monitoring the impact of HIV on demand and supply, and on students and teachers.

64. Implementing such an overall response requires leadership and strong managerial capacities. IIEP and MTT have developed a series of modules that could assist managers and administrators at all levels to include an HIV/AIDS component in all of their tasks and contribute to developing an adequate response to the epidemic.

65. Across the globe, millions of lives are compromised due to conflict, emergencies and disasters. These adverse circumstances range from armed conflicts to earthquakes, and they can, and often do, give rise to crises of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. Armed conflict is defined by Project Ploughshares as "a political conflict in which armed combat involves the forces of at least one state (or one or more armed factions seeking to gain control of all or part of the state), and in which at least 1,000 people have been killed by the fighting during the course of the conflict". Globally, there were 32 armed conflicts in 2004 (Project Ploughshares, 2005). Disasters vary by type and include, but are not limited to, floods, earthquakes, landslides, epidemics, and even technological disasters. The number of disasters totalled 5,677 in 2003, killing 673,000 people (Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, 2005). Consequently, not only do countries experience conflict but also the daunting task of addressing the needs and concerns of refugees and IDPs. The number of refugees reached 9,236,521 by the end of 2004, and the number of refugees returning home in 2004 totalled 1,494,610 (UNHCR, 2004). However, these numbers are dwarfed by the global total of approximately 25 million IDPs at the end of the same year (Eschenbächer, 2005).

6.1. Emergencies as obstacles to EFA in Africa

66. Emergencies, conflicts and disasters can have a direct negative impact on individuals and communities, but they also cause an impact at the system level. As such, emergencies pose obstacles to the government's provision of basic services, such as education, and hence hinder progress toward EFA. In addition, a country may endure years of political unrest and poverty, as has been the case in some of Africa's conflict-affected countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan. The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers estimates that since 1998 the number of child soldiers worldwide has remained constant at approximately 300,000. In 2004, up to 100,000 of those child soldiers were estimated to be involved in armed conflict in Africa (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 2004). This great number of African child soldiers carries serious implications for the capacity of the education system to address individual and community level needs within the framework of EFA.

67. The educational data, such as gross enrolment ratios (GER), gender parity index (GPI), literacy rates and pupil-teacher ratios demonstrate the difficulty that the abovementioned countries have encountered with respect to education. In the DRC for primary education during the period 1998-1999 the GER was 49.6 per cent, the GPI was 0.9 (female/male) and the pupil-teacher ratio was 26:1. For the period 2000-2004 the total adult literacy rate for males and females of 15 years and older was 65.3 per cent (UNESCO, 2005). In Liberia, for primary education during the period 1998-1999, the GER was 89.6 per cent and the GPI was 0.74 (female/male). For the period 2000-2004 the total adult literacy rate was 65.3 per cent (UNESCO, 2005). In Sierra Leone, for the 2000/2001 school year, out of a primary school-going population of 761,000, a total of 554,000 students were enrolled and the GPI stood at 0.70. For the same year, the pupil-teacher ratio was 37:1. Based on census data from 2000, Sierra Leone had a total adult literacy rate of 29.6 per cent (UNESCO, 2005). In the case of Sudan, the primary GER in 2003 was 61.2 per cent and the average enrolment for girls stood at 55.8 per cent. With a pupil-teacher ratio of 28:1 in 2003 and an adult literacy rate of 57.2 per cent in 1998, Sudan also faces great obstacles to achieving EFA (Government of Sudan

and UNESCO, 2005). As the data demonstrate, the education systems of conflict-affected countries have low capacity to integrate and provide for all out-of-school children, especially ex-combatants. In particular, ex-combatants may never be able to enter a school in their home community and face a common fear of stigmatization in school. Not only do they encounter jealousy from others due to special services that they might have received but they must also face the academic reality of having lost education and fallen behind in school. Former child soldiers must forge a new identity and social role in their community. Their greatest stress often derives from lacking skills that will allow them to earn a living. These fears and concerns multiply for orphans. Education, however, can play a crucial, restorative role in the lives of all of those affected by conflict.

6.2. Why provide education in emergencies in Africa?

68. While several basic needs such as physical safety, health, water, nutrition and shelter arise and demand attention during times of emergency, education is integral. It not only improves a society's content area knowledge and skill bank, but also offers protection, fosters confidence in individuals, and rehabilitates those who suffer from the psychological effects of a crisis. As Sinclair (2002: 27) states, "education can help meet the psychosocial needs of crisis-affected populations" and it "provides a channel for conveying survival messages and developing skills for conflict resolution and peace-building". While the international community recognizes education as a basic right in the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 29) and the UN Covenant relating to the Status of Refugees (Article 22) reflect the international community's legally binding commitment to provide education in emergencies. Additionally, those affected by conflict voice a demand for their children's education. This parental demand can present an opportunity to reduce gender disparities in education.

69. Due to endemic violence in Uganda, many suffer from a lack of access to education and its benefits. Since an intervention in 2004 by the International Rescue Committee and the Italian Association of Volunteers in International Service, education's potential as a tool for protection and for ameliorating gender disparities and trauma has materialized in a programme called ORACLE – Opportunities for Reducing Adolescent and Child Labor. ORACLE works to enrol children, especially young mothers and child soldiers, in classes and keep them there. Additionally, ORACLE offers non-formal vocational classes in such areas as brick-laying and business skills for those in need of income-generating activities. ORACLE aims to address the community's lack of information on children's rights, child labour, the benefits of girls' education and strategies for teaching children affected by conflict (Locatelli, Castelli and Jobolingo, 2005).

6.3. Immediate challenges to ministries of education during emergencies

70. In circumstances of emergency, the ministry of education often faces a plethora of difficulties. Emergencies can often entail the loss of fundamental physical elements of educational activities – buildings in which to hold classes, and books, paper and syllabi for student and teacher use during the lessons. Without a regular environment in which to hold classes, ministries of education find themselves under pressure to set up safe, structured activities immediately. Additionally, the question of which curriculum to follow complicates education provision due to the likely change in the demographics of students and the influx of refugees and IDPs. Decisions regarding curricula thus entail issues of multi-grade classes, ethnicity, and language of instruction. The choice of curriculum also depends on the availability and capacity of new and returning teachers. Recruiting adequate numbers of teachers on appropriate contracts is a huge challenge. In addition, the ministry of education

must ensure that teachers can perform their duties as well as cope with the crisis situation by providing them with professional development and psychological support.

6.4. Education of IDPs and refugees

71. Individuals might be forced to seek asylum or protection in another region of their country of residence or outside that country as a result of the onset of a disaster, emergency or conflict. These refugees and IDPs suffer great disadvantages with respect to their access to and completion of schooling. This, in turn, cripples the prospects of achieving EFA. Almost every country in Africa is hosting significant numbers of refugees. The education system of the country receiving refugees might experience a sudden increase in the school-going population, increased pupil-teacher ratios, and a decreased quality of education provision. On the other hand, the country where the emergency is occurring might suffer a human resource drain, leaving an ill-equipped school system. The greater likelihood that refugee children will gain access to education compared to IDPs demonstrates one of the dilemmas associated with a crippled education system in a crisis-affected country. For example, Southern Sudanese children enjoyed far fewer educational opportunities than Sudanese refugees in Kenya, Uganda or Ethiopia (Bethke and Braunschweig, 2004; Sinclair, 2001).

72. Several conditions such as inconsistent attendance, low instructional quality, poor school infrastructure, low completion rates, safety, attitudes restricting girls' attendance, and opportunity costs of foregoing work plague refugees and IDPs and prevent them from attending school and acquiring literacy – another goal of EFA. The difficulty of locating and tracking refugees and IDPs can hinder the collection of thorough and accurate educational data that shape efforts to satisfy refugees' and IDPs' needs. Because the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) exists to protect refugees and can work with governments that have signed the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, in theory more information and more tailored services could be organized for refugees than IDPs (Bethke and Braunschweig, 2004). Unfortunately, co-ordination of international intervention can limit the potentially advantageous impact of education in emergencies (Sommers, 2004). EFA in emergencies must proceed in a highly contextualized manner, and efforts such as peace education programmes must be sensitive to participants and local conditions, as Bird (2003) notes in the case of Rwandan refugees in Tanzania.

6.5. Planning for educational reconstruction after conflicts and disasters

73. While ministries of education will confront many challenges to rebuilding education systems following conflicts and disasters, there are solutions that can help orient policy and actions. A systematic series of principles was articulated very clearly by Sinclair (2002: 29-30):

Box 2. Principles of emergency education

Access

- The right of access to education, recreation and related activities must be ensured, even in crisis situations.
- Rapid access to education, recreation and related activities should be followed by a steady improvement in quality and coverage, including access to all levels of education and recognition of studies.
- Education programmes should be gender-sensitive, accessible to, and inclusive of, all groups.
- Education should serve as a tool of child protection and prevention from harm.

Resources

- Education programmes should use a community-based participatory approach, with emphasis on capacity-building.
- Education programmes should include a major component of training for teachers and youth/adult educators, and provide incentives to avoid teacher turnover.
- Crisis and recovery programmes should develop and document locally appropriate targets for resourcing standards adequate to meet their educational and psychosocial objectives.

Activities/curriculum

- All crisis-affected children and young people should have access to education, recreation and related activities, helping meet their psychosocial needs in the short and the longer term.
- Curriculum policy should support the long-term development of individual students and of society, and for refugee populations it should be supportive of a durable solution, probably repatriation.
- Education programmes should be enriched to include life skills for education for health, safety, and environmental awareness.
- Education programmes should be enriched to include life skills for education for peace/conflict resolution, tolerance, human rights and citizenship.
- Vocational training programmes should be linked to opportunities for workplace practices of the skills being learned.

Co-ordination and capacity-building

- Governments and assistance agencies should promote co-ordination between all agencies and stakeholders.
- External assistance programmes should include capacity building to promote transparent, accountable and inclusive system management by local actors.

74. Peter Buckland (World Bank 2005c: 30-40) has since elaborated on these principles, highlighting lessons learned in its post-conflict educational work in Africa and elsewhere. The Bank stresses these items, among others:

- rigorous conflict impact assessment of educational policies;

- appropriate sequencing of educational interventions;

- leveraging interim arrangements and transitional mechanisms;

- prioritizing within a system-wide approach;

- building on existing initiatives;

- demonstrating early and visible impact;

- encouraging community involvement;

- early initiation of technical and capacity-building work; and

- building effective partnerships.

75. IIEP has conducted in-depth case studies in Burundi, Rwanda, Rwandan refugees and Southern Sudan as well as Kosovo and Timor-Leste. Additionally, IIEP has conducted in-country training programmes in most African countries in reconstruction, and is working extensively with UN agencies and NGOs in this area. On the basis of this experience it has prepared an *IIEP Guidebook for Planning Education in Emergencies and Reconstruction* for ministry of education officials.

76. In the framework of EFA, claiming the right to education and enjoying the opportunity to receive an education during times of emergency or reconstruction often becomes elusive. The IIEP Guidebook offers insight into how to accommodate different populations and plan for their integration and continuous participation in the school system. Systems for inclusive education need to be not only structured, but also reliable. Thus, a sound system of identification and data collection on different populations will facilitate an educational needs assessment. For example, the growing prevalence of child soldiers in conflict situations poses the question of how to draw such children back into the classroom and how to offer them the proper academic as well as social and rehabilitative services. Being able to identify the number of child soldiers, determining what education they have previously acquired and the nature of the trauma experienced during conflict lay the foundation for a sound response to their needs. Additionally, ensuring that schools do not become places of recruitment of child soldiers and that teachers receive training on how to relate to former child soldiers remains essential. How rapidly a country can manage to respond to the educational needs of its affected populations and how effectively it can use education as a means of inclusion will indicate how solid the reconstruction process will be.

77. At the centre of the education process are teachers and learners. The theme of teachers and learners spans the areas of curriculum, instruction, teacher management and support to learners. Following the onset of an emergency, it is reasonable to assume that the human resource pool diminishes and teachers and education administrators must be recruited. The Guidebook offers suggestions for addressing issues of teacher motivation, compensation and working conditions. Offering non-monetary forms of support for teachers, such as bicycles for transportation or mentoring systems, can attract teachers to the field, satisfy their needs and improve their skills.

78. Curriculum and learning materials often get lost or destroyed and must be revised or replenished in emergency and reconstruction scenarios. Curricula, lesson plans, syllabi and textbooks may need to be redesigned or replenished, according to the population affected and to the type and phase of emergency that the country is in or has experienced. Educational provision through formal, non-formal and informal channels has to be considered.

79. In order to build a lasting system of education, assessing and strengthening the management capacity of the system carries educational response efforts from the immediate to the longer term. The groups concerned include all types of profiles from ministry of education officials, provincial and local education officers, administrators, teachers, and community members. Genuine community participation, for example, assures the relevance of the system and the consultative process necessary to rebuild an education system. Support and involvement from the community at large will keep the development of the education system in check such that it relates to local needs and relies upon available human resources. Establishing clear roles and responsibilities for community education committees in relation to activities such as fundraising, monitoring, construction of buildings, and interaction with NGOs and donor agencies is essential (IIEP, forthcoming) .

6.6. Networks

80. The causes, nature and aftermath of emergencies, conflicts and disasters vary according to the context. However, via networks such as the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), crisis-affected African countries find a forum for sharing information regarding best practice and will also discover a common goal of working towards achieving EFA. INEE has brought together experts in the field to formulate the Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction. Derived from the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Dakar 2000 EFA goals and the Sphere Project's Humanitarian Charter, the standards serve as an advocacy tool and practical guide for response.

81. The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), which offers access to databases, working groups, programmes and publications that address key issues in the development of quality education, can also contribute to sharing good practices in post conflict areas.

6.7. Conclusion

82. Emergencies and conflict present an ongoing challenge to the achievement of EFA in Africa. Circumstances of crisis present a unique set of hurdles to continuous and quality education provision. Years of civil war, natural disasters and epidemics such as HIV/AIDS can leave African countries with poverty-stricken, traumatized populations excluded from educational opportunities. Education issues that countries in reconstruction or emergencies must confront and resolve vary from a lack of physical infrastructure to reduced ministerial capacity and curriculum content to refugee and IDP populations. However, with effective planning, an understanding of immediate response strategies and consensus over education's key role in responding to emergencies by international agencies and donors, national governments, NGOs and local communities, the achievement of EFA can remain in sight. Drawing upon networks, publications, and best practice from within the region, will also aid Africa to enjoy more equitable and relevant education.

7. INEFFICIENCY TRANSPARENCY AND CORRUPTION

83. In order to enroll the excluded children mentioned above, many more resources will be required. It is just as important that the resources mobilized be used more effectively and reach the groups that they are supposed to reach. Corruption and ineffective use of resources is a major problem in many countries all over the world, including African countries. If all the funds allocated to education were to effectively reach those to whom they are targeted, more children would be in school, there would be fewer inequalities, and policies and development programmes would have better results. Corruption in the education sector can be defined as the "systematic use of public office for private benefits, whose impact is significant on the availability and quality of educational goods and services, and has a consequence on access, on quality or equity in education" (Hallak and Poisson, 2002). Corruption covers a wide range of activities such as favoritism, nepotism, clientelism, solicitation or exhortation of bribes, or embezzlement of public goods. There are many examples of corruption in a variety of domains within the education sector. They range from apparent petty corruption (scholarships not being allocated to the right people; schools not being open or built where they should be; children of certain groups having priority access to free prestigious state schools) to more serious corruption involving large sums of money (on public procurement for school construction or on textbook production or purchase). But in education there is no petty corruption: indeed several occurrences of small sums being badly used or mis-allocated add up to large sums: if 10 per cent of teachers are absent at any point in time, this means that almost 10 per cent more students could be enrolled in the same teaching conditions as at present at no additional teacher cost, or that the quality of education could be improved with no additional cost. Another problem is that it sets a bad example to the pupils: suggesting that a teacher's presence and whether or not he/she actually teaches is left to the teacher's discretion. Corrupt practices have to be identified as well as good practices allowing to curb the impact of corruption on education.

7.1. Corruption in education: a few illustrations

84. There are many examples of corruption in the education sector, in a variety of domains, e.g. bending of rules governing school construction, misappropriation of funds, ghost teachers, failure to respect the criteria for attributing school scholarships and meals, favouritism or nepotism in personnel management, academic fraud, etc. Some specific illustrations are provided below:

▪ Ghost teachers: The problem of absent teachers has been mentioned above in the context of HIV and AIDS and will not be repeated here. It is a well known fact that even in countries with low HIV/AIDS prevalence, the number of absent teachers can be as high as 25 per cent. Ghost teachers refer to another problem: 'fake' teachers that actually now retired but are still listed or kept on the payroll, are deceased or never existed, with the purpose of getting more resources unduly. Studies conducted by the World Bank estimate that the percentage of ghost teachers can reach up to 15 per cent in Papua New Guinea (2002) and 20 per cent in Uganda (1993).

- Academic fraud: Academic fraud can be defined as 'the use of public office for private gain in the academic field, especially regarding examinations, certificates and diplomas, university/college research and publications'. In Liberia, six teachers were found guilty of having bought their degree. Thanks to these fake degrees, they had received a total of US$29,702 in additional pay, with individual amounts ranging from $2,300 to $7,200.

- Private tuition: an increasing number of pupils take private tuition in Eastern and Southern Africa. According to data from SACMEQ II, 80.6 per cent of primary students received extra tuition in 2000. The existence of private tuition in Mauritius is a fairly well documented phenomenon, and some Ministry staff are concerned that it can affect quality in mainstream education. More countries are hit by the same syndrome. In Malawi, for example, 79.7 per cent of pupils were taking extra tuition in 2000 compared to 22.1 per cent in 1995. In Kenya, 87.7 per cent of pupils were taking extra lessons in 2000 according to the SACMEQ II survey, compared to 68.6 per cent in 1995 (SACMEQ I) (Paviot, Heinsohn and Korkman, 2005). The extent to which extra tuition is paid for by families is not known: students either did not know or did not want to say. It is not proven that the rapid increase in the number of students taking extra lessons is a result of declining quality in the primary schools of the region, but this is likely to be the case. More research would be needed to find out whether this phenomenon is the result of a genuine concern of parents to provide better education to their children, or to what extent it is the teachers who are putting pressure on their own students to take additional lessons in order to pass, which would be corruption.

- School finance: leakage of non-wage funds. According to recent surveys, between 87 per cent (Uganda) and 49 per cent (Ghana) of non-wage funds never reach schools. One survey showed that leakages occurred at specific levels within government hierarchy but mainly at local government level. Anecdotal evidence "suggests that these funds were largely used for private gain, patronage politics or the funding of political activities." (Reinikka, 2005; Reinikka and Smith, 2004)

- Textbooks: At each stage of the book production and distribution chain, opportunities for corruption can be observed: lack of transparency of purchase rules for raw materials, lack of clear policy on copyright, distortion in procurement rules, lack of transparent criteria for costing, etc. In one French-speaking African country, textbooks produced by the government were stored and then sold by street vendors instead of being distributed to the schools; part of them were sold in a neighbouring country.

85. In recent years, a number of reforms have been introduced in order to improve the quality and relevance of education. This is the case of all reforms aiming at more decentralization of decision making and management. In general these reforms genuinely allow decisions to be better adapted to local conditions. Yet precautions must be taken in setting up proper accountability procedures when giving more funds to local governments and schools to manage. Decentralization of education finance can also lead to decentralized opportunities for corruption. A study conducted in Zambia, for example, showed that funds allocated to schools at the discretion of local authorities were less likely to reach schools than funds allocated to a formula funding system. For such reforms to be beneficial, clear rules must be established and the local administration must be subject to regular internal and external audits. In order to reduce corruption opportunities, some reforms specifically aim at bypassing regional and local administrative levels to allocate funds directly to schools.

7.2. Impact of corruption on EFA

86. An education 'free of corruption' would certainly contribute to increasing the resources available, as well as access, quality and equity in education; indeed:

▪ Public expenditure tracking surveys (PETS) conducted in different countries illustrate the magnitude of leakage from education funds, resulting in reduced resources available for expanding access and improving quality.

▪ Report card surveys conducted on the impact of corruption on the provision of social cohesion – including education – demonstrated that illegal payment for school entrance and other hidden costs help explain low school enrolment and high drop-out rates in developing countries.

▪ Other studies showed that bribes and payoffs in teacher recruitment and promotion tend to lower the quality of teachers.

▪ Several studies on teacher management – including surveys on the employed teachers – suggest that there are three sources of inefficiency – ghost teachers, absenteeism and inadequate monitoring of deployment, which when combined can represent more than 20 per cent of the total salary budget.

▪ The recent peer review exercise in Mauritius (WEGSA, 2005) illustrates the perverse effects of private tuition: how it can ultimately reduce quality in public schools and introduce some inequalities between those who can pay and those who cannot. Those interviewed mentioned that parents feel they "will lose out on the curriculum if they do not participate"; that "teachers more than double their salaries with private tutoring and the royalties earned from their books"; "head teachers have no access to teachers for in-service after school hours" and that "teachers resist any reform that affect their involvement in private tutoring".

87. Even more preoccupying is that a variety of studies have proven that disadvantaged groups suffer more from corrupt practices because they have less access to information, are poorly organized and benefit less from adequate public service delivery. Put differently, those who are to be served first if EFA goals are to be achieved are those who suffer most from corrupt and distorted practices in the management of education resources.

7.3. EFA and an education 'free of corruption': Promising strategies to fight corruption in education

88. There are several success stories in the fight against corruption in the education sector. Four examples will illustrate the point:

▪ Eliminating ghost teachers: successful strategies have been implemented to eliminate ghost teachers: nation-wide 'headcount' exercises, during which teams visit every known 'pay point' for instance, and physically verify that teachers listed on the payroll actually exist and are paid the salary to which they are entitled; and 'spot audits' carried out throughout the year by a professionally reliable group from the central auditors or ministry inspectorate, etc.

▪ On the basis of the findings of the first public expenditure tracking surveys (PETS) in Uganda, the central government decided to:

 - publish the monthly intergovernmental transfer of capitation grants in press

 - ask primary schools to post information on the funds received by the school for all to see.

The result of these measures was impressive. On average, leakages were reduced from 38 per cent in 1995 to 18 per cent in 2001. In other words, the combination of implementing change in the regulatory system and better informing end users on what they are entitled to by means of the press significantly contributed to reducing leakages (Reinikka, 2005; Reinikka and Smith, 2004).

Figure 4. Effect of newspaper campaign on school funds in Uganda
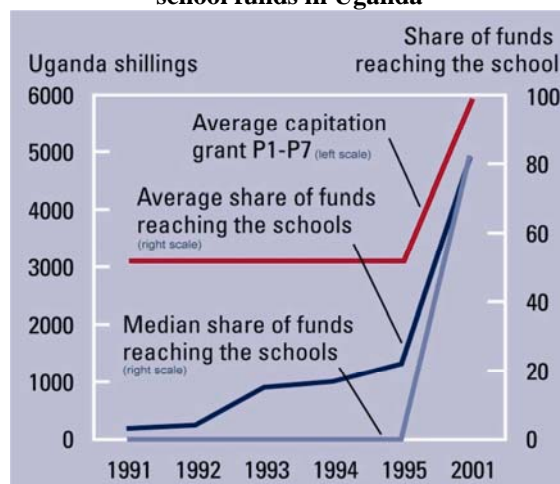
Source: World development report 2004

▪ Designing a real textbook policy: several French-speaking African countries have succeeded in designing a good textbook policy, thus enabling them to minimize the risks of corruption by providing to all a clear definition of aims, resources and rules of the game; the dissemination of this policy among stakeholders with consideration to the following critical aspects: copyright legislation, taxes/import duties, authors' fees, publishing rules, prices to be charged per textbook, etc.

▪ Checking diplomas: some countries have asked their teachers to physically travel to one designated location on a particular day, with appropriate credentials to indicate physical existence and location of work. This helped them 'clean' their rosters of teachers.

7.4. Conclusion

89. More broadly, improving transparency and accountability in the long term involves the design of comprehensive strategies, including:

▪ the creation and maintenance of regulatory systems: this involves adapting existing legal frameworks to focus more on corruption concerns (rewards/penalties); designing clear norms and criteria for procedures (with regard to fund allocation or procurement for instance); developing codes of practice for the education profession; and defining well-targeted measures, particularly for fund allocation.

▪ strengthening management capacities to ensure the enforcement of these regulatory systems: this involves increasing institutional capacities in various areas, particularly information systems; setting up effective control mechanisms against fraud as well as promoting ethical behaviour.

▪ encouraging enhanced ownership of the management process: this involves developing decentralized and participatory mechanisms, increasing access to information, particularly with the use of ICTs; and empowering communities to help them exert stronger 'social control'.

8. OVERALL CONCLUSION

90. Poverty, emergencies such as the HIV/AIDS pandemics and conflict present an enormous challenge to the achievement of EFA in Africa. The number of children and youngsters concerned is large and can not be ignored. If no specific solutions are envisaged, the number of children likely to remain outside the education system could reach 20 per cent of the relevant age group. Education for All is a commitment of the international community, which requires that all children have access to quality learning opportunities, that all problems be discussed and all solutions envisaged.

91. Education decision makers face different options regarding the future of their education system:

1. It continues to operate as before: policies programmes and actions are designed that cater for 'regular ordinary children' in urban and rural areas. Recent reforms such as decentralization, diversification of school finance and privatization will contribute to increased flexibility in the system, but they may also somehow increase the disparities between groups. Abolition of school fees will allow an increase in coverage but ensuring quality will remain a daunting challenge. There is also a great danger that the EFA objectives will not be met. Another danger is that the AIDS pandemic will continue to undermine the operation of the school system; conflicts may continue, fuelled by inequalities, inefficiencies and corruption.

2. Decision makers acknowledge the fact that some 20 per cent of the school-age population will not integrate the normal school system; parallel, alternative education and training activities organized for the excluded, generally with much less resources will be strengthened. Supplementary schemes are also developed that provide support and coaching for those in difficult circumstances. A small proportion will have the opportunity to reintegrate the formal system later on.

3. The entire mode of operation of education and systems of allocation of resources is reviewed to give more attention to the needs of marginal people; a human rights approach is developed that focuses primarily on the needs of all children; the right to good education, of protection against violence, stigma and abuse is emphasized; different paths are developed, each of equal quality, which allow sufficient flexibility for children and youngsters to move from one path to another.

92. This is a serious but difficult political dilemma and different countries will make different choices according to their level of resources and their social and political circumstances. Option 3 requires a great deal of creative thinking and commitment from all parts of society. It should be widely discussed with all stakeholders, however. Effective planning, an understanding of immediate response strategies, a consensus among international agencies and donors, national governments, NGOs and local communities over education's key role in responding to emergencies, and strengthened managerial capacities should help to keep the achievement of EFA in sight.

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Table 1: Indicators of participation in primary and secondary education by income quintile

	Indicator	Total	Poorest income quintile	Highest income quintile
Ghana 2003	Net primary participation rate	60.4	42.9	77.9
	Gross secondary participation rate	46.3	22.2	74.7
	Proportion of 15- 19 years old with no schooling	11.8	33.7	4.6
	Primary completion rate of the 15-19	71.4	41.7	87.5
Nigeria 2003	Net primary participation rate	60.1	40.4	82.9
	Gross secondary participation rate	61.2	32.1	94.6
	Proportion of 15- 19 years old with no schooling	22.6	43.3	2.7
	Primary completion rate of the 15-19	63.4	35.9	90.7
Benin 2001	Net primary participation rate	53.5	33.9	77.2
	Gross secondary participation rate	23.5	5.3	55.6
	Proportion of 15- 19 years old with no schooling	41.1	68.3	15.9
	Primary completion rate of the 15-19	33.0	11.4	60.5

Source: World Bank data.