Assessment of Basic Education

in Sub-Saharan Africa

1990–2000

Education for All:

Report from the Sub-Saharan Region

Assessment of Basic Education

in Sub-Saharan Africa

1990–2000

Sub-Saharan Africa EFA Secretariat
NESIS Regional Centre
ADEA Working Group on Educational Statistics

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AIR	Apparent (gross) Intake Rate
CAR	Central African Republic
CONFEMEN	Conference of Ministers of Education
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
EFA	Education for All
ERNESA	Education Research Network for East and Southern Africa
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GNP	Gross National Product
MINEDAF	Conference of Ministers of Education and Ministers responsible for the Economic Planning of the African Member States
MLA	Monitoring Learning Achievement
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NESIS	National Education Statistical Information Systems
NIR	Net Intake Rate
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PASEC	Programme for analysis of educational systems of CONFEMEN
PTA	Parents-Teachers Association
ROCARE	Western and Central African Network of Educational Research
SACMEQ	Southern African Consortium for the Measurement of Quality of Education
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizsation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

GLOSSARY

THE APPARENT (GROSS) INTAKE RATE (AIR) measures the proportion of new entrants into a grade or cycle or level of education, regardless of age, as a percentage of the corresponding eligible official age-group population in a given school year.

$$\text{AIR} = \frac{\text{New entrants in primary Grade 1 (regardless of age)}}{\text{Population of official school-entrance age}}$$

THE NET INTAKE RATE (NIR) of primary education measures the proportion of new entrants into the first grade of primary education who are of the official primary school-entrance age, as a percentage of the population of the official school-entrance age

$$\text{NIR} = \frac{\text{New entrants in primary Grade 1 of official school-entrance age}}{\text{Population of official school-entrance age}}$$

THE GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO (GER) is defined as the total number of pupils in primary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official primary school age population in a given school year.

$$\text{GER} = \frac{\text{Total number of pupils in primary education}}{\text{Population of the official primary school age}}$$

THE NET ENROLMENT RATIO (NER) is defined as the total number of pupils in primary education of the official primary school age group expressed as a percentage of the eligible official primary school age population in a given school year.

$$\text{NER} = \frac{\text{Total number of pupils in primary education of official primary school age}}{\text{Population of the official primary school age}}$$

Survival rate to Grade 5
The percentage of a cohort of pupils who enrolled in the first grade of primary education in a given school year and who eventually reach Grade 5.

THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) is the sum of the values of the various branches of the economy added together.

- Primary branch: agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry and fishing
- Secondary branch: industrial activity
- Tertiary branch: business sector: (profits + VAT), transport, property and tourism, banking and insurance

THE GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT (GNP) is the sum of the GDP and the net factor services.

THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDICATOR (HDI) measures the average level at which any given country stands. This composite indicator contains three variables: life expectancy, level of education (measured by the adult literacy rate and the school enrolment rate) and the GDP per inhabitant.

BASIC EDUCATION: refers to a whole range of educational activities that take place in different settings and that aim to meet basic learning needs as defined in the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand 1990). It thus comprises both formal schooling (primary and sometimes lower secondary) and a wide variety of non-formal and informal public and private educational activities offered to meet the defined basic learning needs of groups of people of all ages.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As FORESEEN BY the Jomtien Framework for Action to meet basic learning needs (1990), all Governments were invited to participate in a global end-of-decade assessment. The assessment was based on 18 statistical indicators and policy reviews of basic learning needs at the stages of early childhood, youth and adulthood. In a most comprehensive assessment ever undertaken in Africa, it assessed 47 national education systems and strategies, analysed the extent to which the expanded vision had been realized and identified the changes required to create learning opportunities at various stages and conditions of life. It demonstrated the need for monitoring future action on Education for the African Renaissance in the twenty-first century.

The Regional Technical Advisory Groups, established to assist and coordinate the assessment at the regional level, organized preparatory workshops and the EFA Conference of all Sub-Saharan Africa. UNICEF, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, Sweden and Action Aid provided financial support and UNESCO provided staff support. The NESIS programme[1] conducted a series of training workshops on statistical indicators in 1998 and on assessment methodology and peer reviews in 1999. This early initiative enabled virtually all countries to participate in the most ambitious assessment exercise ever undertaken in basic education.

The output of the EFA 2000 assessment in Sub-Saharan Africa is documented in the following:
- Report on the All Sub-Saharan Conference on Education for All
- EFA Framework of Action in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Regional Synthesis Report of EFA 2000 Assessment in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Statistical indicators of progress toward EFA in Sub-Saharan Africa

This regional synthesis report is a product of the African national assessment teams and participants in the Johannesburg Conference, involving two years of hard work by country EFA teams, statisticians and the staff of NESIS and RTAGs. Through stages of revision toward this final manuscript, Ko-Chih Tung was the principal content editor and Carole Pearce the copy editor. For the French version, Luc Pierre Raemdonck was the translator. Pape Sow wrote the section on the history of education in Africa and summarized the country reports submitted in French and Carole Pearce, those in English. Ko-Chih Tung wrote the sections on socio-economic developments. Jeannette Vogelaar summarized the discussions and the recommendations of the Johannesburg Conference. Claude Akpabie, Evans Chitando and Anna Eriksson assisted in data processing and preparation of the final tables and graphs.

To all those who participated in the national assessment and as well as the above-mentioned agencies and individuals, this report owes much gratitude for their dedication to the cause of development in Africa. In moving into a new millennium, the realization of Education for African Renaissance in the twenty-first century will depend to a large extent upon how well the lessons of the past successes and failures have been learnt and applied in formulating the national and regional action plan.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EFA 2000 ASSESSMENT OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

IN 1990, DELEGATES FROM 155 countries and representatives from 150 organizations agreed at the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) to universalize primary education and massively reduce illiteracy before the end of the decade. How well have countries delivered on their commitment to provide basic education to their people? To answer this question, the EFA Forum launched a global assessment of the progress made during the 1990s towards the goal of Education for All. The purpose of this exercise was not just to measure success and failure but also to reinforce the dialogue on basic learning needs in order to develop strategies for the twenty-first century.

In December 1999, delegates of 47 countries in sub-Saharan Africa met in Johannesburg to assess progress made toward the goals of the Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA) and to set the agenda for the twenty-first century. The EFA 2000 Assessment was intended to find out what has been achieved and analyze what has enabled and obstructed progress toward the goals of Jomtien.

Virtually all 47 countries of sub-Saharan Africa participated in the assessment. The data and information presented in this report are based on the national assessment reports encompassing 18 statistical indicators and policy reviews of basic learning needs at the ages of early childhood, primary school, youth, and adulthood.

Early childhood education

Although early childhood education is recognized as playing an important role in education, governments have neither the financial nor administrative capacity to engage in this form of education on a large scale. In many cases childcare systems are privately run and limited to those who can afford it. Data on early childhood education are rare and difficult to access, therefore making it difficult to analyze trends and patterns.

At the end of the decade, the numbers of children reported to be participating in an institutionalized form of early childhood education and care vary greatly among countries and gross enrolments range from universal access in a very few countries to below 10 per cent in many countries. The quality of pre-schooling also differs, contributing to large disparities in how the programmes benefit those who do attend. Successful approaches that build on local communities or traditional frameworks were reported in Gabon, Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Senegal, Uganda and Zanzibar.

Primary education

Access to primary education is often measured by the Net Intake Rate (NIR), which measures new entrants in primary grade of official school-entrance age as a percentage of the total population of children of the official entry age into Grade 1. As a result of many more countries adopting EFA goals and observing the official admission age, the NIR during the decade has increased about 10 per cent among the sub-Saharan countries. This is remarkable, considering the high population growth during the same period. Nevertheless, towards the end of the decade, almost 60 per cent of eligible children were not starting Grade 1 at the official age.

The enrolment of primary-school-age children in school, measured as net enrolment, also increased during the decade, though around 40 per cent of the official school-age population are still out of school. The net enrolment of boys rose from around 60 per cent to 68 per cent and of girls from around 50 per cent to 54 per cent. The increase was more rapid for boys than for girls and, at the end of the decade, the gender gap was around 13,5 per cent. The fact that gender disparities have remained high implies that policies to promote girls' education have not had an impact on global figures.

There are, of course, considerable differences among the countries in the region, with net enrolments ranging from 30 per cent to 100 per cent (attainment of universal primary education). Among the countries that have reached or are very near to reaching their net enrolment targets for the last decade are Botswana, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Uganda. Those which are far from reaching their targets, have, in most cases, experienced serious economic and political disruptions.

Attrition rates among primary school pupils in sub-Saharan Africa vary enormously. Many drop out of school before they complete their first four years, which is considered to be the minimum number of years needed to acquire basic literacy. Among those most likely to reach Grade 5 are the children in relatively peaceful and prosperous countries.

Adult education and literacy

Ten years after Jomtien, the rates of illiteracy in sub-Saharan Africa have remained generally very high compared to rates in other regions. Women make up the greater part of those who are illiterate, with rates as high as 80 to 90 per cent in some countries. Yet estimates show an increase in literacy rates in all the countries for which data are available. In the majority of countries reporting data, the increase in rates among women was greater than that among men. Out of 39 countries reporting, one-third have literacy rates over 75 per cent, another third have literacy rates of 46 per cent or lower.

Opportunities and constraints

The attainment of EFA objectives has been facilitated and hindered by a number of factors. The enabling factors are often related to political will, through long-term planning, decentralization, integration and targeting of specific groups such as women and girls. Innovations such as the evaluation of basic education, the integration of different forms of education, the use of non-conventional staff, the creation of community schools and experimental approaches to curriculum, have been the starting point for important developments in the management of education and its effects.

A number of constraints, however, have hindered progress. High rates of demographic growth have made it difficult for the supply of education resources to meet demand for schooling. In 1999 the population of primary and secondary school-goers reached 220 million, which is 90 million higher than in 1984. This puts greater pressure on governments and education budgets. Other issues, such as the inefficient use of allocated resources, problems inherent to management, institutional instability, and political crises, all weigh against the capacity of education systems to produce positive results. The inadequacy of resources, the inadequate integration of the formal and non-formal sectors and the continuing prejudice against the education of girls and women have also exacerbated the problem. The rapid spread of the AIDS pandemic, not predicted in 1990, has also stalled the progress made in the provision of basic education.

Lessons learned

Progress is often made through learning from past errors and successes. The EFA Assessment provided useful lessons from the past ten years. It also pointed to where progress can be, or has been, achieved. Some of these lessons are the following:

• Improve the management of complex programmes: Jomtien goals have proven to be complex to implement, particularly those aimed at improving institutional management, organizing partnerships between agencies and the quality and effectiveness of learning processes.

• Concentrate on activities that have a good chance of being successful: Programmes that have realistic goals, based on earlier successes and failures, should be emphasized to avoid wastage of time, energy and resources.

• Avoid the fragmentation of activities: The holistic aspect of basic education in a lifelong learning perspective needs to be kept intact while distinctive elements are simultaneously defined.

• Reinforce partnerships: The diversity of those involved in improving basic education is an unprecedented asset in Africa. It is essential, however, that support to basic education be efficiently consolidated and managed in order to ensure participation of all major stakeholders at various levels of society.

• Take into account technical, economic and institutional capacities: Social, technical, political and economic environments have had a profound impact on basic education achievements. Education systems need to adapt to changing conditions so that they continue to function as well as possible and to teach children skills and knowledge that are directly relevant to developments in these areas.

• Develop policies on illiteracy, poverty, and population: Correlation analyses have shown a significant relationship between illiteracy, poverty, population growth and educational achievements.

• Develop policy-relevant information systems: Relevant and efficient information systems based on statistics, research, and analysis are essential for sound policy and management of the entire education sector.

Future prospects

Sub-Saharan African countries have made important progress in basic education. Some have already realized the goal of universal primary education. Some are getting close to it. But many others are still far from reaching it. All need to address the issues of quality and relevance. Beyond the progress achieved, future prospects for basic education in sub-Saharan Africa will depend on the capacity of policy and management functions of the education systems. The demand for and supply of education will vary from country to country according to the diverse needs of this region. Consequently, the content, delivery, quality and relevance of a country's education programme must be adapted to the diverse needs of its population. In adapting and applying programs, the most important lesson is to focus on the needs of the learners, their communities and national developmental goals.

1 INTRODUCTION: FROM JOMTIEN, AMMAN TO DAKAR

1.1 The context of the EFA 2000 Assessment in Africa

THE END OF THE TWENTIETH century has witnessed a heightening of attention to education development in Africa as shown by commitments expressed by African leaders in such contexts as:

- The OAU Decade for Education in Africa
- The Decade for Literacy and Adult Education in Africa
- The Durban MINEDAF VII Ministerial Statement of Commitments
- The World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-first Century
- The Jomtien EFA process

In Jomtien, 1990, governments of the world signed the World Declaration on Education for All and adopted the *Framework of Action: Meeting Basic Learning Needs for All.* The framework of action foresaw the need for an end-of-decade review and the International Consultative Forum on Education for All was set up as global mechanism to follow up the implementation of Jomtien and to organize the end of decade assessment.

The national assessment is built around a number of core indicators that provide a quantitative picture on the status of education in the different countries around the world. However, the EFA 2000 assessment is not about enrolment figures alone. More importantly, it aims to construct a comprehensive picture on the progress made towards each country's own EFA goal that were set following Jomtien and the problems encountered on the road to attaining these goals, in order to identify innovative strategies to overcome obstacles and redirect national plans of action.

Through this major assessment we need to rethink our education systems and strategies and monitor their future action closely with regard to such key issues as finding cost-effective alternatives to traditional formal education and integrating formal and non-formal education for lifelong learning. In this assessment, we aim to:

- assess the past decade for lessons on what was and was not attained
- analyze what enabled and what obstructed the progress toward the Jomtien Declaration on Education for All
- set the agenda for the twenty-first century, while being aware that what was appropriate in the past may not be so in the future

The Sub-Saharan Conference on Education for All in Johannesburg, South Africa, 5–10 December 1999, highlighted the issues of concern to be addressed at the global level during the EFA Summit (Dakar, 26–28 April 2000) to ensure that Africa's specific problems are taken into consideration.

1.2 Jomtien objectives and framework of action

The leaders of the education community from all around the world convened at Jomtien in Thailand and issued a Declaration on Education for All, setting specific targets for the year 2000. It defined **the basic learning needs** required by human beings as follows:

- to be able to survive
- to develop their full capacities to live and work in dignity

EFA Forum to all countries of Sub-Saharan African countries to join the assessment process. In May and June technical workshops were held in Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast and Benin, in the English and French languages respectively, followed by a Sub-Saharan peer review workshop held in Zimbabwe in September 1999 to assist country teams in finalizing their national reports.

At the same time, **regional assessment** was initiated during the above-mentioned workshops and accelerated during the peer review workshop in September where the draft national reports were reviewed. On the basis of this review, regional issues and priorities were identified and a framework was prepared for the All Sub-Saharan synthesis report. The (sub) regional workshops also defined the major theme for the regional EFA conference as: Education for the African Renaissance in the Globalized Economy, Communication and Culture, concentrating on the following thematic areas:

- the role of education in national and regional developmental goals with specific reference to social, cultural and economic development and its impact on education,
- curriculum content, relevance and quality,
- the role of the state and the transformation of the education system, its structure and function,
- building capacity in education planning, management, research and information systems,
- partnerships with non-governmental organizations and civil society, national and international.

The main task of Sub-Saharan Africa Conference, involving national policy makers, non-governmental organizations, civil society and development agencies, was to formulate the African framework of action, consisting of goals, target areas and strategies for the realization of Education for the African Renaissance in the twenty-first century. The framework of action needed to take into account the initiatives of the OAU, MINEDAF and ADEA as well as those of sub regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Paises Africanos de Lingua Oficial Portuguesa (PALOP) and the East African Community (EAC). The time perspective needed to be synchronized with the OAU Decade of Education.

1.4   The formation of the EFA Regional Advisory Groups in Africa

At Jomtien it was decided to put in place a system of monitoring the progress toward the goals of Education for All. The first test of the monitoring capability was the mid-decade review. The report of the 1996 Johannesburg conference noted that the absence of statistics made it very difficult to review the situation of education at the start of the decade, to evaluate progress since then, or to outline the changes needed to attain the goals by the year 2000. The need for statistics enabling countries to plan, implement and monitor change was already stated in the Jomtien Declaration. The conference decided that capacity building in statistics must be given priority for monitoring and evaluating EFA in preparation for the end-of-decade review. Accordingly, the NESIS programme of the ADEA Working Group on Education Statistics (WGES) was decentralized to Africa in 1998 with the mandate to assist in building the capacity of national education statistical information systems. With Harare as the new headquarters and a branch office in Dakar, the NESIS network of African education planners, statisticians and regional education advisors of the member agencies was expanded to all countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. A series of workshops began in earnest, introducing methods of data collection and processing, technical guidelines and electronic templates for indicators in preparation for the end-of-decade assessment.

relieve some of Africa's burden of debt have provided opportunities to inject cash into education systems: these can be combined with efforts to reassess national budget allocations to education.

We have also taken heed of wisdom imparted by other similar conferences. Audience Africa,[6] for example, warns that the right to education is in jeopardy and democratization is in retreat as a result of economic and social inequalities, certain cultural traditions and a weakening of the role of the State. It recommends a mould-breaking strategy to rebuild the system inherited from the colonial era and to redefine new partnership for burden- and cost-sharing between the State, regions, provinces, municipalities, rural communities and families. This sharing of roles, responsibilities and funding commitments presupposes the effective participation of all partners in determining not only the objectives but also ultimate aims and strategies at all levels.

When defining goals and targets, we need to first ask "Education for what and for whom?" As the choice of education means the choice of a society,[7] then what kind of society is envisioned in formulating a framework of action for the twenty-first century? Choices must be made. Resources must be allocated to balance quantity with relevance and quality with equity. The distribution of resources must clearly reflect and give effect to each society's choices of economic, social and cultural development.

The following questions should be posed with regard to:

* **economic** development, how can education be redesigned to enable individuals to make a decent living and to enable the country to participate and compete in the globalized economy?
* **social** development, how can education be redesigned to promote social harmony and democracy?
* **cultural** development, how can education be redesigned to promote the African cultural Renaissance?

1.6 The significance of the expanded vision

On a world scale Jomtien was the landmark event that had prompted a rapid expansion in primary education enrolment and motivated many developing countries to reform their respective education systems. In these reforms education is seen as the vehicle through which political and socio-economic demands are to be fulfilled while meeting the expectations and desires of all people. This new vision reinvigorated the old. Out of the struggle for independence, long before the Jomtien Conference, new countries in Africa emerged with a firm commitment to the education of their citizens. For Africa, education has always been an instrument for building nations from the diverse peoples who lived within the externally imposed territorial boundaries. Starting from a situation where few had any education, African countries were vigorously pursuing these goals.

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[6] Final report of Audience Africa, Social Development: Africa's Priorities, UNESCO, Paris, 6–10 February 1995, BRX-95/CONF.006/LD.18

[7] *Learning: the Treasure Within*, Report of the Commission on Education for the 21st Century, UNESCO

The main part of this document is a summary of national assessments conducted by teams appointed by the respective ministries of education. Although there are many common experiences, there are also many differences. One common element is that the reports generally represent the observations from the viewpoint of the government ministries of education although some reports were discussed in national consultative meetings involving other stakeholders. In general, those areas within the purview of ministries of education constitute the bulk of the reports and areas under the control of other agencies are under-reported.

There are at least five major constraints that limit the scope of the summary of the national assessment.

Limited scope of EFA 2000 exercise
The 18 indicators were formulated to facilitate reporting cover only four of the six target dimensions that were to be discussed. Furthermore the indicators touch only upon quantifiable issues, leaving many of the analytical and qualitative aspects untouched.

Time limit
Although the initial NESIS pilot teams had started with data work on the indicators in 1997, most governments had not appointed EFA Assessment Task Force until they received an invitation to the mid-production workshop in late 1998. Most of the countries started the actual assessment process only after the January meeting. By July many countries had produced drafts for the peer review workshop. Most of this summary is based on the first set of the draft national reports, which contained very little analysis. The statistical information has been updated for this version.

Quality
Shortage of time has also had negative impact on quality. It did not permit much time for analysis of the relationship between the part describing policy and the statistical part, let alone for any conclusions based on the analysis of that relationship.

Time span
The EFA 2000 assessment aims to look back at what has happened since Jomtien (1990). However, many countries have only recently been in the position to present reliable and accurate data. This means that it is difficult to formulate an accurate picture on progress made over the last ten years.

Coverage
There is no regular data collection in areas that do not lie within the various ministries of education's responsibility, such as early childhood care and education, adult education, literacy and vocational training. The shortage of time meant that the EFA task force could not commission special surveys or collect data in these areas by other means. It would take at least two years to conduct such surveys properly in Africa. In view of the above we must acknowledge that the EFA assessment is not just an end-of-decade review, but much more the start of a new millennium, where we can start once more with refreshed energy to commit ourselves to providing learning opportunities to all.

1.8   Data for national EFA 2000 Assessment
As it became evident during the mid-decade review, the lack of relevant and timely statistics has been a major problem in education planning and management in Africa. For example,

Many countries, as a supplement to the core statistical indicators, had initiated evaluation studies and special surveys during recent years, particularly in following areas:

- pupil performance
- gender specific issues (literacy of girls and women and their participation in education)
- access to education
- resources in schools

A few others have also conducted the following studies:

- benefits of learning
- factors affecting school attendance
- financing and expenditure
- needs of teachers
- non-formal education
- literacy
- demand for education
- early childhood development

The availability or lack of statistical data, and the special surveys and studies, therefore, determined the comprehensiveness of the assessment. Since the above survey was conducted in January 1999 many countries have made efforts to collect more statistics and studies. As a result of these intensive and concerted efforts, we are now able to present statistical indicators gross and net enrolment rate for nearly all countries with the exception of those engaged in long wars and civil strife. Considering that there were very little data in the national reports for the Mid-Decade Report, the quantity available this time indicates a considerable progress.

The present report constitutes a global overview of the Sub-Saharan Africa region. It deals with 47 countries. The indicators and information analysed in this report are mostly drawn from the assessment reports of the participating countries as well as from the sub regional peer reviews mentioned above. Discussions and comments resulting from the critical exchanges on these reports have also been taken into account.

2 THE SITUATION REGARDING BASIC EDUCATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

ABOUT THE TIME WHEN the majority of the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa were moving towards independence, almost all development indicators of modern education placed this region far behind the rest of the world. Even if the gap has not been closed, the early efforts made since then, especially in the 1960s and 1970s have been nonetheless quite spectacular. These achievements in this period have been thanks to the determination of Africa's leaders and to the sacrifices made by the other people involved, amongst whom are African families who want to secure a better future for their children and the international community, in the context of cooperation for development. The initial expansion proceeded rapidly, as it was largely in the urban areas; it later slowed down, as it approached the rural and the remote areas.

The end of the century coincides with a tendency to globalization marked by a globalizing vision to approaches to development. In Africa it also coincides with a desire to draw more effectively on the endogenous values and strengths developed in the course of the history of the African peoples. This new mobilizing ideology, known as the African Renaissance, is a search for a better understanding of the historical circumstances that have determined and continue to influence the various development sectors on the continent. A new critical reading of these factors should facilitate the establishment of new political directions capable of stimulating the imagination and creativity of African societies. There is a great deal to be learnt from the review of the evolution of educational systems within this framework.

2.1 Brief history of the evolution of African educational systems

African societies have a long and rich educational tradition. Practiced since time immemorial by all ethnic and linguistic groups, traditional education has always acted as an important method of transmission of cultural identity. Its goal was to inculcate in children the behaviour and knowledge needed for the part they were to play in society, laying particular emphasis on the duties and privileges whose source lies in cultural values. Transmitted by means of parental example and by word of mouth, as well as by lessons and rituals taking place outside the home, traditional education aimed above all to find solutions to the concrete problems of everyday life. It trained political leaders as well as workers in different fields (agriculture, animal husbandry, hunting, crafts). It instilled a sense of civic duty into the members of the group.

Its roots going far deeper than the colonial period, the Christian tradition is the second major contributor to African education. Chiefly established in the North East and the Nile Basin, Christianity has flourished there for over 1500 years. Thus it was that by about 450 the Christian church of Ethiopia had established an educational system that was to become the chief support of the cultural, literary, scientific and artistic life of that country.

Islam is the third major influence on African education before the colonial period. The Arabic language and culture of a large part of North Africa and Islam spread into the Sahel area, along the East coast and into much of the Horn of Africa. Various kinds of scholastic structures were set up to teach Islamic theology and morality. Designed to transmit knowledge linked to religion, Islamic education gives a large place to reading and recitation in Arabic.

The period of the colonization of Sub-Saharan Africa by the West began with the arrival of the Portuguese in the fifteenth century and ended only recently. Of the African countries to be considered here, only Ethiopia and Liberia have been sovereign states for more than fifty years. All the others have achieved sovereignty in the recent past, in the relatively short period from 1957 (Ghana) to 1980 (Zimbabwe) and most recently South Africa (1994). The consequences of colonization, still evident in most of Africa, often create obstacles to government initiatives.

The chief practitioners of modern education before independence were the colonial powers and their African missions, the Catholic Church and various Protestant churches. The division of administrative and financial responsibility between states and churches varied from one colonial regime to another. The British, who favoured self-government, for example, were generally more accommodating towards local and religious autonomy than were the French, who favoured assimilation.

In order to propagate their faith and to have literate Africans as their subjects, the missionaries and the colonial administrations established in the region a network of schools, many of which were of a high standard. But, as the educational system was usually based on foreign models, the curriculum was practically devoid of any African content. Modern education in Africa was largely administered by foreigners. Nevertheless, the economic transformation which the colonial powers brought about in Africa contributed to a demand for European-style education, which, in many places, seemed almost insatiable. Education became the means of moving in a single generation from poverty and the life of a peasant to the top of the social hierarchy. Few African parents anxious to secure a better future for their children failed to notice this fact.

However, access to education was very limited, particularly in the sparsely populated territories of French West Africa. In 1960 the gross enrolment ratio for primary schools in the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa amounted to only 36 per cent, that is, about half that of Asia (67 per cent) or of Latin America (73 per cent). The figure stood at 38 per cent in the Francophone territories, (50 per cent in the Belgian colonies and scarcely 31 per cent in the French colonies) and at 40 per cent in the Anglophone territories. Many countries, among them Ivory Coast, Gambia and Senegal in West Africa and Tanzania in East Africa had, at the time of independence, an illiteracy rate exceeding 90 per cent.[9]

There were also great variations in access to and attendance at schools within each colonial territory – between urban and rural people, between boys and girls and between members of different ethnic or religious groups. There were various reasons for this phenomenon: the colonial administrations considered and treated various African groups differently. The cost of education varied, particularly from urban to rural areas. Some sectors of the population were more receptive to education than others. In accordance with their patriarchal customs most Africans gave preference to the education of their sons over that of their daughters. As a result the forms of inequality in school attendance frequently crossed colonial borders. This is why the pattern of school attendance in Nigeria in the north differed more from that of the south than it did from that of the north of neighbouring Cameroon, under French influence. Forty years on, these disparities have not yet been completely removed.

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[9]   Source: "L'éducation et le développement endogène en Afrique: évolution, problèmes, perspectives" UNESCO, Paris, 1982

The transition rates from one level of education to the next remained low until the end of the 1980s and, with dropout rates remaining high; the education pyramid was generally very narrow at the top. In 1990 secondary education represented only 14 per cent of the total potential enrolment in Sub-Saharan Africa. It should, however, be remembered that the gross secondary enrolment ratio in Africa stood at 3 per cent in 1960, as against 14 per cent in Latin America and 21 per cent in Asia. Tertiary education was practically non-existent during colonialism. By 1990 the number of students enrolled in tertiary education constituted approximately 4 per cent of the total enrolment within the formal education sector. According to the figures quoted by UNESCO, at independence there were only 90 African graduates from the University of Ghana, 72 in Sierra Leone and 29 in Malawi. When Botswana became independent in 1966, foreigners occupied 96 per cent of the top positions in the country.[10]

The educational model imposed on traditional education and on other types of religious-based education for over 80 years has not, since independence, undergone any further profound structural changes. Thus education has functioned in the greater part of the continent in isolation from the realities of the African environment. What still remains as a major preoccupation of educational specialists in Africa is therefore the possibility of reforming education in order to:

- allow individuals to earn a decent living and countries to participate in and compete within a globalized economy
- promote social harmony, peace and democracy
- promote the African cultural renaissance
- allow societies to assimilate the contributions of others without being absorbed by them

The education systems that African countries inherited at independence were significantly underdeveloped with regard to the training of the managers needed to run the country and for development of their economic, social and cultural aspirations. Even so, the quantitative expansion attained during the first two decades after 1960 were remarkable**.**

2.2   Variation in living conditions and education opportunities

To provide an education that meets the needs of all is a complicated undertaking for Africa. The continent, and even each country, displays extreme variations in wealth, poverty, security, ways of obtaining a livelihood, language, culture and ways to survive and thrive. Geography, climate and natural resources as well as man-made disasters and opportunities influence patterns of human settlement and migration. People live in different material and cultural environments – traditional subsistence farming, nomadic and semi-nomadic groups, commercial farms, mining towns, migrant workers' home villages, cosmopolitan trading cities, capital cities and provincial towns, slums, refugee settlements, and so on.

As there are various forms of human settlement, the provision of education for all has been and will continue to be a difficult task. To understand why the first decade of EFA failed to reach so many children, youth and adults, we have to know how learning opportunities are distributed in various environments and, for each type of settlement and condition of existence, we must ask "education for whom and for what purpose?"

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[10]   Source: "L'éducation et le développement endogène in Afrique: évolution, problèmes, perspectives" UNESCO, Paris, 1982, UNESCO Statistical Yearbook

2.2.1   Traditional subsistence farming and animal husbandry

Relative to its geographical area, Africa is sparsely populated. Unaided by irrigation, fertilization and crop rotation, the life-sustaining fertile soil in vast areas of Africa is a thin layer susceptible to degradation and erosion. It cannot, therefore, sustain dense populations. Subsistence farming is scattered in clusters of households over a wide area. When the soil is degraded and eroded, periodic migrations take place. In savannah and the arid regions, semi-nomadic communities, usually organized in kinship groups, live by herding animals.

Although better farming techniques and reforestation programmes have been initiated, over-grazing and lack of soil care continue to hasten erosion in vast areas, causing the perimeters of the desert to spread wider. A livelihood based on subsistence farming or herding is fragile. In times of drought millions may suffer famine. When they cannot reach a hospitable environment or when emergency-aid cannot reach them, as for example, in times of war, millions of food-seeking migrants die.

Far removed from the mainstream developments in the capital city and centres of commerce, these people have retained their traditional culture, beliefs and languages, many of which have no written form. As an alternative to conventional school-based education, various delivery methods, such as mobile units, radio-based distance education, boarding schools and even forced "villagization", have been tried. The provision of education for widely scattered, semi-nomadic and nomadic people remains costly and logistically difficult to implement and sustain.

2.2.2   Cash crop plantations

In areas endowed with the climate, topology and soil amenable to large-scale farming, cash crop plantations provide tea, coffee, cacao, sugar, tobacco and other agricultural products for consumers in Europe. With modern refrigeration and transport, fruit and flowers have also become exportable. To these commercial farms, labourers of both genders were recruited from wherever feasible. They may be from villages nearby. However, where land was acquired by driving away the indigenous population, people from other regions were brought in, including slaves and indentured labourers from other colonies. Isolated from their origin and their surroundings outside the farm, they developed their own unique cultures and languages. Although spoken every day, these languages (e.g. variations of pidgin and Creole) have no written form in most countries. Seychelles is an exception, where Creole is the official language of the State.

There have been very few educational opportunities for the children of farm labourers and the families in the small villages that grew up around these farms. In modern times employers have organized or provided some form of education.

2.2.3 Mining towns

In the mineral-rich areas, many of which are located in land-locked regions, large mining towns evolved. Aside from the few educated people needed for supervision and management, the unique social characteristic of these mining towns is the concentration of male manual labourers and the absence of families. Recruited from various areas, the workers have very little, if any, education. As the men work and live apart from their families, no aspect of their lives has permanence. There are many social and health problems in these towns. There are often no alternatives to whatever services the mining company may provide.

The other side of the coin is the absence of men of an economically active age in the villages from which the mineworkers are recruited. The population of these emigrant villages consists mainly of old people, small children, young girls and their mothers, many of whom have been abandoned by their husbands. School enrolment rates show, therefore, the predominance of women in these areas.

As long as the main economic sectors have been dependent on cheap labour for agricultural and the extractive industries, there has been little incentive for investment in human development. Although institutions for human control, such as the administration, the police and the army, had been developed during the previous era, institutions for human development had not.

2.2.4   Cosmopolitan port cities

The countries along the coast had the most intensive and extensive contact with the seafaring powers. The major commercial centres in Africa are the ports along the coasts and large rivers with access to the sea, some of which were once centres of slave trade. Today these ports trade in mineral and agricultural products in exchange for manufactured products from the industrialized regions. The population in these cosmopolitan cities is multi-cultural, multi-racial and polyglot. Cultural, social and financial institutions reflect the predominance of European (English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) and Christian or Arabic and Islamic influences, which brought the written languages essential for commerce and administration. Wherever their origin, these cosmopolitan, entrepreneurial people have been able to organize civic associations and religious institutions and provide an education for their children in the languages required for the next generation to take over their business or to enter other professions.

2.2.5   The capital city

The capital city is the centre of administration, politics and institutions of control. In Africa this is the most, and sometimes the only, developed part of the country, located in a position that was strategically defensible, given the military technology at the time of its establishment, and with a comfortable climate to accommodate the ruling class. It is usually located in the highlands. It was also sometimes located at the centre of commerce, if commercial interests dominated.

The government ministries and offices provide employment opportunities for the educated in the civil service, businesses, technical services and organizations that cater for government needs. There are also many professionals such as lawyers and doctors, and services and entertainment industries catering to the needs of the ruling and the middle classes. These professionals speak at least two languages, the home language and the official language. The capital city became also the centre of commerce and industry, catering to the growing consumer market and attracting labourers seeking employment.

Whereas residential areas may have been racially segregated previously in many places, they are now increasingly income-stratified. Hence, racial composition in city schools is becoming more heterogeneous.

The national university is located in the capital city. There are élite schools for the ruling class, many inherited from the colonial period, and new private schools for the emerging black middle class. The languages of instruction and curriculum in these schools are usually

European, as pupils in these schools, encouraged by their parents, mostly aspire to continue to university in Europe and, increasingly, the USA.

There are also many schools run by non-governmental organizations, especially religious organizations and communities. These schools played an important role for many Africans in earlier times when they could not enrol in schools in racially segregated residential areas. Since independence government-financed schools have been established in the cities and gradually spread to provincial towns and other areas. These city schools are usually overcrowded. In some countries there was a time when revolutionary governments nationalized all schools. Subsequent governments have, however, found it difficult to finance them.

Education in the official language of government administration has been and is still today widely regarded as the passport for entry into the world of privilege. The national curriculum and examinations, therefore, often reflect this rationale; hence, it is irrelevant to the people with other needs and aspirations. The enrolment and literacy rates in the capital city are usually the highest in the country although this is changing due to urban migration. As white-collar work requires both men and women, gender disparities in city schools may be the lowest in the country.

2.2.6   People in transition: migrants, displaced persons and refugees

On top of having to deal with the highest population growth rate in the world, at 2.7 per cent, EFA strategy in Africa had to address another target group – the urban migrants. African cities and towns are becoming overcrowded by urbanization, due mainly to rural-to-urban migrants. From 34 per cent of the total population in Africa in 1995, the African urban population is estimated to be growing at the rate of 4.3 per cent per annum. It varies from 3 per cent in South Africa to 9 per cent in Burkina Faso. In simple quantitative terms urban communities will have difficulty in expanding educational services fast enough. Even more seriously, the urban growth is due in large part to migration from rural areas.

Urbanization, however, offers great opportunities for EFA, as many of the formerly unreachable children are becoming reachable. The traditional school-based education and clinic-based health services are difficult to deliver where population is scattered in remote regions. It was only within the last two decades that some governments tried forced "villagization", so that such public services could be more effectively administered. Without employment and other income-generating opportunities, however, this artificial collectivization was not sustainable. Although urbanization is often associated with problems, it also means that public services can be made available to an increasing proportion of the population.

Rural-to-urban migrants in Africa, however, might just as well be foreign migrants, for many of them are foreigners in these cities. They are refugees from rural poverty seeking employment and a better future. They come from various conditions of life described above, often leaving behind an impoverished countryside; eroded land no longer able to sustain life; mines or commercial farms whose products are no longer competitive on the world market; or villages destroyed by natural or man-made disasters. Many are illiterate and do not speak the mainstream languages of the city people. They find temporary shelters in the outskirts of the city, where there are very few, if any, city amenities and public services such as electricity, health care, sanitation and education. Adults and children

scrounge for living, to survive another day in the hope of finding a job. Families disintegrate, as traditional values, beliefs and morals are no longer valid guides to behaviour and the youth seek their luck and excitement in the city streets. Without education or skills for gainful occupation, boys may turn to street crime and girls to prostitution. Where the rich and the poor live in close proximity, non-governmental organizations and other forms of volunteer organizations are motivated to engage in charitable activities.

A former Zimbabwe Minister of Education, speaking at a regional conference on the EFA mid-decade review, said that his country's education policy was aimed at the rural population. No sooner than they thought that they had succeeded, than they were caught unprepared for the growing number of street children and migrants in the overcrowded city slums and squatter settlements mushrooming around the cities.

Displaced population and refugees

By the very nature of the causes, governments of the countries in conflict are not able to provide security and social services, let alone education, to their people. Many organizations, with UNHCR in the lead, are helping to provide emergency assistance, including education. Many agencies have, however, found it difficult to raise funds for emergency assistance to Africa. Both agency staff and Africans have witnessed the extreme contrast in the response of Americans and Europeans to the plight of Africans and that of Kosovo Albanians.

In provision of emergency assistance as well as the assessment and formulation of EFA strategies, one of the realities we must face is that there are, and will continue to be, massive numbers of people affected by conflicts on the continent. This is a more or less permanent emergency. Millions of people, victims, perpetrators, traumatized women, children and child soldiers in countries in conflict and in countries of refuge need medical and psychological treatment and special education. The preparation of children for life cannot be suspended until normalcy is restored: after such experiences, they are no longer normal.

The restoration of peace and economic growth are essential for these children to be able to go back to school and normal life. EFA strategies in Africa must therefore include educational services for various stages of the conflict as, for example, during the conflict, with displaced people and refugees, and, afterwards, with returning and restoring the destroyed schools and rehabilitating traumatized children and child soldiers. Needless to say, there are no reliable statistics concerning the education of people in this situation. The educational and demographic statistics from such countries, even where available, are distorted by these massive movements of people across national boundaries.

To assess the achievements of the decade since the Jomtien Declaration and to formulate appropriate strategies for the future, it is thus essential to bear in mind the great variation in the ecology of the target groups and their learning needs.

3 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

THE CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS made during the last three decades in education has been seriously threatened in Africa in recent years by external circumstances, particularly the demographic explosion, which has greatly swelled the numbers of illiterate people, and the economic decline of the continent, which has dealt some harsh blows to public spending, together with the many conflicts taking place on the continent. If the economic horizon has cleared slightly, and if demographic growth has begun to slacken in a small number of countries, it is none the less the case that, for most of sub-Saharan Africa, whatever progress achieved in education over several decades is threatened. The regression of education, in its turn, makes the solution to these problems more difficult, and further decline is inevitable unless extraordinary efforts are made to break this vicious circle.

3.1 The demographic challenge

Between 1990 and 1998 the average annual growth rate of the world population was 1.9 per cent, while that of Africa stood at 2.7 per cent, that is, one and a half times the world rate. This growth rate shows no sign of changing, although in the other parts of the world it continues to slow down.

The high rate of demographic growth in Africa is due to the fact that mortality rates have dropped considerably over recent years, whereas fertility rates have remained, for the most part, as high as in the past. In 1960 the gross mortality rate in sub-Saharan Africa stood at 25 per 1000 and the gross birth rate at 49 per 1000. In 1997, thanks to the great strides made in health care, the mortality rate had fallen to less than 17 per 1000, but the birth rate remained practically unchanged, and even increased during this period in a small number of countries.[11]

The demographic explosion in Africa creates huge problems with regard to education. To be able to accommodate an ever-increasing school-age population, every year more schools, teachers and books will be needed. And as the number of children eligible for school is growing more quickly than that of active adults, the burden of an expanded education system falls on the shoulders of an adult population, which is proportionally numerically inferior. Of all the regions of the world, it is sub-Saharan Africa that currently has the youngest population. One person in three in Africa is of primary or secondary school age, in contrast to only one in five in Latin America and Asia, and one in six in industrialized countries.

In 1999 the African primary and secondary school-age population reached the figure of 220 million, which is 90 million more than in 1984. This massive explosion in the potential demand for educational services was inevitable, given the number of people already born who had reached school going age in this period. The constraining nature of this growth is of fundamental importance: it considerably narrows the field of options available to the decision-makers.

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[11] World Development Report, the World Bank, 1998/1999

Thus in 1990 in Africa there were about 55 million places in primary schools. Nearly 41 million more places were needed for the year 2000 just to keep the enrolment ratio at the 1990 levels. The aim of achieving universal primary education, which those in charge of education had thought it possible to attain by the end of the 1990s, was not realistic in such a demographic context.

In fact, the investment necessary in classrooms and operating costs for such a huge expansion of primary education, though not entirely fantastic in terms of what had been done during the 1960s and 1970s, hardly seemed feasible in the context of the long period of austerity that began in the 1980s. Assuming that the annual expenditure per pupil remained at the 1990 level in constant dollars (that is, about 50 dollars for a primary school child) the operating costs for primary schools alone would be equivalent to approximately the total amount that African governments spent for all three levels of education and their administration in 1990.

In addition to facing up to ballooning operating costs, it was necessary to fund construction and buy educational materials to cover both the new demand arising from the arrival of new pupils as well as to replace (at the rate of about 2 per cent per annum) worn out equipment. If we estimate the cost of equipment at a very modest 150 dollars per head in primary schools, an extra investment of 1,4 billion dollars per year would be needed in Africa. Yet this figure is still optimistic, as the average spent on equipment is very much smaller on average in Africa today. The total amount of the operating and equipment expenses, just for the primary sector, would be in the region of 11 billion dollars per year, that is, two billion more than the total expenditure on education in 1993. In short, the rising demographic tide will demand huge efforts to do no more but maintain enrolment ratios at present levels.

It is paradoxical that, as well as suffering from an explosive demographic growth, a large part of Africa is suffering from another demographic malaise: low population density. In Namibia and Botswana there are two inhabitants per square kilometre, in Angola and Somalia ten inhabitants per square kilometre. A low population density often means high unit costs for education, particularly in rural areas where the current methods of provision of education prevent economies of scale. The present population density of Africa stands at about 19 people per square kilometre, compared with a global density of about 36.

This is, however, rapidly changing. The UNFPA, in its 1998 report on "the State of World Population," estimates that 34 per cent of the population in Africa lived in urban areas in 1995. The rate of urban growth projected for the period 1995 – 2000 is 4.3 per cent for Africa as a whole, the fastest urban-growth in the world. In sub-Saharan Africa, the fastest urbanization is taking place in East Africa (5.3 per cent), with Burundi leading at 6.4 per cent; and the second in West Africa (4.9 per cent), where Burkina Faso, for example, has experienced nearly 9 per cent urban growth rate; closely followed by Central Africa (4.5 per cent), where Angola has experienced 5.6 per cent. The slowest urban growth is in Southern Africa (3.3 per cent), mainly due to South Africa's low rate of 3 per cent, as other countries are experiencing just as rapid growth as elsewhere in Africa, as for example, Botswana with a growth rate of 6.3 per cent.

To get an idea of what these figures imply, consider that the urban population in East Africa, growing at 5.3 per cent, will double in 14 years and triple in 22 years. Botswana's urban population, growing at 6.3 per cent, for example, will double in 12 years and triple in 19 years. At a 9 per cent growth rate, the urban population in Burkina Faso will double in nine years and triple in 14 years.

FIGURE 2: GNP PER CAPITA IN US$
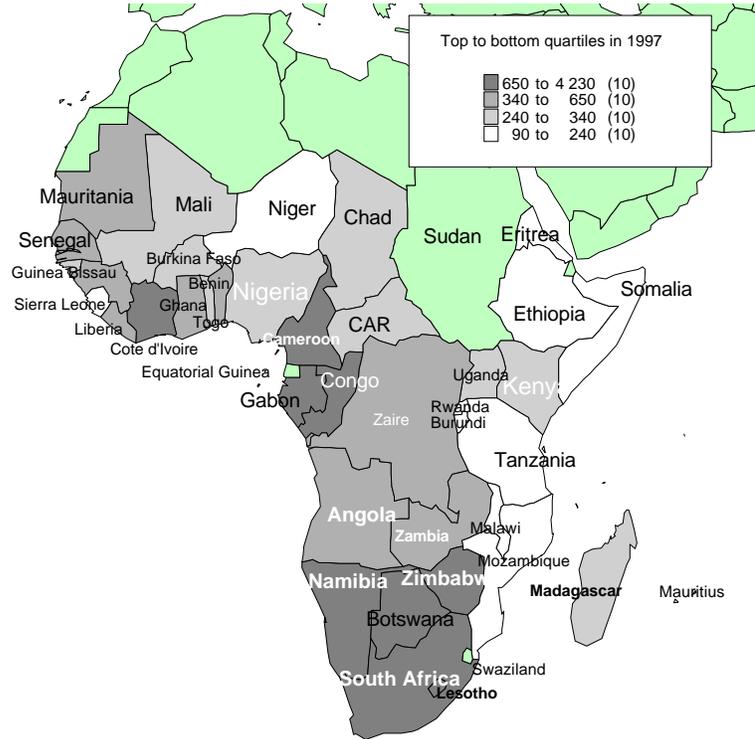
On top of dealing with the fastest population growth in the world, African countries are increasingly facing the prospect of overcrowded cities and towns. The quality of public services, including health and education, has been declining as municipalities have difficulties in coping with fast-growing, young populations. Yet the increasing concentration of the population in urban areas opens up the opportunity of providing education and health services to a greater proportion of the population. As many non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations are present in these areas they are increasingly involved in solving the problems.

Sub-Saharan Africa has become the major centre of continued rapid population growth, as other previously high regions, principally Latin America and Asia, have succeeded in reversing their rates of growth. The combination of a high population growth rate, stagnant economic growth rate and government cuts in public services and price support has impoverished millions of people in Africa. In many ways, children born today may have worse prospects than their parents had at the beginning of their lives. With its huge demographic growth and with the fastest urban growth rate in the world (4.3 per cent), Africa has seen its problems of poverty and unemployment increase.[12]

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[12] Source: "L'éducation et le développement endogène en Afrique: évolution, problèmes, perspectives" UNESCO, Paris, 1982

3.2   Macro-economic adjustment and budget austerity

The end of the 1970s marked the beginning of an economic crisis, which, accelerating after 1980, caused a serious downturn of most African economies. Agriculture, which represents the biggest share of production (about one third of total production), was affected by the drought that wrought havoc in much of the region, compounded by serious deterioration of exchange rates (the drop in agricultural prices being accompanied by a rise in energy costs), and by the pursuit of national policies unfavourable to the agricultural sector. Furthermore, the investment rate, which exceeded 18 per cent of revenue in the 1970s, fell below 15 per cent in 1983, to become the weakest of all the developing regions. These factors combined to sap the long-term productive capacity of Africa.

This economic stagnation, together with the demographic explosion, brought in its wake a drop in living standards for people in many countries. Overall, revenue per inhabitant fell by almost 4 per cent per annum between 1980 and 1984; in 1983 it was lower than it had been 20 years before. The external debt contracted or guaranteed by governments multiplied by a factor of 11 between 1980 and 1988 and debt-service payments more than tripled, going up from 1.2 per cent to 4.4 per cent of the GNP. Since public expenditure increased as income remained more or less static, budget deficits rose to about 10 per cent of the GNP. To allow these trends to continue would have led to economic disaster. Many governments adopted structural adjustment programmes. Within this framework they reviewed their exchange policy, undertook civil-service salary reform and committed themselves to the elimination of price distortions unfavourable to the agricultural sector. They also reduced public expenditure, including that on education. However, this cocktail of measures, designed to be a life-saving medicine, has become something of a bitter pill for the peoples of Africa; the more so as many years of continued sacrifice have not born fruits in term of increased consumer purchasing power. These economic and budgetary constraints have prevented societies and governments from investing as much as would have been desirable in education. African countries have fallen into a vicious circle, as investment in education, which had represented on occasion as much as 30 per cent of total government expenditures, is generally expected to contribute toward long-term development.

By the 1990s sub-Saharan Africa became among the poorest in the world in terms of GNP per capita. In 1997 the bottom quartile had a per capita GNP ranging from US$ 90 to 240 per year, among which are Mozambique (US$90), DRC, Ethiopia, Somalia and Burundi (US$110). The top quartile had a per capita in the range of US$ 650 to 4230. The top four were Gabon (4230), Mauritius (3800), South Africa (3400) and Botswana (3260).

While other parts of the world such as Asia have successfully shifted from primary industries toward manufacturing and knowledge-based industries, exporting raw commodities is still the mainstay of most African economies. Raw commodities constitute the lowest stage of transformation into products sold on the market and, hence have the lowest profit margin. African economies are thus highly vulnerable to the vagaries of weather and the boom-or-bust business cycle on the international commodities market.

As shown in the time-series trend curves, the real GDP in US$ at 1987 constant prices[13] (that is, adjusted for inflation) in Sub-Saharan Africa had been growing steadily at an

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[13]   Data from World Bank, 1999, country series, national accounts, Table 2.1

FIGURE 3: REAL GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT, AT 1987 CONSTANT PRICE
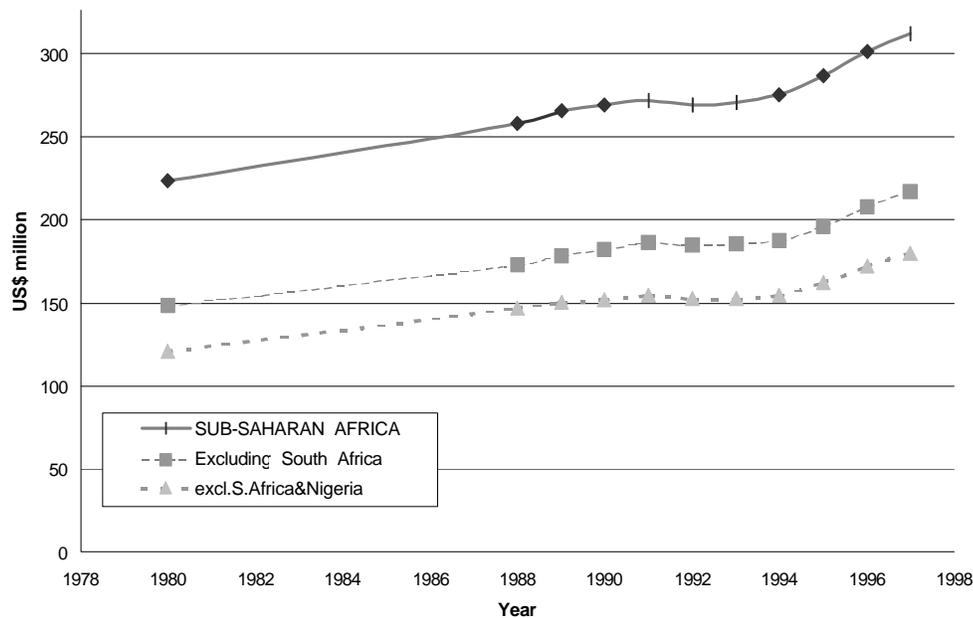
average rate of 2.2 per cent from 1975 to 1984, picking up during the latter half of the 1980s to 2.6 per cent and, excluding South Africa, 3.1 per cent and, thereafter dropping down to 1.9 per cent in the 1990s. However, looking at the curves, it can be seen that the low figure is due to stagnation in the first half of the 1990s. After this period, the higher growth rates were attained. The generally positive trend is broken in 1991, until 1994, by events in South Africa and Nigeria; thereafter the curve shows generally a vigorous upward trend.

For the third year in a row since then, the average sub-Saharan African country experienced positive per capita economic growth. This is reinforced by the 1998 results. While the region's gross domestic product (GDP) grew at 3.8 per cent, the GDP of the average African country grew by 4.6 per cent, slightly lower than in 1996 (at 4.8 per cent). Some thirty-seven countries registered positive per capita GDP growth in 1997 and twenty-one of them grew at 5 per cent and more. Exports expanded roughly twice as fast as GDP in recent years and lower fiscal deficits and inflation also boosted growth. This, combined with improved economic policies and increased political openness, has created greater opportunities for development. As Africa's leaders address the different development needs of their countries and strive for what some are calling an African Renaissance, the world's financial institutions need to find new ways to respond to these opportunities and to meet the changing needs of Africa.

The figures for the 1997 growth rate for nations and the sub regions show that economic growth has taken two opposite directions. Some countries in West Africa and the Sahel and some East African countries had reversed the downward trend and are now growing at rates over 3 per cent. However, the countries in Central and Southern Africa, namely Rwanda, Burundi, DRC, Namibia, Angola and South Africa, had negative growth rates in 1997. On the eve of the 21st Century, there is generally a cautious optimism in those countries in which some political order has been restored.

3.3 Armed conflicts and poverty

Large-scale demographic changes and migration have occurred over much of Africa in this decade, arising from droughts and environmental destruction on the one hand and war and conflict on the other, causing millions to be displaced, to become refugees or to seek a better life in the cities and towns. As of January 1999, there were 21.1 million refugees and displaced persons in the world. The escalation of wars and internal conflicts during this past decade has engulfed one third of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa in armed civil or cross border conflicts. This situation has resulted in Africa being responsible for almost a third of the world's refugees, estimated at 6.5 million. The figure includes 3.3 million refugees, 2.1 million internally displaced people and 1.1 million former refugees who have recently returned home.[14]

One of the direct consequences of long, armed conflict is the disruption of all normal social and economic activity. In terms of the number of hungry and undernourished people, the most dismal place, according to a recent report on "The state of food insecurity in the world", is sub-Saharan Africa,[15] where one-third of the population is undernourished. Nearly half of the population in Central, southern and East Africa are hungry. The worst cases are found in countries that have experienced long wars. Vast numbers of people are displaced, productive activities cease and healthcare and education are abandoned. Children are stunted, underweight and wasted and suffer the most. In Somalia, almost three-quarters were undernourished and hungry; and over half in Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Mozambique. That this can be prevented in sub-Saharan Africa is demonstrated by the progress in West Africa, where the proportion of undernourished children in Ghana, for example, decreased in 20 years from two-thirds to one-tenth.

The Human Development Index,[16] based on longevity, education attainment and standard of living, gives a summary view of the variation in the human conditions across the world's regions. According to this index the bottom ten countries are all in sub-Saharan Africa. Among them are Niger and Sierra Leone, which possess valuable mineral resources, but most of the others are poor in natural resources. What most countries at the bottom of HDI have in common during this decade are the experience of war, civil strife, hunger and poverty. Also in Africa are a significant number of countries in the medium level, including Botswana, Cape Verde, Gabon, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, São Tomé, South Africa, Seychelles, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. What these medium HDI countries have in common are relatively long periods of peace and prosperity.

The impact of armed conflicts on children is so enormous and so generalized that it is almost impossible to measure it fully. It is estimated that in the whole world, in one decade, two million children died, six million were seriously wounded, one million were orphaned or separated from their families and twelve million lost their homes. About half the victims were counted in Sub-Saharan Africa. Beyond these visible effects (mutilation, loss of family and home), it is impossible to know how many children have been mentally affected and emotionally traumatized by the violence they have experienced and, in some cases, in which they have been forced to participate; by the ripping apart of their social environment or by the attacks of which they themselves were more and more frequently the target. The

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14   "Africa Fact on File", UNHCR, January 1999

15   The state of food insecurity in the world, FAO, October 1999

16   Human Development 1999, UNDP, New York

destructive fury of these conflicts has not spared teachers enlisted or killed, nor the infrastructure and equipment requisitioned, mined or simply destroyed. In many countries, years of effort have been destroyed in a very short time in many countries disturbed by civil wars.

In armed conflicts education can both heal and rehabilitate. Keeping schools open or reopening them as soon as possible gives to the children a structure and a feeling of some normality in the midst of chaos. With this conviction teachers and other professionals have tried in some countries in conflict to deal with the psychosocial and emotional effects of violence on the children and they have passed on to their pupils techniques for safety and survival, while at the same time monitoring violations of human rights.

To attempt to restore and protect the rights of children to education in emergency situations, UNESCO and UNICEF have put together the Edukit, a "teaching box" containing educational and teaching materials that can quickly be sent to sensitive areas. In these the children find pencils, paper, chalk, erasers and exercise books and the teachers get curriculum guides, teaching material and textbooks. Devastated communities can immediately begin to rebuild. Used for the first time in Rwanda and Somalia, these teaching boxes have subsequently been sent to Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia, where teaching materials are acutely needed.

These programmes help to make schools places where peace is learned and practised. The children learn problem solving; they are taught negotiating and communication skills as well as the respect due to others and to themselves; they come to understand that peace is their right. The aim is to reconcile divided communities and to prevent as much as possible any future conflicts. Among the successes can be counted the reduction of psychosocial tensions, improvement in the classroom atmosphere and the strengthening of positive attitudes towards school, parents and life in general. Originally designed as a means to help children in Somalia and Rwanda pursue basic education, it is hoped to extend this type of training to the teachers and pupils of the eight years of primary education and to adolescents through youth groups.

3.4 The AIDS pandemic

The battle against the AIDS pandemic has just ended its second decade and the situation remains disturbing. AIDS is no longer simply a public health problem. In many Sub-Saharan African countries it constitutes a rapidly growing obstacle to development. In these countries AIDS has become the principal cause of death in children, above that of measles and malaria, and the mortality rate of children under five years, which it had taken so much effort to reduce, is beginning to rise again. The World Health Organization estimates that in sub-Saharan Africa the HIV virus infects approximately one adult in 40 and that in some towns the proportion is one in three. Most of the victims are women, who are becoming infected at a rapid and increasing rate, and children.

HIV/AIDS has a devastating effect on children in sub-Saharan Africa, where more than 90 per cent of AIDS orphans live – children one or both of whose parents have died of AIDS. For many, their chances of ever completing their primary education are slim. Those spared by the disease are still at risk as their parents and schools are ill equipped to take care of them or to advise them. The WHO estimates that at the end of this century, Africa will have about ten million children living on their own – orphans, abandoned children or runaways, all vulnerable to HIV.

FIGURE 4: AIDS ORPHANS IN 8 AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN MILLIONS[17]
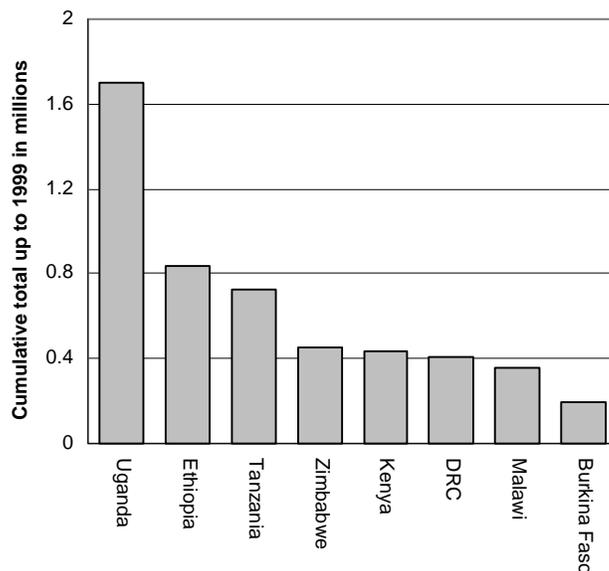
Despite lack of resources some countries with a high prevalence of the disease, such as Malawi and Uganda, have adopted a free education policy that offers the orphans a vital support. Malawi has also drawn up a national policy for orphans and is moving in the direction of a community care approach: South Africa is currently trying out similar policies. The situation within the education sector calls for immediate action as the growing number of the sick and the dead due to HIV/AIDS is also rapidly decreasing the number of active teaching and administrative staff. Actual teaching hours and days in operation are decreasing accordingly. To reduce these losses of personnel, teacher training and recruitment must be accelerated. Systems must be developed for keeping the increasing number of orphans in school and solutions found for their long-term care and development.

Life skills and HIV/AIDS education need to be strengthened or introduced in all education programmes. Working partnerships need to be forged with the mass media, religious organizations, civil society and communities, to build consensus on implementing an HIV/AIDS curriculum and develop effective and viable strategies to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In collaboration with other ministries and stakeholders, the education sector needs to take a leading role in AIDS campaigns and urge men, including those in the teaching profession, to respect women's dignity and their right to protect themselves.

3.5   New forms of partnership

The commitment to partnership declared at the World Conference in Jomtien as one of the major strategies for the realization of Education for All constituted an important contribution to the development of education in sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, with regard to the volume of funds invested, the range of fields covered and international and national mobilization of assistance, Africa's development partners made a great contribution to

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[17]   Source: Report on the world epidemic of HIV/AIDS, June 1998. UNAIDS and WHO, Geneva, 1998

FIGURE 5: GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF DEATHS ATTRIBUTABLE TO HIV/AIDS[18]
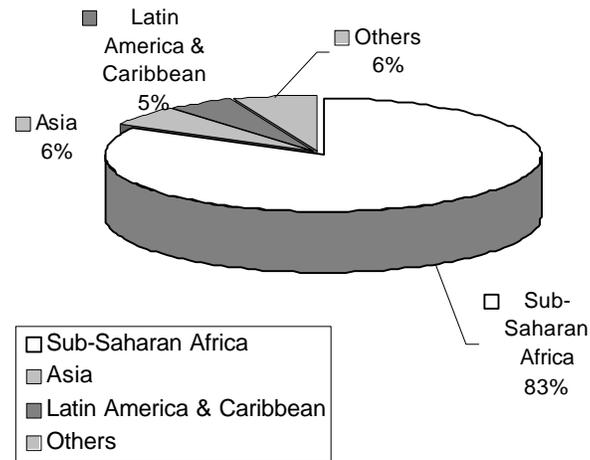
the progress achieved over the decade. The following participants in this partnership should be mentioned:

- donors of bilateral and multilateral funds
- civil society through non-governmental organizations, associations and foundations
- local communities and groups
- organized communities
- households
- teachers' unions

Various measures taken by governments to create a partnership with civil society include:

- embracing the representation of civil society organizations on government organs for basic education
- consultation and dialogue with these organizations for an improved donor coordination
- taking measures for building capacity of the education institution
- the participation of civil society in policy formulation and drawing up an action plan for Education for All

Besides playing a role in implementing the action plans resulting from the World Conference, non-governmental organizations and other organizations in civil society have also actively participated in most of the countries in the evaluation of the progress made within the framework of Education for All. Alongside the partnerships developed within countries, there are also initiatives involving many African countries in research, statistics and exchange between African countries:

- the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), of which the most widespread and active is the NESIS of its Working Group on Education Statistics

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[18]   Source: Report on the world epidemic of HIV/AIDS, June 1998, UNAIDS and WHO, Geneva 1998

- the Education Research Network for West and Central Africa (ROCARE),
- the Education Research Network for East and Southern Africa (ERNESA),
- the Southern African Consortium for Monitoring of Educational Quality (SACMEQ)
- the Programme for the Analysis of CONFEMEN Countries' Educational Systems (PASEC) for the evaluation of school productivity and
- Monitoring Learning Achievements (MLA).

The partnerships need to be consolidated by acknowledging a larger role for the civil society organizations alongside governments in the planning, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the policies and programmes of basic education. This demands a climate of confidence, on the one hand between governments and civil society and on the other hand between the various organizations within civil society itself. Where alliances and networks of organizations are working in the same field, a fair proportion of the obstacles such as working at cross-purposes and duplications have been surmounted and progress has been greater.

Governments have the principal responsibility for ensuring the adequate financing of basic education. Included in this responsibility is the leadership that government provides in facilitating partnership at all levels with civil society, agencies, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, religious groups, communities, parent-teachers associations, teachers' trade unions and families. The role of the government is changing from that of the provider to that of the facilitator or creator of the enabling environment. Partnerships need to involve more than just cost-sharing and governments have to accept that responsibility, decision-making and power must also be shared with civil organizations. Finally, the development of regional and sub regional cooperation, which has greatly contributed to the process of analysis and to the strengthening of institutions in the countries concerned, may be a determining factor of success or failure of education in the new millennium.

4   PROGRESS MADE IN BASIC EDUCATION SINCE 1990

4.1   Early Childhood Education and Care

4.1.1 Description

Jomtien Declaration

TRADITIONALLY MOTHERS, GRANDMOTHERS and other family members have been primarily responsible for the caring and education of young children. The involvement of governments has mainly been limited to the provision of mother and child health care.

The Jomtien Conference (1990) has contributed to putting Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) on the agenda of ministries of education, by recognizing that:

- learning begins at birth
- investments in ECEC contribute to survival, growth, development and creating a culture of lifelong learning among children.

By signing the Jomtien Declaration countries have committed themselves to including early childhood education in their national education policy, thus moving early childhood care outside the informal, family context.

Since Jomtien, Early Childhood Education and Care has become a fundamental part of basic education, aimed at providing the full range of purposeful and organized activities intended to cater for the healthy growth and developmental needs of children from birth to eight years of age. This includes activities provided under the supervision of several areas of state responsibility, such as education, health, nutrition and social welfare.[19]

The target specifically includes family and community ECCD interventions, especially for poor, disadvantaged and disabled children as an important tool to overcome any disparities.

National goals, targets and policies

Following the Jomtien Conference many countries experienced a shift in the provision of ECCD from being primarily associated with day care to institution-based programmes that aim to prepare children for primary schooling. This shift can be illustrated by relocating responsibility for young children from the Ministry of Social Welfare to the Ministry of Education (as Zimbabwe has done) as well as the attempts of governments to get more control by engaging in teacher training, curriculum development and registration through legislation.

When defining their strategies and formulating specific targets, countries have accepted different definitions of the age-groups they intend to include in their own classification of early childhood education and care provision. Most countries focus on the pre-primary school age group, that is, four to six or four to seven year-olds, depending on the official primary school age. Some countries, like Kenya, have divided up the period into the early years (zero to four) and the pre-school years (five to six) and tried to rationalize the kind of provision suitable for each group. Others, such as Seychelles, have taken the whole period

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[19]   *Education for All: The Year 2000 Assessment*, Technical Guidelines, 8

from zero to eight years to be the responsibility of the State. South Africa has even gone as far as targeting children up to the age of nine as part of early childhood education and care provisions, while every primary school is required to have a reception class, making schooling for five year-olds compulsory.

Beside the matter of political will, however, countries indicated that governments in general have neither the financial nor administrative capacity to engage in early childhood education in the same way that they are involved in the provision of universal primary education. Some, like Mozambique, emerging from very difficult circumstances, frankly admit that they will not have the capacity to tackle the problem of early childhood education for some time. Others note a gap between policy proposals and their implementation. As Botswana puts it, "Government undertook to provide an enabling environment for those who will be providing education at pre-primary phase, being local authorities, churches, NGOs and the private sector."[20]

Providers, financing and investments

In many countries the responsibility for the provision of early childhood education and care is divided among different ministries. In most countries, ministries of education are responsible for pre-primary education (children aged five to six years), while ministries or departments of social welfare, women's affairs, health or home affairs, are responsible for day-care centres serving children aged two to four or the needs of young children generally.

Religious, non-governmental and community organizations and external donors often supplement governments' efforts. In countries with a strong Islamic presence, Koranic schools or *madrassas* have supplemented state provision up to primary school. In other countries Christian organizations and missions have taken on some responsibility. International non-governmental or donor agencies reported to be active in the area of ECCD are the Red Cross, Save the Children Fund; the Bernard van Leer foundation, the Aga Khan Foundation and UNICEF.

To link, coordinate and enhance partnerships between the different ministries and other partners involved in the area of early childhood education, some countries such as South Africa, have established inter-departmental committees or national networks to deal with early childhood development. Mauritius and Seychelles, two countries that have reached almost universal access to pre-school education, attribute their achievement to a combination of political support, government control, peer pressure and demand.

However, in most countries the provision of ECEC is beyond the control of government. The costs of ECEC are primarily being carried by individual households, the private sector and non-governmental organizations with the government contribution limited to paying fees to ECEC teachers and, in some cases, providing teaching guides. Communities are often expected to build their own centres and provide staff and learning materials while the government can only marginally supplement their efforts. As a consequence, the provision of ECEC remains often limited primarily to those who can afford it.

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[20]   Botswana, EFA 2000 Assessment, 1999, 13

**FIGURE 6: GROSS ENROLMENT RATE IN THE PRE-SCHOOL SECTOR IN SOME
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES (LATEST YEAR AVAILABLE)**
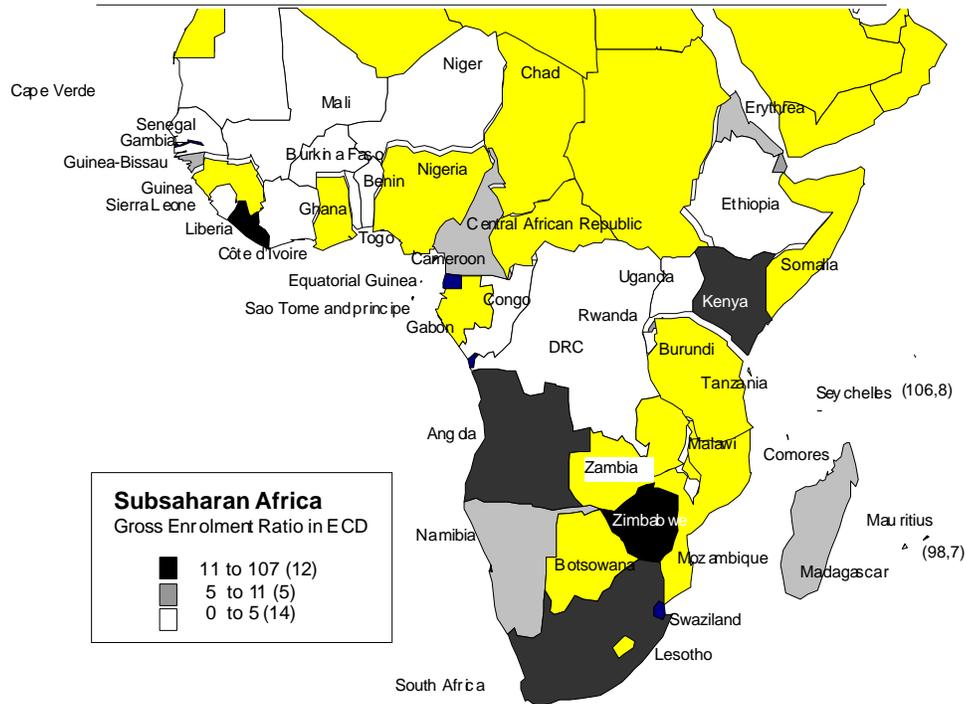
4.1.2 Statistical indicators of performance

Limitations of the data

Generally speaking, reports on participation in Early Childhood Education and Care provision, primarily concern access to the institutionalized pre-school education offered to four to six year-olds. Such reporting lacks information on the zero to three year-old and does not take into consideration any other form of informal or non-formal child-care provision. Countries indicate that data was either generally unavailable or available in non-ministry sources, in which case they found them difficult to obtain. Furthermore, in many countries it was not until 1996 that data on early childhood education and care started to be collected and disaggregated by ministries of education to capture the ministry's involvement in this area. As a consequence it is difficult to discuss trends, suggest causes for differences in regional experience and isolate the experiences and experiments that others could emulate.

At the end of the decade the number of children reported to participate in an institutionalized form of ECEC varies greatly between countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Only two countries have achieved universal access at this level of education: Seychelles and Mauritius. Some countries report levels between 60 per cent and 35 per cent, such as the Cape Verde Islands (60 per cent), Liberia (56 per cent), Angola (43.4 per cent), Equatorial Guinea (43.5 per cent), Zimbabwe (35 per cent) and South Africa (34.9 per cent), while gross enrolment in the majority of countries does not reach 10 per cent.

Disparities

Generally, the limited access to pre-schooling in many countries has increased disparities in terms of access between rich and poor; urban and rural areas; children with special needs and, to a lesser extent, girls and boys. Urban and rural disparities in access to early childhood

care are much greater than differences between boys' and girls' access to school. Pre-schools seem to serve primarily the urban population, but there are exceptions where rural communities have become active in the provision of ECEC. Often ECEC facilities in urban areas are private and therefore quite expensive, compared with some rural areas where costs have been kept to a minimum and participation to a maximum through the active involvement of non-governmental organizations.

The disparities between girls and boys seem to be negligible with regard to early childhood, with the exception of a few countries. This can be explained by several factors:

• organized early childhood education is mainly located in the urban environment, where gender disparities are generally lower than in other environment;
• in the urban areas, literacy rate amongst parents is higher than elsewhere;
• schooling is culturally accepted

Because of the diversity of ECEC provision and lack of control, the quality of the services differs greatly and contributes to enhancing disparities even when access is provided.

Curriculum

The curricula offered in various countries are diverse and often reflect the reason for which an establishment was originally set up. For example, day-care centres designed as places for the supervision of children of working mothers, make their basic task to keep their charges in good health and do not demand any professional educational standards On the other hand, in certain infant establishments, the desire to promote the intellectual, social, physiological and emotional development of the children is the chief guiding principle.

More and more, however, governments have taken on the responsibility of unifying the different services by developing a national curriculum that focuses on the overall development of a child: social, psychological, psychomotor and cognitive. The ECEC curriculum aims to introduce creative play, social interaction, "school readiness" play and stimulating activities such as story telling, songs and access to picture books.

Teacher development and support

To ensure the effective implementation of well-designed curricula, many ministries of education have furthermore taken on the responsibility to train ECEC teachers and caregivers. Kenya, for example, has increased its number of trained pre-school teachers to over 16,000 out of a total of nearly 38,000 while in 1990 there were only 6000 trained pre-school teachers. Nigeria indicated it has trained a wide range of personnel including over 6000 caregivers.

At the same time, because of lack of control and resources, beside qualified staff, surveys have shown the existence almost everywhere of unqualified staff such as grandmothers and childminders.

Another limiting factor is the lack of teaching and learning materials that affect the implementation of a well-designed curriculum. Many countries, including Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, Mali, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Cameroon, Niger, Chad and Guinea, are using local materials to overcome this problem.

4.1.3 Concluding remarks

Integrated approach

The major gain of the last decade regarding ECEC relates to the official recognition of the importance of the early years. However, limited resources have hindered ministries from engaging in this area as much as they would like. While recognizing this limitation, very little discussion has appeared in the national reports regarding alternative approaches to childhood education and care.

Examples of such alternative approaches include initiatives that successfully build on existing local communities and traditional frameworks, as currently being adopted, primarily as pilot projects, in countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar, Gambia, Ivory Coast, Senegal and Gabon. These deserve better integration into existing frameworks, such as:

- in the educational sector: day-care centres, nursery schools, crèches
- in the social sector: village day-care centres, social centres, orphanages, Koranic schools (*madrassas)*
- in the health sector: health check-ups via vaccination and health education programmes
- in the recreation sector: playgrounds
- the children's rights sector: rehabilitation and integration of handicapped children

Capacity building

Countries identified their limited capacity to monitor and assess of what takes place as a major drawback in their attempts to improve ECEC. To include ECEC in the Education Management Information Systems was seen as a major step in the right direction in order to provide a tool for future decision-making.

Partnerships

In view of the above, countries could benefit from the current involvement of many different partners to support an integrated system that allows each partner to contribute their particular strengths. Government's main responsibility should be to safeguard equal access and quality.

4.2 Primary Education

4.2.1 Description of the primary school sub sector

Aims and objectives

The expanded vision of Education for All identifies primary schooling as "the main delivery for the basic education of children outside the family". Within this context, the World Declaration on Education for All stresses the importance of universal access and equity and learning acquisition and outcome. The Declaration furthermore states the need for supplementary and alternative programmes to meet the basic learning needs of children with limited or no access to formal schooling or with special needs.

Following the Jomtien Conference in 1990, African Ministers of Education met in Dakar in 1991 (MINEDAF VI) to formulate goals and strategies to meet universal primary education.

They divided the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa into three groups:

- Group A: countries having net enrolment ratios of less than 50 per cent
- Group B: countries having net enrolment ratios between 50 per cent and 70 per cent
- Group C: countries having net enrolment ratios of more than 70 per cent

For the decade 1990–2000 the Conference of Ministers fixed enrolment targets as follows:

- countries having net enrolment ratios of less than 40 per cent should double them
- countries having net enrolment ratios of between 40 per cent and 49 per cent should aim for 75 per cent
- countries having net enrolment ratios of between 50 per cent and 70 per cent should aim for 80 per cent
- and lastly, the other countries should aim for universal enrolment.

National policies and strategies

The expansion of access to primary education has been the major concern of every country during much of the post-independence period. This has been justified largely by economic reasons, to broaden the skilled human resource base for increasing productivity and improving the welfare of the population. Following the expansion of primary school education in the 1970s and the economic recession in the 1980s, accompanied by rapid population growth, urbanization and increasing disparities, the elimination of disparities and the reduction of poverty have become additional justifications in the 1990s for further expansion of primary school education as a right for all children.

Considering the importance given to primary education, its provision has been primarily the responsibility of ministries of education. To support the notion of universal access to primary education as a crucial condition for socio-economic development of a country, many countries have made primary education free and compulsory. However, although primary education in most countries is free in terms of tuition fees, communities and individuals are expected to contribute towards items such as compulsory school uniforms, textbooks, parent-teacher associations and, in some cases, even school buildings. Governments do not have the capacity to monitor school attendance rates and lack regulations to follow-through any form of absenteeism or non-attendance.

Individual countries in the region demonstrate differences regarding the length and minimum entrance age of their primary education system. Twenty-six countries reported they had a system of six-years' primary education. Fifteen others have more than six years of primary schooling. Finally, six countries reported having a primary cycle of less than six years.[21] It should be noted, however, that in many cases the number of years of compulsory basic education often exceed the number of years of primary education. A number of countries include the first three years of secondary schooling in their basic education, while others, such as Mozambique, have a first primary cycle of five years (lower primary) and a second cycle of two years (upper primary). The age of admission into primary education also varies from country to country. Twenty-six countries admit children at the age of six, 19 countries from seven years of age and the remaining two countries admit children at the age of five.[22]

These differences between countries in both length and entrance age has a bearing on comparing them when analysing the data, particularly when determining the net enrolment and apparent intake (see par. 3.2.4).

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[21] Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbook

[22] Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbook

4.2.2 *Educational expenditure*

The amount of money African countries devote to education illustrates their commitment to the development of education and explains in part the progress that has been made in this sector since 1990. At the same time, however, due to declining economies in real terms, many countries see a decrease in government's financial contribution and have allowed or encouraged other partners (churches, mosques, communities, donors or non-governmental organizations) to make contributions under their supervision and control.

As only about half of the countries in both Africa and elsewhere provided data on public expenditure on education in their EFA 2000 Assessment reports, the figures provided here are estimates. There are also problems of comparisons due to differences in the structures of both education systems (for example, the. duration of each level) and financing (from both central and local government, private sources, churches, and so on.)

Public educational expenditure

In 1980, Sub-Saharan Africa devoted approximately USD 15.8 billion of public funds to education. This decreased to 11.3 billion in 1985 and 14.8 billion in 1990. By 1995 it increased to 18.8 billion.[23] This apparent increase hides a drop in real educational expenditure, given that, in most African countries, teachers' salaries (which constitute approximately 90 per cent of the operating expenses in primary schools, 70 per cent in secondary schools and 50 per cent in tertiary education) have not increased as quickly as prices in general, as measured by the GDP deflator. Although there is no data available for later years, it is likely that expenditure has maintained its growth despite the economic crisis.

The figures, which are dependent on official exchange rates, may lead to an erroneous picture of the amounts spent over a certain period and misleading comparisons of expenditure between regions and countries. As an indicator of national effort, public expenditure relative to national revenue (GNP) is more relevant in policy analysis. The total public expenditure on education in Sub-Saharan Africa amounted to 5.6 per cent of the GNP in 1995, slightly higher than in 1980 (5.1 per cent) and a greater part of its total revenue than any other region, except North America and Europe.[24]

Relative to the GNP per capita, public expenditure per pupil on pre-primary and primary education in Sub-Saharan Africa has been high (16.4 per cent in 1985 and 17.0 per cent in 1995), compared with, for example, 9.1 per cent in 1995 in Latin America and 10.2 per cent in 1995 in southern Asia.[25]

However, if we focus on primary education alone, the median public expenditures as a percentage of GNP between the years 1990 to 1998, remained stagnant at 1.7 per cent in West and Central Africa region and increased only slightly in the East and Southern Africa

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[23]   1998 World Education Report 1998, UNESCO, Table 12: Estimated public
      expenditure on education, 1980–95

[24]   Ibid.

[25]   1998 World Education Report 1998, UNESCO, Table 13: "Estimated public
      expenditure per pupil, by level of education, 1985 and 1995"

region from 1.2 per cent to 1.5 per cent.[26] The minimum reported was 0.5 per cent by Chad in 1990 and the maximum was 4.5 per cent by Côte d'Ivoire in 1998.[27]

As most of the expenditure goes to paying teachers' salaries, there is little left for quality investment, such as improvements in the production and distribution of textbooks and in-service staff training. Furthermore, it should be noted that national budgets do not give the whole picture. Countries that have devolved responsibility for primary education on to provincial and local authorities, as in the case of South Africa, Ethiopia and Nigeria, often have no clear picture on public expenditure.

Private educational expenditure

In almost every country there is more information available on public educational expenditure than on private funding. Although in most countries there is no information available on the total amount of private expenditure, there is no doubt that families and non-governmental organizations are assuming a large and growing share of the financial burden of education in many parts of Africa. Such private expenditure is estimated at about 23 per cent of the national educational expenditure between 1990 and 1997 in Tanzania, 31 per cent in Zimbabwe, 48 per cent in Sierra Leone and 53 per cent in Ghana.

In some African countries in the past a great part of European style education was provided – and in a large part, financed – by missionary organizations that often gave a large role to local initiatives. In the period following independence the state took on responsibility for this kind of education in almost all African countries. Taxes levied on education, where they existed, were often reduced or completely cancelled. But, for some time now, as a result of budgetary pressures and demographic increases, African leaders have come to tolerate their reintroduction. By way of participation, pupils, their families and communities are asked to assume an ever-increasing share of the costs of education. Often, to avoid giving the impression of levying a tax, other terms, such as contributions to a school development fund, or payments for services rendered, are used. To the education tax are added quite high costs, which, as they do not pass through the state coffers, are difficult to calculate. These includes most of the costs of education levied by private educational establishments; the cost of transport, uniforms, textbooks and stationery and, a contribution that is particularly important at primary level, the expenditure of families and groups – in cash and kind – for the construction or repair of public school buildings. The time pupils spend on their education (constituting opportunity costs for both parents and pupil) obviously also constitutes an important contribution to the educational system, but this is not taken into account in the estimation of expenditure.

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[26] EFA Forum, UNESCO, 2000, The Statistical Document, Figure 4.1. The source of data is national EFA 2000 Assessment reports, in which only about half of the countries provided data on expenditure. Thegreat contrasts in these figures relative to those reported in the World Education Report are partly due to differences in methods of estimation, the former being median of country aggregates and the latter, weighted aggregations. The median permits small countries to be treated equally as the big ones, while weighted aggregation gives dominance to big countries over the small ones

[27] Ibid.

Foreign aid to African education[28]

Foreign aid also represents an important share of the total of educational expenditure in Africa. During the period 1990–1997 the total of bilateral, multilateral and private aid provided to African education through the intermediary of ministries of education (and not through other government departments nor directly to individuals) rose to about 915 million dollars a year. Bilateral cooperation (particularly with Europe and Japan) resulted in large donations to African countries. As far as multilateral aid is concerned, the World Bank and, to a much lesser extent, the African Development Bank, gave considerable loans of which the greater part (about 97 per cent) may be considered as concessionary aid. These amounts are destined largely for the construction and equipping of classrooms, institution building, teaching materials (school textbooks) and technical assistance.

The total amount of all types of external aid to education and training in Africa at the beginning of the 1990s was in the order of 1.6 billion dollars a year. This is a considerable sum – almost 3 dollars per person – but it does not seem as though foreign aid has increased sufficiently during the last few years to meet the demand arising from the World Conference on Education for All, or to compensate for the reduction of expenditure of certain African governments faced with problems. When analysing the final destination of foreign support during the decade, it is easy to understand why certain areas (such as early development programmes, special education, and quality control) targeted in 1990 have been covered in a very limited way. The full range of objectives, all of which were legitimate within the framework of world action for basic education, will henceforth have to be seen in relation to the limited resources available and the processes of aid mobilization.

4.2.3 Cost reduction and innovative approaches

To overcome donor dependency and to build sustainable systems that include all, governments have engaged in various cost-saving and cost-sharing measures. This includes inviting the private sector, including industry and commerce, to play a part, either directly or through taxation or incentives; the use of mass media and distance education, particularly targeting remote areas; or any alternative form to government provision, such as Koranic schools or community schools, to provide education for those who do not attend formal schooling.

A good example of an alternative delivery method is the programme used to meet the needs of nomadic children by providing education at home, at times convenient to the family, using instructors from within the community.

Other cost-reducing strategies have been: the introduction of double shifts to meet the expanded demand when facilities are limited or to save costs for training, housing and paying teachers, as well as for providing classrooms and textbooks; the introduction of automatic promotion to increase internal efficiency and reduce repetition rates and the introduction of book rental services to increase their durability.

Finally, decentralization has been identified as a major measure towards more effectively using existing limited resources and encouraging community involvement, not only for financial contributions, but much more to engage in the management of schools and the formulation of policy in new ways. Taking control and responsibility for the process is also expected to increase transparency and accountability of the educational system.

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[28] Data source on foreign aid: "World Development Report" World Bank 1990/1991, 1993/1994, 1997/1998

4.2.4 Statistical indicators of performance

Introducing the concepts

The focus on universal primary education implies equity in terms of both access and quality, irrespective of gender, race or any other socio-economic circumstance.

Access is often measured by **apparent intake rate (AIR),** being the number of children entering primary school, regardless of age, as a percentage of the population of the official entry age. The AIR, also referred to as the *Gross Admission Rate*, is used to measure the admittance of children in the education system. The **net intake rate (NIR)** refers to the number of children of the official school-admission age admitted into the first grade of first level education, expressed as a percentage of the population of official admission age. The NIR measures the admittance of children of the right age, that is, of the official entry age. It also shows the proportion of eligible children who were not admitted. The AIR is used in place of the NIR when data on enrolment by age, of new entrants into the first level is not available. The difference between AIR and the NIR gives an indication of the extent of under-aged and, more often, over-aged enrolment at the first grade.

The **gross enrolment ratio** is the total enrolment, irrespective of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible school-age population. The n**et enrolment ratio** is the proportion of the eligible school-age group who are enrolled. The difference is that former includes also those who are not within the eligible age group.

The gross enrolment ratio (GER) shows the general level of participation in and thus the load of primary education. This ratio is particularly relevant when demonstrating the increase in access to primary education, when we are concerned with getting children into school who were not in school before, irrespective their age. After a period of civil conflict or economic hardship, or when a policy of free primary education is initiated, we see a sudden expansion in the number of children enrolled in primary school, such has happened in the case of countries such as Malawi, Uganda and Mozambique.

The net enrolment ratio (NER) measures the proportion of school-age children who are actually enrolled. However, for EFA strategy, it is most useful in calculating the proportion of school-age children that are not in school. If the net enrolment is, for example, 60 per cent, the remaining 40 per cent of the age group who are not enrolled, therefore constitute the group for whom opportunities for learning must be extended if education for all is to be attained.

The survival rate to Grade 5 is the percentage of a cohort of students enrolling in Grade 1 of primary education, who subsequently attain Grade 5. Its purpose is to assess the internal efficiency of an education system and the attainment and retention of literacy, which is normally equated with reaching Grade 5 of primary education. Further, this indicator reveals the magnitude of the dropout rate before Grade 5.

The aggregated data in this section, referring to "Sub-Saharan Africa", "Western and Central Africa" and "southern and eastern Africa", are the official figures presented by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) and the EFA Forum in the EFA Global Synthesis and Statistical Reports. These aggregations were calculated using each respective country's population estimates and enrollment data provided in the framework of EFA 2000 Assessment through the EFA Country Reports. The differences between these data and

FIGURE 7: TRENDS IN APPARENT INTAKE RATE: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

1990, 1995, 1998
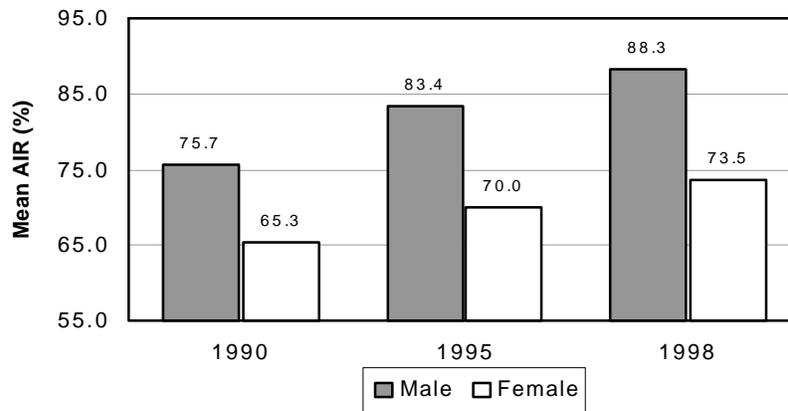
those presented in the UIS Yearbook or the World Education report are mainly due to different sources of demographic data.

Data and information pertaining to individual countries were extracted from the EFA Country Reports and accompanying worksheets submitted to the EFA Regional Technical Advisory Groups in Harare and Dakar.

Access and equity

Apparent Intake Rate (AIR)

Admission into the first grade is the first step into the world of formal education. The apparent intake into the primary school in the Sub-Saharan region increased during the decade, from 70 per cent in 1990 to 81 per cent in 1998. This increase is a great achievement when one considers that it has been attained over and above the highest population growth rate in the world.

Although more girls are entering school today (73.5 per cent) than ten years ago (65.3 per cent), there are many more boys today (88.3 per cent) than before (75.7 per cent). As this increase has been larger for boys (12.6 per cent) than for girls (8.2 per cent), the gender gap in the intake to first grade has widened, from about 10 per cent at the beginning of the decade to 15 per cent in 1998–1999. Unless extra measures are taken to encourage and facilitate the entry of more girls into school, the widening gap at the entry point will have a profound impact not only on the career of these children up to their adulthood but also on the society at large.

There are great differences between the countries and regions in Sub-Saharan Africa. Fewer children in some West, central and East African countries bordering the southern rim of the Sahara than elsewhere are entering schools. Many of the countries that were and still are involved in conflicts during the decade have AIRs that fall below the region's average admission rate. In contrast, adjacent countries hosting displaced people and refugees from neighbouring countries, report an AIR well above 100 per cent, resulting in overcrowding in schools.

Most countries in the Indian Ocean and Southern Africa regions, with relatively stable political and socio-economic environments, high GNP per capita and adult literacy, show high AIRs and small or no differences between the admission of boys and girls. Hence, gender parity has been attained in admission into the first grade in a number of countries in Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean, where the admission of girls may be even higher than that of boys, as in Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique and Zambia. In some countries boys are involved in cattle herding at the expense of attending school. Gender disparity at an early stage in life is more pronounced in West, central and East African countries and those bordering on the Sahara.

Net Intake Rate (NIR)

With regard to children of the official age of admission, usually around six to seven year-olds, many parents are apparently reluctant to send them off to schools that may be far away from home. Only 33.4 per cent were admitted in 1990 and 43 per cent in 1997.[29] The general adoption of EFA principles and goals by the respective countries and a general observance and enforcement of the official admission age have contributed to the increase in NIR. Nevertheless, almost 60 per cent of the eligible children in the reporting countries are still not entering school at the official admission age. Many, however, enter later on when they are little older; and this accounts for the difference between the apparent and the net intake rates.

The gender gap among the 6–7 year-old entrants is much less than among all new entrants. The difference between boys and girls has remained just below 3 per cent in 1990 and 1997. Comparing these figures with those of the apparent intake indicates that the gender imbalance among the first grade entrants is due to the presence of due to the presence of more above-age entrants among boys than among girls.

Most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa[30] have reported a NIR of around 30 per cent or lower. At the other extreme, a few countries have attained above 95 per cent net intake. These countries have apparently put into practice a policy of universal primary education. In approximately half of the countries, more boys than girls of the official admission age are admitted. However, in most countries in Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean there are virtually no gender disparities and, in a number of these countries, more girls than boys of the age of official admission enter primary school.

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)

Counting all pupils in school, including those outside the official school-age range, the gross enrolment ratio indicates an overall load or carrying capacity of the education system. In this regard, there is a slight upward trend, from around 73 per cent in 1990 to 75 per cent in 1998–1999,[31] in participation in primary education in the decade under review. The expansion in primary school enrolment has barely stayed ahead of the population growth. The first half of the decade was stagnant and the gain of 2 per cent was made only in recent years.

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[29] As many countries had not collected until recently data on the age of children, as required for calculation of Net Intake Rate, the aggregate statistics on this indicator is less reliable than those that do not require age data

[30] Only 34 countries had sufficient data for the calculation of this indicator

[31] Source: the aggregated statistics at the regional level have been estimated by the EFA-UIS for the occasion of the Conference on World Education Forum, based on national population estimates, rather than the UN demographic statistics, which is normally used in UN statistics

**FIGURE 8: TRENDS IN NET INTAKE RATE: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
(1990, 1994 AND 1997)**

The recent gain can be attributed to cessation of hostilities and conflict, the easing up of economic hardships and the implementation of new policies and reforms by some countries during the decade. At the same time, conflicts and economic hardships during the past decade have had a serious impact on the education systems in the region. In a number of countries, more than 40 per cent of their children are not part of their respective school systems. Despite such adversity, some countries have made considerable gains in their quest for universal primary education and made commendable progress since emerging from destructive internal conflicts earlier in the decade.

Gender disparities remained high (about 16 per cent) and constant throughout the decade, indicating that policies to promote girls' education did not have an impact on the overall figures. As noted earlier the bottleneck at the entry point, admission into the first grade of primary school, portends the possibility of increased gender disparity in the years to come, unless urgent measures are taken to accelerate girls' enrolment.

Regional comparisons suggest that the gross enrolment ratio in West and Central Africa is somewhat lower (71 per cent) than in eastern and Southern Africa (79 per cent). Despite the fact that in a number of countries in the West and Central African region a large proportion of children are out of school, many of these countries recorded important gains in GER during the decade. The eastern and Southern African region has generally attained a wide coverage of the population in their primary education systems.

Taken as a whole, the development in the Sub-Saharan Africa appears as slow and uneventful. This image is misleading, for it is a case of many changes in opposite directions, positive and negative trends, that cancel each other out when lumped together. Different enrolment patterns can be identified among the countries:

- **Stabilizing**: countries that have stabilized their high enrolment rates, (examples: Botswana, Cape Verde, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, São Tomé, Seychelles, Swaziland, Togo, Zimbabwe)

FIGURE 9: TRENDS IN GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

(1990, 1995, 1998/99)
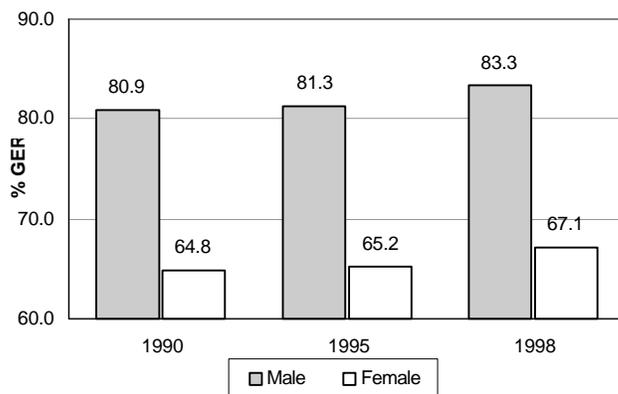
- **Rising**: countries which have started with low enrolment figures that have significantly improved over the decade, (examples: Benin, Chad, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Rwanda, Uganda, Zanzibar)
- **Dropping**: countries that started with relatively high enrolment figures which have decreased considerably over the decade, (examples: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, DRC)
- **Stagnating**: countries that have, in spite of an increase in some cases, remained with low enrolment figures, (examples: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Niger, Sierra Leone)

There are different factors that explain the above-described patterns. The decline in or stagnation of low enrolment figures is often ascribed to declining economic situations or political unrest, while increasing enrolment figures often relate to an ending of strife or introducing new EFA-oriented policies. Government policy can also have an immediate effect. For example, when free primary education was introduced in 1994 in Malawi, the gross enrolment rate doubled from 64 per cent in 1990 to 126 per cent in 1998. A similar pattern can be seen in Uganda: when primary education was made free for four children per family in 1997, enrolment doubled from 2.6 million to 5.2 million.

Gender Parity and disparities: Gross Enrolment Ratio

Gender disparities earlier noted with regard to admission to the first grade are carried over to the enrolment rate. Hence the same pattern can be observed in the gross enrolment. Here, however, we shall examine the other side of the coin, gender parity, which is measured as the size of the girls' enrolment relative to that of boys. Thus, in principle, the gender parity index can be high, as for example in Sierra Leone (81), even where enrolment is low, if the enrolment rates of girls (42 per cent) and boys (52 per cent) are equally low. Parity can be high also because the enrolment rates of both girls (106 per cent) and boys (105 per cent) are equally high, as in Mauritius (101). A low value on the parity index, however, is a clear indication of the lower level of girls' enrolment than that of boys.

Before we examine in more detail the current situation at the country level, it is worth noting that Sub-Saharan Africa had attained some progress toward gender parity in primary school enrolment in the 1980s as part of the rapid expansion of basic education. However, it has

FIGURE 10: GENDER PARITY IN PRIMARY SCHOOL GER 1998/99
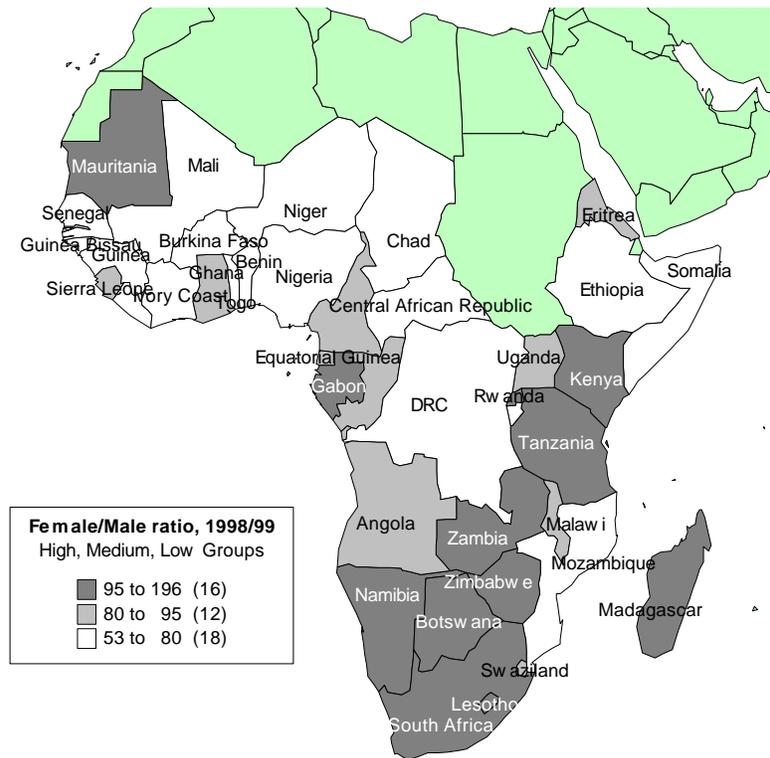
since then stagnated and Sub-Saharan Africa at the turn of the century has the lowest gender parity among all world regions, having been surpassed by Arab States in the early 1990s and currently by South Asia and, both of which started at a much lower level. According to recent projections[32] not much more progress in gender parity in Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole is expected in the next decade, while all other regions are expected to rapidly progress toward gender balance.

There is a clear pattern in the variation across Sub-Saharan Africa. In Southern Africa, the Indian Ocean and along the eastern coast south of the Horn of Africa, the position of girls relative to boys is very favourable. One big exception in this region is Mozambique, which has, however, been making rapid progress since peace has been restored. Economic factors and adult literacy are also generally more favourable in this region than in other parts of Africa. In some countries, there are even gender disparities in the opposite direction: with more girls than boys enrolled in primary schools. This is most notable in areas dominated by mining industry, which mainly attracts male labourers.

With only a few positive exceptions, such as Senegal, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Cameroon, Eritrea and the most outstanding being Gabon, practically all countries across the continent from West Africa to the Horn of Africa belong in the bottom category in terms of gender parity in primary school education. Poverty and adult illiteracy are more prevalent in the region bordering on the Sahara, the conflict-ridden Central Africa and the Horn of

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[32]   UNESCO, 2000, World Education Report, Paris

FIGURE 11: TRENDS IN NET ENROLMENT RATIO:

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (1990, 1995 AND 1998)
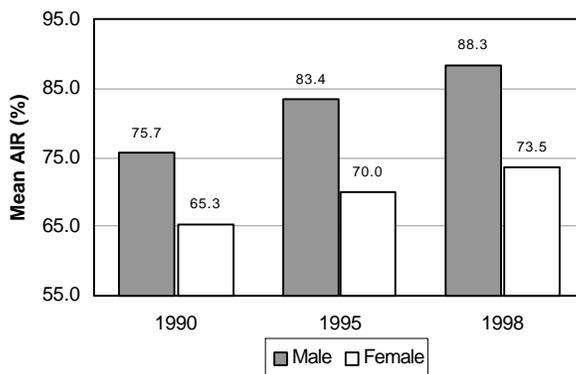
Africa. A harsh and ungenerous nature, poverty and human-made conflicts and misery make life very difficult for all, but especially for young girls.

In addition to factors already mentioned, a common theme running through a number of in-depth studies[33] is the adverse effects of culture in shaping and determining gender equality. This affects not only the immediate environment of the learners in teacher-pupil and adult-child interactions, but also that of decision-making pertaining to policy, legislation, budget allocation and so on, in which male-dominated hierarchies in these societies and in development agencies rarely consider gender disparity as an urgent matter.[34]

The Net Enrolment Ratio (NER)

The decade witnessed a steady increase in the participation of the eligible school-age population in the primary education system, although around 40 per cent of the official school-age population is still out of school. In 1990 the difference in the net enrolment between boys and girls was about 10 per cent. Since 1990 net enrolment has increased more rapidly for boys than for girls and in recent years the gap between boys and girls is around 13.5 per cent.

There are considerable disparities between countries, with the NER ranging from around 30 per cent to 100 per cent. A number of countries in the Indian Ocean and Southern Africa report high participation of the school age population, implying the near-attainment or attainment of universal primary education. Most of these countries fall into the category of politically and economically stable nations on the continent. At the other end of the picture are war-ravaged countries and struggling economies, where lack of adequate resources, materials and infrastructure contribute to the fact that around 60–70 per cent of the children of official school age are not enrolled in primary education.

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[33] See the special issue on girls education in I*nternational Journal of Educational Development* 20 (2000), especially the article, Christopher Colclough, Pauline Rose Marcy Tembon, "Gender inequalities in primary school: the roles of povery and adverse cultural practice", 5–57

[34] Nicola Swainson, "Knowledge and power: the design and implementation of gender policies in education in Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe", *International Journal of Educational Development* 20 (2000): 49–64

The changes in the NER from the beginning of the decade up till recent years also vary a great deal between countries. Most of those supplying data on this indicator have witnessed an increase and some countries have shown remarkable progress. Among the latter Malawi, Uganda, Benin, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Zanzibar all have reported increases in the NER of around 20 per cent or more, up to 35 per cent growth for Uganda and 51 per cent for Malawi. Factors helping to explain these developments include the political commitments of governments and the introduction of new policies and strategies, the abolition of enrolment fees, the introduction of indigenous languages as the language of instruction, the involvement of communities and favourable social and economic conditions. However, in the same period, nine countries have reported a decreasing net enrolment in their respective primary education systems.

Gender disparities: Net Enrolment Ratio (NER)

The net enrolment (unweighted average) differs between boys and girls by about 13.5 per cent, against a difference of about 10 per cent at the beginning of this decade. Expressed in terms of gender parity (per cent girls/per cent boys), the level of girls' enrolment corresponds to 0.80 of the level attained by boys. Nearly 50 per cent of school-age girls were enrolled in 1990 and 54 per cent in recent years. Boys' enrolment changed from 60 per cent to 68 per cent during the same years. As an average figure for the whole of sub-Saharan Africa, the differences between boys and girls have increased.

Within the region there is great variation, from between 100 per cent girls' net enrolment in Malawi, Mauritius, Seychelles and Botswana on one hand; and, on the other, to below 30 per cent in Ethiopia, Niger, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic and Liberia.

The majority of the countries (23 out of 38) show net enrolment ratios that imply that the education systems cater for boys more than for girls of school going age. Some countries in the West African, Central and East African regions depict relatively high gender disparities

FIGURE 12: CHANGE IN THE NET ENROLMENT RATIO 1990–1998/1999

Country	Percentage difference
Malawi	51.4
Uganda	35.2
Benin	24.3
Guinea	22.2
Mali	21.1
Mauritania	20.9
Zanzibar	19.4
Chad	15.6
Gambia	14.3
Ethiopia	12.8
Côte d'Ivoire	12.4
Mozambique	11.8
Senegal	9.6
Eritrea	8.7
Burkina Faso	8.7
Togo	7.7
Namibia	7
Rwanda	6.4
Botswana	5.5
Niger	3.3
Tanzania	2.8
Madagascar	1.9
Mauritius	1.3
Seychelles	0
DRC	-0.4
Comoros	-3
Nigeria	-8.6
Swaziland	-10.2
Angola	-12.3
Cen. African	-13.3
Lesotho	-17.3
Sao Tome &	-18.7
Burundi	-19.3

Percentage difference, 1998/99 NER --1990 NER

FIGURE 13: NET ENROLMENT RATIO BY YEAR AND GENDER

Gender	1990	Latest year available	Progress Parity LYA/1990
Girls	49.9	54.2	**1.08**
Boys	59.8	67.6	**1.13**
Gender Parity G/B	**0.83**	**0.80**	

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in favour of boys. In terms of the gender parity index, girls enrolment corresponds to less than 0.70 of boys enrolment in Benin, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger and Togo. On the other hand, a number of countries demonstrate gender disparities in favour of girls. Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Namibia, Rwanda, São Tomé and Principe, Tanzania and Zambia report net enrolments where girls participate more than boys in primary education.

Attained net enrolment relative to the targets for 2000

Shortly after Jomtien, the Conference of Ministers (MINEDAF VI) had set net enrolment targets for the decade 1990–2000 (see paragraph 3.2.1). Malawi and Uganda have performed better than their targets. Mauritius, Seychelles, Botswana and Mali have reached or nearly reached their targets. Guinea, Zanzibar, Namibia, Rwanda, Mauritania and Benin have reached over 80 per cent of their target. Many countries whose performance was much lower than the target set have experienced serious disruption in economic and political spheres beyond the control of the education sector.

FIGURE 14: NET ENROLMENT RATIO GENDER DISPARITY
LATEST YEAR AVAILABLE (LYA)
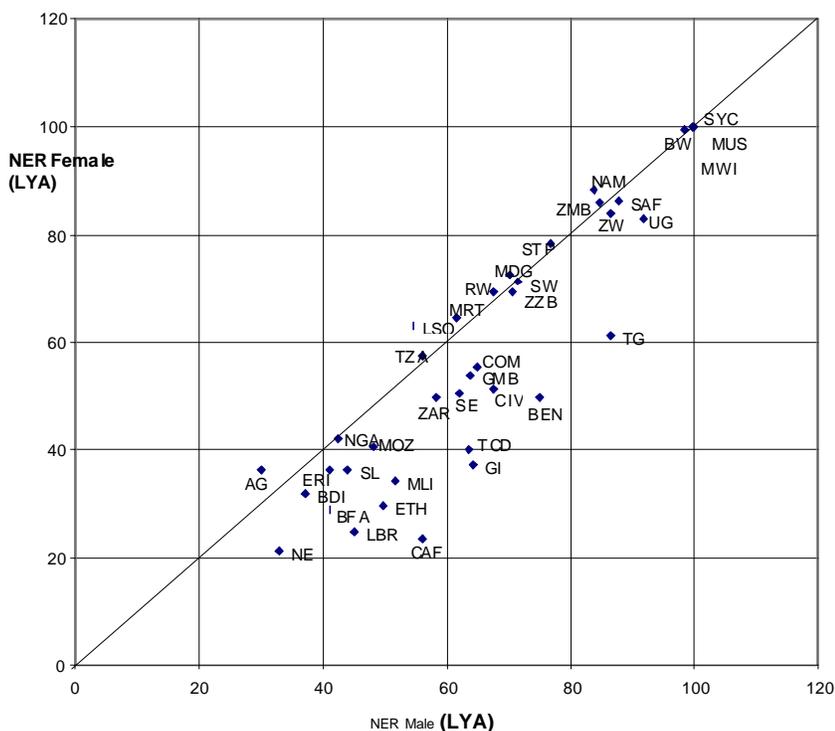
FIGURE 15: ATTAINED NER AS A % OF MINDAF VI TARGETS FOR 2000

Survival to Grade 5

Once in school, boys and girls have different chances of remaining in school. Some drop out before they complete the first four years of education, which is considered to be the minimum for acquiring basic literacy. Survival rates among primary school pupils vary enormously in Africa. Among those who are most likely to reach Grade 5 are children in relatively peaceful and prosperous countries. In Botswana, Cape Verde, Ghana, Mauritius, Namibia, Senegal, Seychelles, Uganda, Zambia and Zanzibar, more than 80 per cent of the pupils reach this stage, while in countries, such as Angola, Comores, Congo, DRC, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique, 50 per cent or less of the enrolled children will never reach Grade 5.

Looking at sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, it appears as if both boys and girls have equal probabilities, 68 per cent for boys and 67 per cent for girls, of reaching Grade 5. However, this is a misleading conclusion and is due to the non-response of some countries as well as variations between countries. In many countries where enrolment is generally high, equality prevails. Seychelles and Mauritius expect practically 100 per cent of girls to reach Grade 5. Inequity, however, is found both in countries with low enrolment rates (such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Guinea) and countries with high enrolment rates (such as Togo, Zambia and Zanzibar). There are exceptional cases where girls have a better chance than boys. In Congo, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland, significantly more girls than boys reach Grade 5. One explanation, in the case of the Southern African countries, is that boys leave school much earlier than girls for work in the mines.

To improve efficiency rates a number of countries have introduced automatic promotion. Automatic promotion also encourages children to stay with their age group and removes the pressure of end-of-year examinations, thus creating opportunities to focus on learning

FIGURE 16: SURVIVAL RATES TO GRADE 5

Country	Survival Rate
Seychelles	99.9
Mauritius	99.6
Ghana	99.3
Uganda	94.0
Cape	90.5
Zanzibar	87.1
Botswana	85.7
Zambia	85.0
Namibia	84.3
Senegal	82.1
Mali	78.1
Guinea	77.6
Swaziland	77.5
Tanzania	77.0
Eritrea	76.6
Gambia	73.9
Zimbabwe	73.3
Sao Tome and	69.0
Lesotho	68.4
Burkina	68.4
Mauritania	65.8
Niger	65.5
Benin	64.3
Togo	57.0
Guinea-Bissau	54.0
Cameroon	51.0
Ethiopia	50.6
Comoros	48.4
Mozambique	46.2
Madagascar	39.8
Congo	38.1
Malawi	36.5
DRC	25.3
Angola	24.8

rather than on preparing for exams. However, for automatic promotion to have a positive impact on internal and external efficiency, supplementary learning opportunities need to be provided for slow learners moving up through the grades' system. Without these, automatic promotion can contribute to an increased number of dropouts and school leavers without any skills or knowledge.

Gender issues

Disparities remained despite the unprecedented rallying of social forces that has taken place to end the marginalization of girls. Countries have paid a great deal of attention to the question of gender disparities in their national policies, for example by setting up special gender units within ministries of education. Other national policies include measures that favour or promote participation of girls, such as the provision of free education for girls in Mozambique or Uganda's new UPE policy that states that of the four children who are provided with free primary education, at least two, if applicable, must be girls.

Among other innovative measures, some examples are:

- free transport benefits
- loan or free provision of school textbooks
- setting up of canteens for girls
- donation of school stationery

- exemption from wearing of school uniforms
- counselling or sponsorship of girls
- re-entry schemes for pregnant girls

Urban and rural disparities

Most countries have not been able to make equitable provision for children in the different regions. Characteristically, educational provision is best in cities where most of the resources are, although in some countries that have experienced civil strife or those with large populations of urban poor and unemployed, the picture is different.

As a consequence of uneven distribution of resources, such as teachers and teaching-learning materials, not only is access unequal, but so is the available infrastructure. Schools in many rural areas often lack electricity, chalkboards, storage cupboards, benches, desks and teaching materials. Sports fields are strips of cleared land. Repairs to structure are expensive and difficult to carry out. It is difficult to encourage teachers to work under such conditions, especially as their housing is poor and they may not have access to clean water or modern sanitation. In general, there are more demands put on children in rural areas where they often contribute to income-generating activities or help with household chores and look after siblings. They may have long distances to walk to school. Sometimes they leave for school without having had breakfast and they do not have a meal to look forward to during the course of the day until they get home.

There are exceptions. In order to stimulate participation in rural areas, Zimbabwe, for example, has introduced free rural education. As a consequence, many parents send their children back to the rural areas to attend school. There are also a number of mission schools located in rural areas known to provide good quality education. As a consequence, Zimbabwe's rural enrolment figures are higher than those in urban areas.

When describing urban-rural differences, we must not forget the differences within urban and rural areas themselves. Particularly in cities that are overpopulated with an inadequately housed and underemployed or unemployed citizenry we can find an unequal distribution and uneven quality of facilities, learning materials and teachers from one suburb to another.

4.2.5 Learning Achievement

When assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of primary schooling, the key question remains: "Have our children acquired any basic learning?" Many countries have found it very difficult to answer this question. The issue of measuring learning achievements is considered to be crucial for any future policy development and planning. In view of this, countries in Africa have engaged in different projects and studies that measure learning achievements at different levels. The Southern African Consortium for Monitoring of Education Quality (SACMEQ) and its equivalent, PASEC (Programme for Analysis of educational systems of CONFEMEN), aim to measure children's reading achievement in Grade 6, while the Monitoring of Learning Achievement Project focuses on measuring basic learning achievements at Grade 4 level. Countries that participated in the different studies have used their results in their EFA reports. These projects go far beyond merely measuring learning achievements in a particular grade and aim to contribute to building capacity in this area. Other countries have opted to use their examination results at Grade 7 level to discuss learning achievements. The results of these different studies are worrying, indicating that low percentages of children reach minimum mastery level and even lower reach the desirable mastery level.

4.2.6 Teaching force

The teacher is considered the key to educational improvement and reform. Despite the difficult circumstances under which teachers often need to perform, they remain a priority, as demonstrated through the estimated 90 per cent of educational budgets spent on teacher salaries.

Teacher–pupil ratio

The teacher–pupil ratio is often used to measure quality. Although there is no clear correlation, many countries aim to bring the ratio down in order to facilitate better and more direct interaction between teacher and pupils. This ratio can easily be misleading, however, as it does not take into consideration double shifts or under-utilization of teachers in low-populated areas.

The reported teacher-pupil ratios range from as low as 15 in Seychelles) to over 60 in Burundi, Congo, Malawi, Mozambique and Uganda. Most countries have experienced either no change in this ratio or increasing teacher-pupil ratios during the decade. Only nine out of 22 have seen a decrease, implying smaller class sizes.

Teacher development and support

The numbers of certified or qualified teachers are thought to be more important than teacher-pupil ratios in improving the quality of education. Most countries have invested heavily in training teachers and there have been significant attempts to improving the proportion of trained and experienced teachers in many countries in the region during the last decade. This has involved training programmes of different kinds, for example, using distance education through the radio or through programmes offered by open universities. Countries such as Zimbabwe, Botswana and Kenya have succeeded in training the large part of their teaching force. Other countries found it more difficult. A major limitation to the training of teachers is the high turnover rate. In some countries, people enter the teaching profession with a view to obtaining an academic qualification that they can use to improve their marketability elsewhere. Other countries note rising mortality rates among teachers as a consequence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Data on qualified teachers show disparities: generally speaking more male teachers are qualified than female and the highest numbers of uncertified teachers can be found in rural areas. Nigeria, however, shows that the proportion of qualified men to women is falling as a result of poor conditions of service that encourage men to look for jobs outside the teaching profession.

4.2.7 Enabling environments

Children with special needs

There are many children with special needs in the region. Some of these are disabled children, others are children who have suffered the effects of war either as soldiers or as other kinds of victim and need special care. Some are gifted children who become disruptive in the classroom when they cannot proceed at their own special pace. Children with special needs include those excluded from school such as children growing up on city streets or in overcrowded squatter or refugee camps.

With regard to children with disabilities, many countries have moved towards a policy of integrating such children into mainstream education to provide them with the opportunities

of a normal childhood. Other policies encourage the participation of children with special needs. Uganda's new UPE policy states that, if there is disabled child in a family, that child should be one of the four to receive free education.

There are other marginalized groups such as street or working children who may be considered as children with special needs. These children are targeted in some countries through alternative programmes.

Curriculum reform

Following dissatisfaction with the standards and performance of graduates of the education system, many countries have been or are engaged in processes of reviewing the curriculum in order to re-orient the system and make education more responsive to the needs of learners and the nation.

Important elements of such curriculum reform are the the introduction of vocational oriented subjects and the introduction of life skills that touch upon issues such as population, HIV/AIDS, human rights and democracy . Other important dimensions that relate to current teaching practices as:

- learner-centred and participatory teaching strategies;
- continuous assessment;
- the use of locally adapted teaching and learning materials;
- the use of local and national languages

Many countries, however, note a difference between the official curriculum and its implementation at the classroom level and they attribute this to existing teaching-learning conditions. Classroom practises have remained very much teacher-centred, using talk-and-chalk methods and in many cases teachers do not have the means or the skills to implement proposed reforms.

Teaching and learning materials

The unavailability of relevant and affordable teaching and learning materials poses a major limitation on the effective introduction of curriculum reforms. In most countries the book development industry is underdeveloped and highly dependent on importation. As a consequence, schoolbooks are often a scarce and expensive commodity. Of particular concern is the book-pupil ratio, which many countries have taken seriously over the last decade. This has led to improvements in the textbook-pupil ratio to one to two in some case.Between 1991 and 1998 Zambia procured and distributed 14.5 million textbooks and other reading material for primary schools.[35] In Zimbabwe the ratio of textbook to pupil in primary school has improved, as a result of budget support, from one to ten to almost one to five. To improve its ratio, Uganda has made an enormous investment in the provision of instructional materials for primary schools. Noteworthy innovations include the introduction of book rental schemes and the use of terracotta tablets instead of expensive paper in many French-speaking countries.

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[35] A recent investigation in Zambia has revealed that vast quantities of the books procured did not reach the classrooms because of delays and diversions. See "Why are there so few books in the schools?" ADEA Newsletter, July–September 2000, 11–12

Exam orientation

The exam orientation of many education systems has been identified as a crucial limiting factor to the improvement of teaching and learning, as both teachers and learners tend to focus on passing exams rather than concentrate on actual learning. In view of this a number of countries have introduced continuous assessment as part of the reform process. Continuous assessment aims to assess the performance of the individual child in order improve learning, rather than measuring the acquisition of knowledge. Their experience shows, however, that continuous assessment requires new skills of teachers in order to make it useful.

Culture and language

Another limiting factor has been the use of official languages as means of instruction. Although most countries use first language instruction in the first three years, in later years instruction in official languages can be a restraining factor for both children and teachers, particular in those areas where there is limited exposure to the official language. Some recent research, such as in Uganda, suggests that a large majority of children tested in written examinations in their mother tongue do considerably better in science and social studies than those tested in English. At the same time, however, even where the use of local languages is required as a policy, as in Ghana, this is not always acted upon. A major limitation is the absence of textbooks in such local languages.

4.3   Education for sustainable personal and societal development

4.3.1 Describing the sub sector

Aims and objectives

The Jomtien Declaration emphasizes an education for all that includes adults and youngsters who have dropped out of school. The expanded vision furthermore links education to personal and community development – education for better living – and focuses on the acquisition of a broad range of skills aimed to provide tools for survival and development within the context of today's and tomorrow's rapidly-changing society. An element of particular interest in the education for youth and adults is the importance given to the "third" channels as a means of learning. This includes the use of mass media, other forms of modern and traditional information and communication channels, and social action.

Following Jomtien, MINEDAF VI (Dakar 1991) recognized the negative impact of illiteracy on the achievement of economic, social, demographic, cultural and environmental policies, and recommended that, as a matter of priority, the illiteracy rate on the continent, estimated at 52 per cent in 1990, be reduced to half (26 per cent) by the year 2000.

Policies and strategies

Up till now literacy and basic education for youths and adults has been primarily provided outside the ministries of education and involved a great variety of partners, such as other ministries, international or local non-governmental organizations and even community groups. Over the decade governments such as Mali, Senegal, and Burkina Faso have realized the importance of having a literate population and have set up special departments within ministries of education that are exclusively concerned with literacy or basic education programmes.

Furthermore, attempts are being made to coordinate and integrate programmes carried out under different ministries, non-governmental organizations and local communities. The mass media is being used by different ministries and other partners as an effective means to communicate life-skill messages. However, despite their commitment and will to contribute

to improving learning opportunities for youngsters and adults, the capacity of ministries of education to coordinate the different partners involved; to gain control in order to guarantee quality and sustainability or standardize certification, is limited.

Financing education for out-of-school youths and adults
Government funding for out-of-school education, whether for youngsters or adults, is limited. Programmes in this area are primarily implemented with donor support through religious or non-governmental organizations. Countries like Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea, Ivory Coast and Senegal have large programmes jointly financed with bilateral or multilateral partners within the framework of development support. It is also important to stress the establishment, since the beginning of the 1990s, of government departments specially responsible for literacy and basic education programs in certain countries (Mali, Senegal and Burkina Faso).

Another important contributor is the private sector, offering vocational training programmes on a commercial basis. In some countries these private facilities are popular, as they seem to offer better quality and their certifications to have a higher (international) recognition. The role of the private sector extends also to using the mass media for educational purposes, to the extent that the mass media have been liberalized. However, it should be noted that increasing the involvement of private sector may contribute to a decline in control regarding educational content as well as quality.

4.3.2 Statistical indicators of performance

Limitations to the data
Assessing the progress made regarding meeting the learning needs of adults and youngsters, however, is not an easy task. Firstly, ten years after Jomtien no clear indicators have been developed to measure either the outcome or the impact in this area. Even the technical guidelines that were prepared for the EFA 2000 assessment exercise fail to formulate clear indicators that go beyond estimating adult literacy rates.

Using adult literacy rates pose a problem as they are estimated on the basis of self-proclaimed literacy during census taking. Although many efforts have been made to set standards and define literacy or functional literacy, there is still no general agreement on when a person may be called literate. The use of a population census is a problem in itself. A third problem is the lack of available or accessible information as most activities take place outside the ministries of education and no system for feedback, monitoring or control have been put in place.

It should be noted that the data collected by the various countries are in general approximate, taking into account the low reliability of basic demographic data, but more particularly the instruments used to collect and process the data on literacy indicators. Furthermore, the reference years vary and in many cases need to be updated in order to take into account the most recent achievements recorded in the implementation of action plans aimed at Education for All. However, in several countries, the data collected on the numbers involved in literacy programmes by various agencies occupy a large portion of the comments on the subject. Lastly, many countries have used more recent data resulting mainly from household surveys or from poverty studies.

Adult literacy
Ten years after Jomtien the rates of illiteracy in sub-Saharan Africa have remained generally very high compared with other regions. From the 39 countries who reported their literacy

rate, 13 have reached a literacy rate of over 75 per cent, 13 between 46 per cent and 75 per cent and 13 lower than 46 per cent.

At the same time, estimates show an increase in literacy rates between 1990 and 2000 in all the countries for which data is available. The figure below shows the percentage change in literacy rates by gender between 1990 and 2000. Both male and female literacy rates increased in all countries and the increase among women was greater than that of men in most countries. This progress is due to the development of educational systems and, in many countries, to the success of literacy programmes for adults and adolescents not enrolled in schools.

Most African countries have launched programmes to combat adult illiteracy and, as indicated above, civil society, through grass roots organizations (non-governmental organizations and other associations), has invested significantly in the adult and adolescent literacy sector. However, it should be noted that, although the proportion of illiterate adults in sub-Saharan Africa has declined since 1990, the absolute number of illiterates continues to increase in many countries.[36]

Gender disparity
Women make up the greatest part of those who are illiterate, with illiteracy rates as high as 80 per cent to 90 per cent in some countries. In all except two countries the level of female literacy is below that of males. In many countries this gender disparity is considerable. As more women than men are illiterate, many literacy programmes target women, for example, by establishing classes in rural clinics and schools where women are likely to be present in order to increase their chance of participating.

Adult and informal education
Within the context of lifelong learning many other forms of adult and informal education have emerged over the last decade. A large number of universities have established adult education programmes or offer special programmes for adults. Further, a growing number of non-governmental organizations have engaged in adult education programmes focusing on linking functional literacy with income-generating or community development programmes.

Many informal programmes have been developed to give information with a view to improving the daily life of the people. The most targeted areas have been:

- reproductive health and family planning
- the battle against Aids
- education for peace
- environmental protection
- civic education, democracy and human rights
- education in family life, hygiene and health.

Other programmes offer training to adolescents or adults in order to provide them with essential skills. In this regard we mention cooperative activities and management and an introduction to the crafts of basket weaving, carpentry, electronics, calligraphy, hairdressing and design.

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[36]   UNESCO. Development of Education in Africa: a statistical review, MINEDAFVII

FIGURE 17: ESTIMATED % CHANGE IN MALE AND FEMALE LITERACY RATES IN SUB-SAHARAN COUNTRIES (1990–2000)
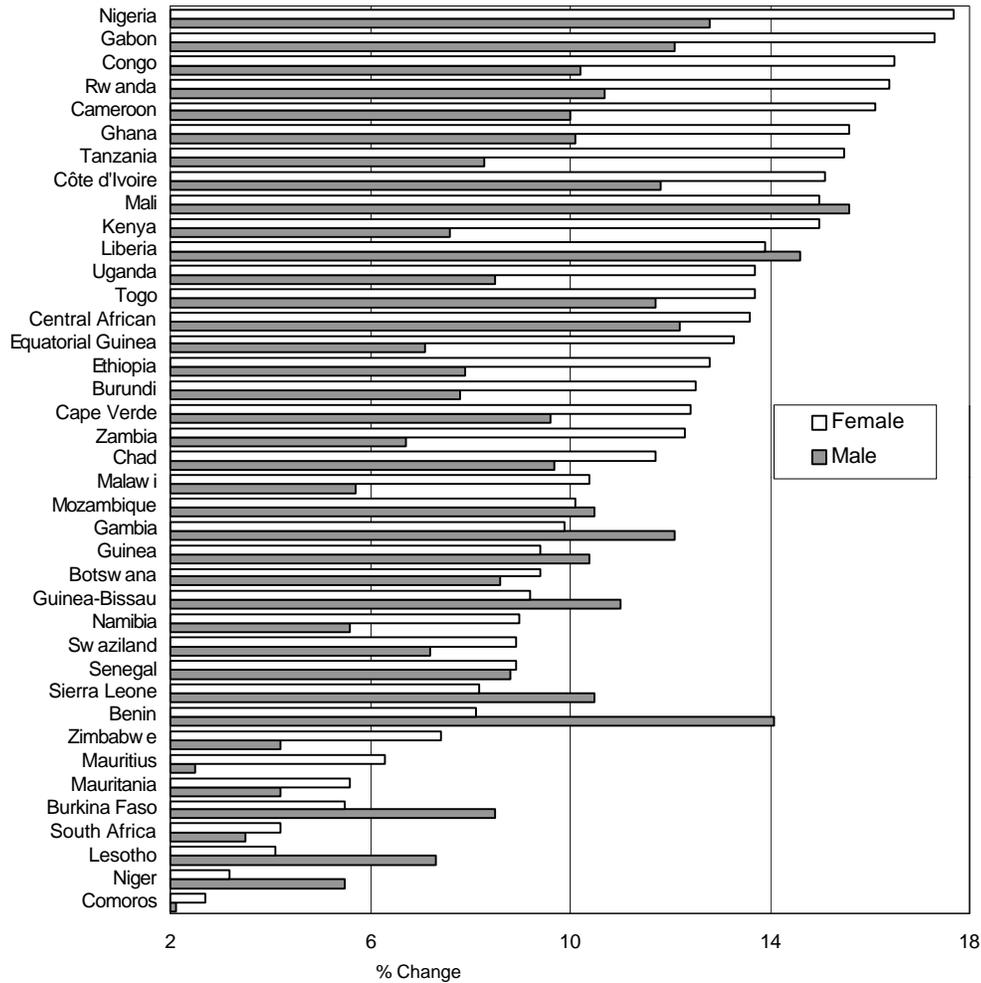
Targeting the youth out-of-school

Many countries have indicated they have a youth problem with a high number of out-of-school youth or dropouts where universal access to basic education has not been achieved. In view of the academic orientation of the curriculum, many other youngsters leave school without relevant qualifications or skills to engage in paying activities. The refocusing of the current academic-oriented curricula has been identified as a major strategy to address this problem. Many educational reform processes seek to enhance the opportunities for young people to acquire relevant and useful skills.

Furthermore, vocational training, both formal and non-formal, is becoming more and more acceptable as vocational training centres are being created as alternative to existing secondary education programmes; on-the-job training programmes and attachment schemes are provided for youngsters who have left school or dropped out without any specific qualification. However, many such vocational training programmes lack adequate funding, monitoring and evaluation, especially those that fall under non-governmental organizations. Furthermore, there is insufficient data on access, equity and quality of skills training programmes for future planning purposes.

FIGURE 18: CIRCULATION OF NEWSPAPERS PER 1000 INHABITANTS

Measuring the impact of media use

The mass media have always appealed to persuaders, messengers and entertainers or political, religious and commercial professions for their potential to reach a wide audience. In the field of education many distance education and open-learning programmes rely on the mass media as the delivery system. Newspaper, radio, television and now the Internet are the media used to reach a wide audience.

Among the paper-based mass media, all across West Africa through Central Africa to East Africa, except for a few countries, there were in 1996 fewer than nine newspapers per 1000 inhabitants. Compared with 1980, newspapers have increased readership in Southern African countries and some countries along the southern coast – the "gold coast" – of West Africa. In 1996 there were 12 daily newspapers in circulation per 1000 people in sub-Saharan Africa,[37] which is the lowest among the world regions. Because of the overall lack of paper-based media many literacy programmes are concerned to create a culture of reading in order to sustain literacy and move towards the stage of post-literacy.[38]

Many countries report that the abolition of censorship and liberalization of the mass media have led to the vigorous growth of many community-based media including newspapers and radio stations. At the same time the effective use of the mass media for learning requires the support of certain infrastructure, for example, marketing and distributing newspapers and broadcasting TV programmes. Such infrastructure is often quite expensive and its costs cannot be borne by governments alone.

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[37] UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1999

[38] "Post literacy" is a term used in combination with programmes to sustain literacy by providing reading materials and promoting reading activities

FIGURE 19: DISTRIBUTIION OF ACCESS TO TELEVISION RECEIVERS

751–1050
350–750
100–349
40–99
10–39
0–9
not known
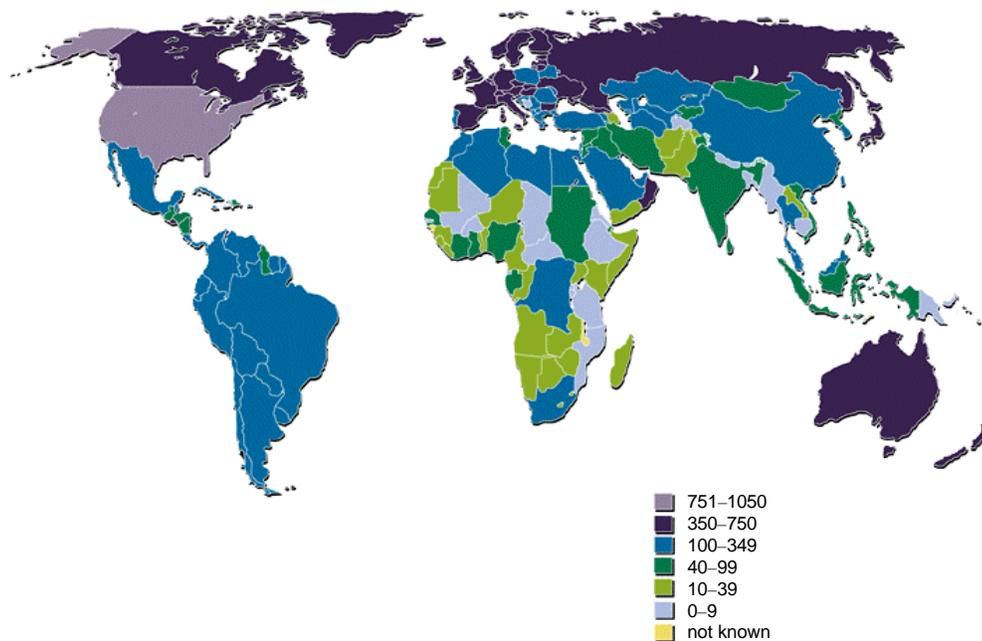
An interesting development is the spread of radio and television in Africa, neither of which requires the ability to read and write, for receiving information from the world outside the home and the local community. Radios have become common in many countries. In 1998, there were 198 radios per 1000 people in the sub-Saharan Africa region.[39] Where there is no electricity, some rely on hand-operated generators. Whereas most African countries had very few television receivers in 1980, 17 years later, many countries have more television receivers per 1000 inhabitants than they have newspapers. On the whole there were 52 TV sets per 1000 people in the sub-Saharan Africa region in 1998.[40] With the exception of the lowest income countries, most have at least ten receivers per 1000 inhabitants, and six countries have more than 40 receivers. South Africa and Nigeria, along with the countries of North Africa, have more than 100 receivers.[41] Of course, there is great disparity within each country, between urban and rural, between rich and poor.

Although no African country has universal access to telephones, the Internet is accessible in most capital cities and main cities. In July 1999 there were 2.32 Internet hosts per 10,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa, just about the same density as in East Asia and the Pacific region (2.39) and higher than in South Asia (0.17) and the Middle East and North Africa

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[39]   UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1999

[40]   International Telecommunication Union, World Telecommunication
        Development Report 1999; cited in Table.11 World Development Report 2000,
        The World Bank

[41]   UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1999

(0.37) regions.[42] In the sub-Saharan Africa region, South Africa has the highest density of Internet hosts; 33.36 per 10,000 people.

Some countries such as Ethiopia, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, and Uganda are experimenting with the concept of multipurpose community telecentres aimed at using the emerging powers of modern communication and information technology to enhance community participation in learning activities.

4.3.3 Facing the challenges

Lifelong Learning

The expanded vision on Education for All takes the concept of basic education beyond that of simply learning to read and write to a higher level of acquiring skills that provide people with necessary tools for personal and societal development. Furthermore it introduces the concept of learning throughout life, starting at zero. Within this context, the existing structures that focus on institutionalized learning between the age of six and 15 must be reconsidered. Learning needs may change over time and opportunities need to be provided throughout life to improve, adjust to or accommodate new challenges.

Specific concerns

The specific challenges of today's world have a direct impact on the way we structure and organize our education system. For example, the HIV/AIDS pandemic directly affects economic productiveness in all spheres. Education should be used as a tool to reverse the pandemic, but at the same time the escalation of the pandemic has put severe constraints on the education sector's organization, management and effectiveness. Other issues of emerging concern relate to environmental protection, general health and hygiene, issues of human rights, good governance, peace and understanding and so on. When designing future programmes that aim at improving life, these issues need to be given as much attention as those focusing on economic productivity.

The impact of information and communication technologies

As long as knowledge is available only in written form, literacy is a necessary prerequisite for learning. Now knowledge is available in other ways. However, people can learn in many ways other than through reading.

The recent developments in technology facilitate learning without requiring competence in reading and writing, using either new (computer-based) or existing (TV or radio) technologies on a large scale. The increasing accessibility and decreasing cost for consumers of this technology through satellite transmissions promises wide coverage even in remote regions.

At the same time, technological developments bring along with them the entire baggage of globalization. It is consequently necessary from the outset to embed within these mass media programmes celebrating cultural identity and diversity, in which traditional dance, music, art and handicrafts can being rediscovered.

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[42] Computers with active Internet Protocol (IP) addresses connected to the Internet; data source: the Internet Software Consortium (http://www.isc.org), cited in Table.11 World Development Report 2000, The World Bank

5 THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF EDUCATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA DURING THE LAST DECADE

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE objectives of Education for All has been favoured or hindered by a number of circumstances, with each country experiencing factors specific to itself that have affected it favourably or unfavourably. Those outlined below affected the majority of countries.

5.1 The enabling factors

The factors facilitating realization of Education for All have been grouped for reasons of conciseness into three categories:

5.1.1 The political factors

The allocation of resources in favour of basic education during the period 1990s

In the majority of countries the education budget has increased in nominal value. Its share of the state budget has shown positive development (Guinea Bissau 8 per cent to 14 per cent, Senegal 28 per cent to 34 per cent, Cape Verde 14.2 per cent to 19.1 per cent). In many countries these additional resources have been devoted, despite the economic situation, to basic education (Gabon, 26.5 per cent to 30 per cent, Togo 36.1 per cent to 44.4 per cent, Ivory Coast 31.6 per cent to 43 per cent).

The political will demonstrated by the authorities

Following all the meetings, round tables and national conferences on basic education, steering mechanisms have been set up in many countries, in ministry, commissions and national coordination task forces). Plans have been drawn up in all the countries to facilitate the implementation of the objectives of Education for All.

The adoption of ten-year plans for education within a long-term vision of education

In an attempt to broaden the horizon of the planning process, changes have been implemented everywhere. Almost every country has adopted a long-term perspective necessary for long-lasting structural changes. In addition, the very diverse interests of major stakeholders are being taken into account and a multi-sector approach adopted, based on a more systematic analysis of needs than before, due in no small measure to the experiences and the findings of the comprehensive EFA Assessment.

The setting up of structures for the follow-up and evaluation of basic education

As a logical consequence of setting up steering and managerial mechanisms, committees have been established to draft review documents at various stages of the implementation of basic education as well as to carry out evaluations. In most countries these structures have been opened to other organizations and agencies of civil society working in the field of basic education.

The improvement of management by introducing terms of reference and making the community aware of its responsibilities

In several cases the scope of changes to be implemented has necessitated the training of national executives in the field of management and planning for the implementation of basic

education. Furthermore, opening up of the process of consultation to other participants has necessitated the definition and indeed the redistribution, of responsibilities with a view to greater community involvement. The result has been, among some of those countries that have carried out this exercise, an improved participation of the organizations involved and greater efficiency in carrying out the tasks assigned to each party.

The implementation of decentralization
Where the democratic process is taking place, a participatory approach to education has been advanced, through increased participation by communities and voluntary organizations and improved communication in terms of conscientious efforts to open up the public discourse. Thus, the reforms undertaken in many countries have attempted to ensure a greater devolution of power to the local elected authorities or to local communities. In many cases, education forms part of the skills transferred, such as training head teachers to work with the community in South Africa. By situating management at the local level, thus freeing local initiatives, the handing over of responsibility described above has become more effective.

The integration of different forms of education
Reforms aimed at integrating traditional and non-formal education with the conventional model have enabled some children and adolescents to return to the system, who might otherwise have been excluded from basic education. An example of such a reform is the equivalency courses given by the non-formal sector to enable youths and adults to obtain primary and secondary education, which they had missed out on when they were children. In many cases this integrative approach has made it possible to transform the competitive perspective that prevailed between the various forms of education into a synergy of complementarity and mutual support.

Specific targeting of girls for whom specific programmes have been implemented
The development of specific programmes for the enrolment of girls in school has made it possible in many countries to mobilize political, financial, moral, scientific and media support and resources. It should be stressed that, even if they were specifically designed to target girls, the intensive conscientization (awareness-raising) programmes have brought about a change of general attitude toward not only education of girls but also the value of education in general, which has been beneficial also to boys.

5.1.2 The implementation of important innovations

New approaches to staffing
Many countries, faced with operational ceilings with regard to the employment of staff in the civil service, or simply with the aim of reducing the costs of education, have had recourse to voluntary teachers, contractual staff, and auxiliaries. This has allowed them to broaden access to basic education.

The creation of community schools
Innovations seeking the involvement of local communities in the management of education and the design of the curriculum have been implemented in many countries. Some of these were aimed at bringing back into the system children aged nine years and over. Others were aimed at experimenting with a four-year course in the child's home language instead of a six-year course in an official language. These types of schools have been expanded to include early childhood development programmes and to the rural areas.

The promotion of private schools

Some countries have facilitated the development of the private sector by means of deregulation measures, subsidies and tax exemptions or helping private organizations to donate buildings, facilities and land to educational institutions.

The introduction of national languages into formal education

At the experimental stage in many countries, the introduction of national languages in the early years of primary education is envisaged as a strategy to improve learning and at the same time to reduce repeater and dropout rates. Among those who consider European (Christian) style education as corrupting and alienating youths from traditional precepts and morals, the introduction of national languages, thus bringing education closer to the culture of the community, has also helped to increase parental approval of formal education.

An experimental approach to the curriculum

Several sub-Saharan African countries, in a drive towards a new curriculum for basic education, have questioned the existing subject content and pedagogic methods and given preference to skills relevant to the social reality of the local environment. Some kinds of knowledge, particular know-how, or life skills related to birth control, family living, human rights, health, civics, peace and environmental protection, are better integrated into this new curriculum.

Application of the strategy of "getting things done"
particularly with regard to literacy

By contracting private operators (non-governmental organizations, associations and other non-governmental agencies), particularly in the field of literacy and in the construction of classrooms, it has been possible to speed up and increase the efficiency of certain educational activities. The governments that have out-sourced these responsibilities have been free to concentrate on the development of policies, the mobilization of resources and the planning and evaluation of programmes.

Mobilization of partners for education

Involvement of civil society in the management and funding of education

Private assistance in development has increased considerably over the decade. Many non-governmental organizations, associations and special educational foundations have been created in some countries or across borders in the sub region. Considered as important participants in the provision of educational services alongside the state and the communities themselves, they have developed partnerships at every level and in very varied fields (such as building and equipping classrooms, teaching material support, school canteens, health facilities, providing staff training opportunities and funding innovations).

The sub regional integration of educational research and evaluation

Regional integration and the coordination of research and assessment programmes of interest to several countries have been implemented through such organizations as

- Education Research Network for West and Central Africa (ROCARE)
- Education Research Network for East and Southern Africa (ERNESA)
- Working Groups of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), such as the Working Groups on Education Statistics (NESIS) and Sector Analysis
- Monitoring Learning Achievements (MLA)

- Southern African Consortium for the Measurement of Educational Quality (SACMEQ)
- Programme for the Analysis of CONFEMEN Countries' Educational Systems (PASEC)

Conferences, workshops and seminars provide opportunities for sharing the results of studies undertaken by researchers and evaluators and for learning from the experiences of other professional colleagues.

5.2   The major constraints

The results have been mixed in general, as there have been many serious obstacles. These obstacles fall into several categories.

5.2.1 The contextual factors

This essentially refers to the limiting factors mentioned in the earlier part of the document:

The high rate of demographic growth

With a demographic growth rate hovering around 2.7 per cent and in most cases above the economic growth rate, meeting the demand for education has been difficult in almost all countries. The high rates of demographic growth reduce the range of options for development at the national level, owing to the great social demand they necessarily create.

Structural adjustment programmes and the concomitant economic crisis

The education budget as a proportion of the total public expenditure has been reduced in some countries over the decade (for example, in the Central African Republic from 22.3 per cent to 13.9 per cent; and in Cameroon from 23.9 per cent to 17.01 per cent).[43] To this must be added the imposition of an upper limit on recruitment of teachers at levels often very much below actual demand. The decrease in teachers' salaries in the context of stabilization of public finances has led to a steep drop in motivation amongst teachers in general.

Poverty and illiteracy as limiting factors in the participation of the people

Where the state as chief provider of funding for educational systems has weakened considerably, there is little relief for people beaten down by the economic crisis. A large proportion of African people have experienced the decline of the purchasing power of their meagre income and they have fallen below the poverty line. Poverty-stricken parents have been unable to contribute to education and, in certain extreme cases, to send their children to school at all. In addition, the illiteracy that afflicts many people limits their capacity to participate in the public discourse on directions to be taken and strategies for extricating their countries from the crises into which their educational systems have plunged. Those who really need education, the poor and illiterate, are the very people who are least likely to participate in making decisions concerning education.

The opportunity cost of education

It is easy to justify investment in education where the future earnings due to education can be expected to outweigh by far the cost of keeping children in school and the years of forfeited income that the children would otherwise have earned from gainful employment. However, in many places in Africa, white-collar jobs are over-subscribed to a saturation point and primary industries demand only labourers. Where the education policy is poorly

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[43]   Data source: EFA 2000 Assessment national reports

attuned to economic realities and labour market trends, the schools produce graduates without the knowledge and skills they need for gainful employment. In such places, there is little incentive for the parents to sacrifice their meagre income for their children's education. In regions dominated by labour-intensive primary industries, such as mining, the young, especially boys, start their working life as soon as it is legally (sometimes, even illegally) permitted, so that they can earn their own living and contribute to the family economy. A significant proportion of the population, especially among the poor and the illiterate, regard education as a useless luxury and irrelevant to survival.

In higher education the dissonance between education and employment is also great. While the universities keep producing graduates for civil service, government is slimming down and the new industries must import technicians and managers from abroad.

5.2.2 The political factors

Institutional instability and political crises

The turbulent process of democratization (demands for multiparty democracy) as well as civil wars, have brought in their wake huge socio-economic problems which have had repercussions on the educational system. Civil disturbances and paralysing strikes in some countries have led to years of poor educational performance and a generation of youth lacking study habits and a proper education. The national action plans adopted in 1991 could not be implemented in these countries because of the prevailing political instability, but also because the structures designed for this purpose had not been established or ceased to function as intended.

The inadequacy of resources relative to demand for basic education

Awareness campaigns in several countries raised a demand for education that governments with decreasing budgets could not satisfy. Furthermore, basic education is in serious competition for budgetary allocation with other sectors both inside and outside the educational sector in a number of countries. This often limits the possibilities of obtaining proper funding.

Inefficient use of allocated resources

The unit costs of basic education remain fairly high in a number of countries. To this must be added the inefficient use of teaching staff. High staff turnover rates (over 10 per cent) have been recorded in urban centres, while in rural areas many classes simply have closed down or not opened owing to lack of teaching staff.

Low salaries of teachers and irregularity of payment

The low salaries of teachers and the irregularity of their payment have devalued the teaching profession, which no longer attracts quality human resources. The malaise prevailing in the teaching profession is worsening along with the economic crisis and it is likely to reduce the number of teachers entering the profession.

Lack of strategies for pre-schools, special needs education and adult literacy

Early childhood development programmes have not yet undergone any major democratizing changes that would make them more accessible to all. This observation is also true of special education and literacy programmes. In the face of government failure to make it a priority, the actions taken remain inappropriate and inadequate.

5.2.3 Education factors

The fragmented management of literacy and early childhood development programmes
The management of literacy, early childhood development and special education programmes is often not within the main responsibility of any one authority, but a side activity of a number of different ministries. In some countries these programmes are not even within the purview of national education. For lack of a coordinated structure there has been little or no development of a coherent policy nor a sufficient mobilization of resources for these programmes for the generally marginalized target groups.

"Education for a better life" and "training in essential skills" are not yet established
These Education for All target dimensions are not dealt with in sufficient depth or adequately operationalized. The current structure of schools and the type of teachers available has made it impossible to resolve this problem, which, in many cases, is not even explicitly an area of concern in the various countries' action plans. With regard to programmes for adults and adolescents the approaches are neither clear nor systematic.

Inadequate provision for data-collection and monitoring basic education
The development of local expertise has been notable, through capacity-building assistance such as that of the NESIS programme. Nevertheless, the lack of adequate provision for an operational budget and equipment, especially computers and application software, for data collection, processing and management of information continues to hamper the capacity for assessment and monitoring. A lack of socio-economic and demographic survey data also hinders policy-relevant analysis of the Education for All target groups.

Awareness of inadequacies, coupled with difficulties in rectifying the situation
The reforms instituted have not yet yielded significant impact, although the diagnoses of the problem remain relevant. The lack of popular support within governments and civil society, the failure to take into account the capacities and interests at stake, the ignoring of economic realities all constitute inadequacies that have greatly reduced the potential impact of the intended reforms. To this must be added the ever-increasing difficulties encountered by school leavers in integrating themselves into their socio-cultural environment on the one hand and finding work on the other.

The inadequacy of educational infrastructure and materials
This situation is a result of the relatively small size of educational investment budgets and the mismanagement of available resources and the limits noted above with regard to absorption capacities with regard to the effective use of funds for building and equipment for educational infrastructure.

The inadequacy of the school environment for teaching and learning socially useful skills
Most of the schools are equipped with neither libraries nor workshops to support teaching-learning activities to meet the educational needs of the learners. To this must be added the absence of basic facilities such as water, toilets and canteens for the children's comfort and facilities to safeguard the girls. Many dropouts or poor performers can be attributed to these poor working conditions.

Inadequate integration of the formal and non-formal sectors of basic education

In most countries educational services in these two areas are conducted separately without any view to complementarity or cross-fertilization. The situation often results in great losses of efficiency in the achievement of educational objectives.

Insufficient capacity of literacy programmes

The variety of initiatives and participants in literacy programmes constitutes a potentially effective asset in filling the gap left by the state. Yet literacy programmes are often beset with insufficient capacity in planning, management, supervision and evaluation. The operators differ in expertise, yet they do not appropriately or effectively use the resources available at various levels. Without an appropriate steering mechanism the efficiency of these programmes is often low.

The inflexibility of school organization, its contents and teaching methods

The vision of basic Education for All has remained narrow in almost all the countries considered in the report. The expanded vision has not been put into practice, due to difficulties in introducing more flexibility into school organization, its contents and its teaching methods. Stress continues to be laid on the conventional sector with few changes in procedures or methods.

5.2.4 Socio-cultural factors

Low demand for education in rural areas, due to the people's reluctance to accept it

The European-style education laden with Western precepts and values offered in most countries tends to be far removed from local cultural values, religious beliefs and economic concerns. In environments with an already existing different traditional education, it has acquired an unfavourable image as something potentially corrupting and alienating to the youth. This has therefore often created a resistance to formal education. Thanks to studies and more closely targeted approaches, this situation has improved in some regions. However, the situation remains disturbing in a number of countries.

Continuing prejudice against the education of girls and women

Girls and women are confined to the traditional roles preserved by those who are hostile to change. The school is often seen as an instrument likely to disturb this balance. This situation, like that described above, remains unchanged in some societies and sub cultures, despite the efforts made to bring about change.

6 SOME LESSONS LEARNT

LESSONS LEARNT FROM experiences over the last ten years by the various countries are summed up as follows:

6.1 Improve the management of complex programmes

The recommendations of the World Education Conference at Jomtien advocated concentration on the following six target areas:

- expansion of programmes to nurture infants and awaken their intelligence
- universalize primary education between now and the year 2000
- improve the output of learning processes
- reduce the adult illiteracy rate, in particular the disparity between male and female literacy
- expand basic education and training in other essential skills for adolescents and adults
- increase the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values needed for a better life by individuals and families using all educational means available

The action plans of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa have attempted to follow these recommendations by setting up several objectives. The implementation of these plans, however, has not been effective, particularly with regard to the universalization of primary education, and, to a lesser degree, to adult literacy. MINEDAF VI tried to moderate the post-Jomtien enthusiasm by prioritising the various targeted areas and by categorizing the African countries into groups based on their actual situation *vis-à-vis* enrolment ratios. Yet, however laudable this concern to rationalize the process of development may be, the different aims were not satisfactorily managed regarding

- institutional aspects (setting up or rationalizing organizations, developing procedures, making work plans, training and research and studies
- expanding access to education facilities and support (buildings, equipment and social services)
- the quality and effectiveness of learning processes (curriculum, evaluation, equipment, accounting, research studies, training)
- partnership arrangements (involving other agencies and organizing the sharing of roles and responsibilities)

In addition, basic education has had to compete with the other sectors of education, that is, the tertiary and secondary sectors, for resources coming from the same funding sources.

6.2 Concentrate on activities which are likely to yield successful results

Resources being limited, negotiation becomes a crucial task. Among the criteria that should be given priority in these cases, those encouraging a realistic approach should be emphasized. Efforts expended on particularly high risk sectors or areas not of any proven relevance might end up as an unacceptable waste of time, energy and resources for countries, the majority of which are passing through times of great economic turmoil.

6.3 Avoid fragmentation of activity that makes coordination difficult

It is in the countries where the administration of sectors targeted by Education for All is uncoordinated among government ministries and independent or autonomous agencies that the most serious problems regarding data collection have been recorded. Too great a fragmentation of basic education must be avoided to preserve its nature as a unit. In other words, the holistic nature of this type of education needs to be preserved while simultaneously defining the clear and distinctive elements that comprise it.

6.4 Strengthen partnership for the development of basic education

The diversity of those involved in basic education is an asset unprecedented in the history of Africa. Nevertheless, without the efficient management of the opportunities offered by such partnerships, the results may fall short of expectations. Therefore it is essential:

- to consolidate the political will to build a more inclusive partnership by availing all the related resources to the common cause
- to involve civil society more in all the stages of the process of resolving social problems related to educational issues
- to improve the general understanding of the concept of partnership at all levels,
- to establish effective mechanisms for coordination in order to avoid costly and inefficient disruptions of educational services

6.5 Take into account technical, economic, institutional capacities

It is essential to take into account the technical, economic and institutional capacities of the education sector structures, schools and communities at the design, planning, and implementation phases. Social, economic, technical, political and natural environments have had a profound impact on the achievements of countries in the development of basic education. In many cases, policymakers have encountered real adversity resulting in stagnation or decline. The analysis of risk factors should be systematized so as to make it possible to envisage the development plan for basic education in its various alternative forms in accordance with different situations to be considered. Parallel to the analysis of real needs, current and potential capacities should be clarified, so as to organize more effectively the adjustments that may be necessary in the medium and the long term. Furthermore, it should be noted that the changes in education system cannot be implemented without popular support.

6.6 Develop policies on illiteracy, poverty and population

Correlation analyses have shown that a significant influence is exerted by illiteracy, poverty, and population growth on the achievement and retention of pupils in the education system. Furthermore, school enrolment has been suspended, if not actually regressed, in countries experiencing violent social upheaval. Education systems should strengthen the defence of peace and democracy and curricula should develop knowledge and behaviour patterns that are likely to have a humanizing influence on politics in many countries.

6.7 Systematize assessments of learning to improve learners' achievements

The assessment exercises conducted in some countries make it possible to extract some important factors that positively influence learners' performance. They include:

- the age of the child when taken into the education system. Those who have gone through early childhood development programmes generally perform better
- the socio-economic level of the family
- the level of education of the mother
- health and nutrition
- the supervision of the pupil by parents at home
- the academic level of the teacher
- the initial and continuing training of the teacher
- teaching methods in the classroom
- the leadership qualities of the head teacher of the school
- the proximity of the school to the neighbourhood it serves.

7   PRESSING CONCERNS

ALONG WITH THE LESSONS learnt in the implementation of the Education for All programmes, the future vision of Education for All should be enriched by the stimulating challenges created by the globalizing world. Africa must cling more firmly to the attainment of its goals for the Education for All as history hurtles towards the new millennium. It must mobilize to create a fully literate society with properly acquired skills for permanent learning and for resolve problems. It is in this context that "educate or perish" once more becomes a relevant slogan for a society that is rich in knowledge and information: without these it will cease to exist. The concerns mentioned below, without being explicitly explained in the various country reports, have been raised in the many discussions on education systems. They are worthy of being included in reflections on the future for the next decade.

7.1   The approach based on children's rights

Programmes for the development of education should be drawn up within a framework that is no longer simply that of a right to education, but that of human rights, which are:

- the right to food
- the right to drinking water
- the right to life
- the right to shelter
- the right to education
- the right to health
- the right to a healthy environment
- the right to protection against violence
- the right to equality of access to all opportunity
- the right to decide one's own future

The approach to education seen through this prism will broaden the restricted view that countries tend to have of their development. The success of the educational mission will depend very heavily on upholding of these rights of children. The principles and methodologies to achieve a programme based on the rights of the child are the following:

7.1.1 Three guiding principles:

Making people aware of their responsibilities: children must be recognized as having rights as members of society and as holders of extra rights in relation to adults. The programmes must be based on the various obligations that the state, families, civil society and their own communities owe children.

Universality: the programmes must give explicit recognition to the universality of rights for every child, for all the rights mentioned above, all the time and everywhere, without discrimination. The challenge consists taking measures to extend these rights to people up to the age of 18 that can be upheld by all societies.

Indivisibility: the programmes must recognize the indivisibility and interdependence of rights which in the final analysis aim at the protection of the dignity of the child. Nevertheless, indivisibility does not mean a lack of prioritising among these rights.

7.1.2 Methodology

The human rights approach based on these principles must follow the following phases:

- analysis of the situation and problems concerning the rights of children
- determination of the goals and objectives concerning the rights of children
- definition of the strategies and activities relevant to the rights of children
- implementation of these strategies
- follow up and evaluation

The methodology to be adopted will be a function of the following points

- causal analysis
- analysis of roles and obligations
- analysis of resources
- analysis of gender

7.2   Involvement of civil society and the transformation of schooling

In the context of the multiple challenges and increased demands for a more democratic and participatory society, Education for All is everybody's concern. The directions taken up to now are promising but they are still lacking in boldness. Almost everywhere the state (whether at the centre or through its various agencies) has remained in full control of education while society goes along with what is decided rather than motivating these decisions. The assessment of the input of civil society, while impressive, makes it possible to see that the problem in education result, to a great extent, from the organization of education and schools. Despite numerous examples of community participation and innovative approaches in many areas such as educating girls and women, as cited earlier, these are promising but isolated cases. On the whole, the teacher and the head teacher still remain at the centre of all basic initiatives in most countries. Community and civil society are occasionally asked to be involved when additional resources are solicited. The transformation of schools to deliver various forms of useful knowledge by the most appropriate persons increasingly constitutes a subject for frequent discussion.

It is becoming increasingly necessary to learn about needs and conditions of various communities, particularly in the rural areas so that more locally-relevant skills for social and economic development can be integrated into the curriculum of basic education. These changes must put the school back into its place at the heart of society to serve the community in its entirety. Furthermore, the involvement of society will necessarily promote transparency in the management of the education system. It will also enhance the mainstreaming of the hitherto-marginalized minorities.

7.3   Responsibility for special educational needs

The handicapped and young people who are disadvantaged constitute categories with a right to education on the same basis as everyone else. The national reports have neglected this target group once again. Despite current difficulties, the authorities and specialist organizations should increase the basic education offered to disadvantaged and abandoned children, many of whom become street children and delinquents. Schools must be restructured to ensure the integration of these children through the installation of supporting equipment and facilities for the handicapped and the training of staff in the field of special education. In the meantime, the strengthening of existing reception centres and special education centres is the only way to increase the access of these categories of children to

basic education. This undertaking should put equal emphasis on satisfying the children's expressed needs and the improvement of their daily life particularly by helping them to acquire professional skills. Naturally, the programmes, methods and modes of training will have to be adapted to the variety of special needs.

7.4 Education in Africa and information and communication technology

The explosion of new information and communication technologies will affect every area of life. The possibilities these offer to education make it necessary to include them into educational development programmes. There are many fields of application, including:

- access to knowledge
- improvement in the quality of education
- improvement in the management of educational systems and schools
- training of teachers
- literacy programmes and training for adults
- reduction of costs of education
- assessment and monitoring of education.

As shown in the report of the Economic Commission for Africa in its initiative for the African Information Association, the capacity to gain access to information and to use it effectively "is no longer a luxury, but a necessity of development".

The advantages information technology can provide are as follows:

- opening up the classroom to a world of educational resources
- improving teaching and learning for both teachers and pupils
- increasing the motivation to learn
- formalizing the local culture and its contribution to world knowledge
- improving the internal efficiency of educational systems
- the potential for developing ongoing educational methods
- increase the possibility of establishing links within the community through the spread of useful information (such as weather reports and price fluctuations) or the supply of training
- strengthening the information support services for policy formulation and implementation.

7.5 A new vision for an African Renaissance

A new vision for an African Renaissance sees education as a catalytic agent for the regeneration of societies. This challenge requires an analysis of the factors that keep the continent confined within the vicious cycle of multifaceted crises. This analysis will involve every sector: economic, cultural, ethical, socio-political, scientific and technological. The strategies for extricating Africa from this situation for this rebirth will require a systemic approach involving the joint efforts of every sector

For this it is necessary to mobilize on a large scale the many resources existing in all branches of society and learn about successful strategies for development, so as to bring up-to-date knowledge, skills and approaches to the management of economic, social and cultural development. Complementary financial and technical support from partners must be sought to guarantee a successful and sustainable start to reconstruction. However, Africa's total responsibility for taking charge of its own destiny remains the only way for this to succeed.

Education will be one of the basic strategies for achieving change. To take on this task, countries must reconsider the values on which it has been based, transform the organization of education and formulate plans. National educational systems must re-establish the confidence of people in themselves and in others, must promote peace, solidarity, work, organization, method, balance, justice, the culture of human rights, multilingualism, multiculturalism, sensitization to the values of reconciliation, nation building and African unity.

7.6   The challenge of the AIDS pandemic

The gains recorded in education as well as the opportunities opened up by the great mobilization surrounding basic Education for All are in danger of being seriously threatened by the AIDS pandemic. What distinguishes this disease from others is its impact on the social and economic development of the continent. AIDS has already killed a very large number of adults in their prime; men and women in the most fruitful period of their lives as regards productivity and parenthood. It has given rise to painful losses in families and communities, aggravating poverty and leaving an overwhelming number of orphans on the continent. The number of children infected in some regions is also enormous. All this makes AIDS more than an ordinary disease; it is a major problem for development.

The effects of the disease on education are likely to be all the greater because of the number of children who will be forced to drop out of school for lack of a family to look after them when their parents have been decimated by the scourge or because they are in such an environment where they themselves are likely to contract AIDS. Compounding this problem is also the rapidly decreasing teaching force, also crushed by the epidemic in many African countries. The drop in productivity, absenteeism of sick teachers and the number of deaths within the teaching profession, all constitute major factors in the crisis in education in Africa.

As behavioural change is the only way of changing the course of the disease, education must become the chief vaccine against AIDS. The introduction into the curriculum of basic education of sections on health, sexuality, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy and reproduction might give children, adolescents and adults the knowledge of the scientific basis of the disease and the modes of behaviour necessary for living their lives safely and responsibly.

8 FUTURE PROSPECTS

IMPORTANT PROGRESS has been made in education and some countries have already realized the goal of universal education while others are getting close to it. But some are still far from reaching it. Nevertheless, beyond the progress achieved within the framework of the goals set at the World Conference on Education, we should look again in a more substantive way (to see what lies behind the figures) at the pivotal concept of basic education, the values on which it is based, its organization, its providers and intended beneficiaries and the various procedures and tools designed to make its operation more effective. As the assessment is still at the stage of taking stock, we can question once again the bases of formal, non-formal and informal education in Africa. The EFA 2000 Assessment and the thematic sessions of the Johannesburg Conference have generated many recommendations to be considered in a comprehensive reflection on the future.

8.1 Policy and management of educational systems

Increase investment and improve strategic resource management in education.
Amongst all the sectors of the African economy, education is one of the best candidates for an increase in investment, in the interest of long-term development. Most African countries should increase public and private spending on education. Public expenditure on education currently represents an average of between 4 and 5 per cent of the national revenue in the region. It should be progressively increased in most countries, particularly in those that are devoting a great deal less than this percentage, or those that have fallen far behind the others in terms of the principal indicators of educational development. But such increases in public spending on education cannot be justified unless they are accompanied, at every level, by efforts to improve the implementation structures and the viability of the educational system. One of the many measures likely to promote the realization of these objectives will generally be to allow bodies other than the state to assume a greater share of the educational service, so as to give the sector an additional source of private funds at least proportionately equal to the funds provided by the state, as well as new ideas on more effective strategic resource management.

Reinforce the capacities for analysis of African educational systems.
Analysis and planning are indispensable for an efficient allocation of resources and, consequently, to the supply of high-quality education in conditions of austerity. The education authorities must be in a position to assess the performance of the system and the effects of their actions. The work of the analytical and planning services must be better integrated into the decision-making process.

Improve the steering of educational systems by reinforcing the structures and means of both qualitative and quantitative systematic data collection.

Reinforce the skills of the management staff of the education system. The lack of qualified managers and the need for existing managers to be more highly motivated represent two basic constraints to education in sub-Saharan Africa. Training educational managers, which henceforth should be more closely linked to clear strategies for long-term organizational development, must aim at building the capacity for leadership, management and operational functions of the Ministry of Education, the provincial and district education administration as well as the schools and other institutions of education and training.

Develop financial and non-financial strategies towards creating incentives for teachers in a context of scarcity of resources and excessive workload.

Build research capacity, including forms of collaboration, funding and related technical capacities in such areas as survey research, statistics and computer applications.

Facilitate integration of new knowledge and assessment into the coherent management of education systems. Disseminate the results of these exercises throughout the educational community to enable their use for improving educational performance.

Reinforce policies for decentralizing basic education. Make communities aware of their responsibilities for the new, decentralized education system and train them to take on this responsibility. Better still, all participants in basic education must be given responsibilities and enable them to take up this challenge.

Reinforce the institutional autonomy of schools by authorizing mechanisms for the selection, training and supervision of the heads of institutions.

Protect teachers more effectively against discrimination and the effects of the inequalities inherent in the educational system through legislation enhancing their status and preventative policies.

Guarantee all children (and girls as a priority) and up to 15 years of age, access to basic education of high quality.

Stabilize the current gains, then consolidate them.

Many countries that have not attained the goals of Education for All will need to make adjustments to their action plan to fit the new environment, taking into account the factors that have obstructed the achievement of the scheduled progress.

Improve the non-formal education sector with regard to its structure, organization and operation to enhance the autonomy of learners in their environment and their culture and to improve their quality of life.

Improve the level of government involvement in funding, planning, follow up and assessment of programmes designed for adults and adolescents, always in collaboration with the beneficiaries, the non-governmental organizations and other voluntary organizations operating in the non formal education sector.

8.2   The supply and demand of education

Improve access to education systems while preserving their quality. On the one hand, reduce the effect of distance between home and school as well as the incidence of late registrations by promoting the use of multi-grade class and establishing accelerated programmes. On the other hand, improve the integration of quality-related factors and mechanisms for supervision and quality control.

Reduce disparities related to gender and regional differences by prioritising the disadvantaged in the allocation of resources.

Diversify the supply of education to satisfy demand as effectively as possible, beginning with early childhood development programmes and going right up to adolescents and adults. Education systems must develop in learners skills, attitudes and values likely to better ensure social mobility and the integration of persons with special educational needs (such as the handicapped, AIDS sufferers and persons with disadvantaged backgrounds). Special education should no longer be thought of only in terms of the learner's deficiencies, but also, and above all, in terms of eliminating the forces of exclusion in education and the obstacles to learning and participation.

Develop early childhood development programmes within a more integrated approach, more open and more culturally and economically accessible to the people. Encourage the development of partnerships with all the parties concerned with promoting the welfare of children.

Employ the potential offered by the new information technologies. Involve the mass media in the education of the young and adults through programmes of persuasion and as a channel to ensure the delivery of constructive knowledge and attitudes.

8.3   Quality and relevance of education

Make school an environment for quality learning and essential skills for living. Develop a new vision in which the school is a community learning centre for various knowledge and skills for individual and community development.

Improve the quality of the initial and ongoing training of teachers in the formal and non-formal sectors, including training in HIV/AIDS, special education needs, classroom management with large and multi-grade groups and harmonious relations between the school and the community.

Consolidate the teaching of civics, human rights and peace so as to reduce the social tensions which are holding back the development of the African education systems.

Promote effective strategies for the validation and introduction of national languages into education in multilingual African countries.

Improve the teaching of sciences and technical subjects in basic education by use of scientific methods of learning with regard to experimentation and analysis of evidence.

Develop the local publishing of school textbooks. Write school textbooks appropriate to the reforms undertaken with regard to the curricula, make the school textbook more accessible to the greatest number of pupils and develop the book industry in the countries of the region.

Make a regular assessment of learning achievements at the end of the fourth year of schooling to ensure that the learners have acquired a minimum amount of knowledge and basic skills that are relevant and useful.

Develop an assessment model to increase the relevance of non-formal education.

8.4   Partnership and cooperation in education

Establish strong partnership links between civil society, development agencies, communities, non-governmental organizations, religious organizations, the private sector,

Parents' Advisory Committees, teachers' unions and families so as to enhance their involvement in the transformation of education systems.

Work in individual countries and at the regional level with resource persons who have a vision of the future.

Reinforce regional cooperation in education and establish a structure for regional cooperation.

Promote and facilitate African integration and unity by strengthening in basic education the awareness of African destiny, by developing the instruments needed for continent-wide communication (bilingualism and the theme of African unity to be integrated into all curricula).

9 EDUCATION FOR WHOM AND TO WHAT PURPOSE?

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, we must ask "education for whom and for what purpose?" Time and time again, studies, reports and conference declarations call for education that meets the needs of all. Within the continent and even within each country, there is an extreme variation in wealth, poverty, security, livelihood, language, culture and ways to survive and thrive. People live in different material and cultural worlds, practicing traditional subsistence farming, living in nomadic and semi-nomadic groups, working on commercial farms, mining towns, migrant workers' home villages, cosmopolitan trading cities, capital cities, provincial towns, the slums and refugee settlements.

The variation in economy, geography, climate and natural resources across the continent, the vagaries of the weather as well as man-made disasters and opportunities influence the patterns of human settlement and migration. Africans live in very different environments and conditions and EFA strategies must therefore be formulated accordingly for the respective target groups. For each type of human settlement and condition of existence, we must ask, education for whom and for what?

What education for whom?
Education for All cannot be defined simply in terms of age groups in a homogenous population. To be realistic and hence feasible and sustainable, the goals, targets and strategies must be appropriate for the learning needs of specific age groups in specific living environment. The main groups described above are:

*   Widely scattered subsistence farming in remote regions
*   Nomadic and semi-nomadic in savannah and dessert
*   Cash crop plantations, commercial farming areas
*   Mining towns
*   Emigrant villages without men
*   Cosmopolitan port cities
*   Capital city and major administrative towns
*   Squatter settlements and slums of migrants
*   Displaced persons in flight
*   Refugees in foreign countries
*   Repatriated refugees
*   Traumatized victims and perpetrators of war

In many ways the differences within countries are often greater than between countries. In a country, for example, the various languages of these groups may vary from pre-literate languages spoken only in a few villages to the international languages of commerce and science. Social organization may range from isolated and scattered households and nomads to complex cities. Technology may vary from near Stone Age to cyber-space. In modes of learning, we may move from nature to computer-simulation. A child in a rural school in any one country may have more in common with her counterpart in a neighbouring country than a child in a urban school in her own country.

Unfortunately those who really need essential knowledge and skills for survival and prosperity are the ones with least opportunities for engaging in learning activities. To

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FIGURE 20: BASIC LEARNING NEEDS IN A LIFELONG PERSPECTIVE

What modes of delivery are appropriate in the context of survival and prosperity?	Early childhood	Primary school age	Out-of-school youth and adult
Scattered small communities in subsistence farming areas	?	?	?
Nomadic and semi-nomadic population in sparsely populated areas	?	?	?
Plantations, commercial farming areas	?	?	?
Mining towns	?	?	?
Emigrant villages without young men	?	?	?
Provincial towns	?	?	?
Densely populated urban centres	?	?	?
Refugees and displaced populations	?	?	?
Etc. (specify other major context)	?	?	?

attain education for all, the main target groups would be, logically, those who have not yet been reached by education, the groups that the first decade of EFA failed to reach: the out-of-school children, youth and adults living in environments where there are little or no learning opportunities. Therefore, an analysis of the obstacles to education for these groups is needed for formulating strategies that are feasible and sustainable.

To be feasible sustainable and relevant, we need to define the basic learning needs at various stages and conditions life of early childhood, youth and adult

- to be able to survive
- to develop their full capacities to live and work in dignity
- to participate fully in development
- to improve the quality of their lives
- to make informed decisions, and
- to continue learning

Their learning needs must be identified in terms of the specific knowledge and skills required in each group and a mode of delivery that is feasible and sustainable in each environment.

In formulating strategies, we need to identify the groups of people whose learning needs are to be met and, especially, whose needs are not being met. What are their learning needs in a lifelong perspective? We need then to identify what mode of delivery is feasible and sustainable in the context of the learners' survival and prosperity. Here is a reference matrix of questions to be asked in the process of analysing the lessons derived from the actual experiences of the countries and in formulating target-oriented strategies.

Moreover, in formulating goals and strategies that are anchored to reality, we need to relate each cell of the matrix to the following regional priority issues:

- the role of education in social, cultural and economic developmental goals and vice versa
- curriculum content, relevance and quality

- the role of the government in the transformation of the education system structures and functions
- forging partnership with non-governmental organizations and civil society
- building capacity in education planning and management, school administration and monitoring and assessment (statistics, information systems and research)

National action plan

The assessment exercise has produced a comprehensive knowledge base on education in the respective countries and sub-regions of Sub-Saharan Africa. Gaining valuable insights from the assessment of the past decade and facing the challenges ahead, a regional framework of action in Sub-Saharan Africa has been adopted at the Johannesburg Conference in December 1999 and a global framework of action at the Dakar conference in April 2000. The world community has resolved to accord priority to Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

At the conclusion of this assessment process, the major stakeholders in Africa have called upon their local, national, regional and international partners to work together toward the attainment of the goals of Education for All. It is now urgent that each country review its own assessment report and apply the lessons and recommendations of the whole Sub-Saharan Africa region, documented in this report, and the regional and the global framework of action in formulating its own national action plan, especially targeting those who have been excluded or poorly served in the past decade. The main message of the Dakar conference is that, where national action plans for the attainment of the goals of Education for All have been formulated, their implementation shall be supported.

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