

Education for All Global Monitoring Report



Literacy for life

The 2006 Education for All Global Monitoring Report

BALID/UKFIET colloquium, London, 24 January 2006

Education for All Global Monitoring Report

Why literacy?

- Literacy is a right
- Literacy is a foundation for all further learning
- Literacy carries profound individual and social benefits
- Literacy matters for poverty reduction
- Literacy drives progress towards all the Education for All goals

Literacy is a right still denied to some 771 million adults

Literacy is neglected on policy agendas

Education for All Global Monitoring Report

The EFA Global Monitoring Report

Evidence to hold governments to account for their commitments

- Charts progress towards the six Education for All goals agreed to by 164 countries in 2000
- Monitors international commitments to education
- Highlights effective policies and strategies, allows for comparisons between countries and draws attention to emerging challenges
- Prepared by an independent team housed at UNESCO and financed by six bilateral donors, including DFID
- Translated in the six UN languages, launched in all regions
- Aims to enrich and inform debate on education policy
- Four editions published since 2002: *Overall challenges* (2002); *Gender* (2003/4); *Quality* (2005) *Literacy* (2006); *Early childhood care and education* (forthcoming)

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What the 2006 Report does

Beyond providing a global picture of progress towards all the EFA goals and assessing a *literacy for life* education, "Literacy for Life"

- Stresses the core importance of literacy as a human right and a development imperative
- Maps the global literacy challenge, drawing attention to evolving methods for measuring literacy more accurately
- Analyzes how societies have achieved widespread literacy
- Calls for a radical scaling up of youth and adult literacy programmes and policies to promote rich literate environments
- Argues for a doubling of aid to basic education and focused attention to literacy in aid policies

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Education for All Dakar Goals and Millennium Development Goals

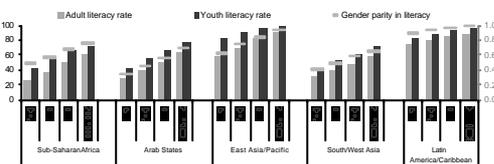
EFA Goals	MDGs
1. Expanding early childhood care and education	Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education (Target 3: Completion of full primary schooling by all children by 2015)
2. Universal primary education by 2015	
3. Equitable access to learning and life skills programmes for young people and adults	
4. 50% increase in adult literacy rates by 2015	Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women (Target 4: eliminate gender disparity preferably by 2005 and no later than 2015)
5. Gender parity by 2005 and gender equality by 2015	
6. Improving quality of education	

LITERACY IS AT THE CORE

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Literacy: big trends

Patterns of literacy from 1970 to 2000 show an increase in adult literacy rates. Among the 15-24 age group, these rates are consistently higher

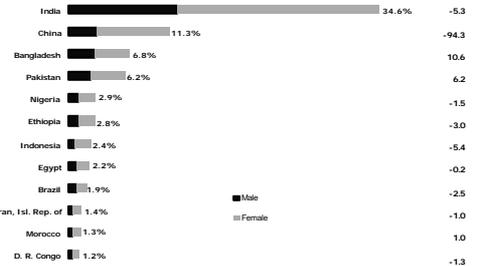


Adult literacy rates are not increasing as rapidly as in the 1970s

Literacy: countries in the spotlight

Three-quarters of the world's illiterate adults live in 12 countries

Change from 1990 to 2000-2004 (millions)



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The impact of exclusion and disadvantage

Where poverty rates are higher, literacy rates tend to be lower

- Women:** 88 literate women for 100 adult literate men – 66 in South and West Asia; 69 in Arab States; 76 in sub-Saharan Africa
- Indigenous peoples:** their lower literacy rates reflect limited access to formal schooling
- Disabilities:** over 600 million people have a disability, two-thirds live in low-income countries. Evidence suggests weak literacy skills
- Migrants:** dramatic growth within and between countries
- Rural residents:** disparities are greater in poorer countries with low overall literacy rates (44% rural vs 72% urban in Pakistan)

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Progress towards UPE

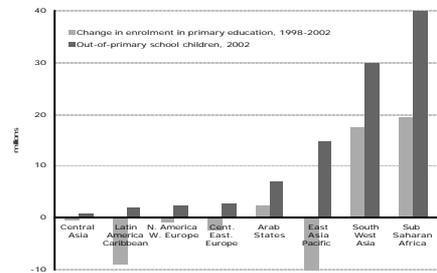
Historically, the expansion of schooling has been the most significant factor in achieving widespread literacy

- 47 countries have achieved UPE, 20 on track to achieve it by 2015
- 44 countries are making good progress but may not achieve UPE by 2015
- Significant enrolment increases in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia
- Progress in countries with very low indicators
- Fees charged in 89 countries are major barrier to progress
- HIV/AIDS impact on education systems
- Substantial increases in school-age population expected in Africa, South and West Asia and the Arab States
- 23 countries at risk of not achieving UPE by 2015, due to declining net enrolment ratios

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The enrolment challenge

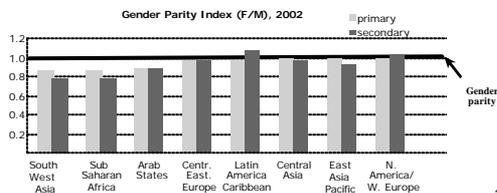
Primary school enrolments have risen sharply in South and West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, but these two regions are still home to 70% of the world's 100 million out-of-school children



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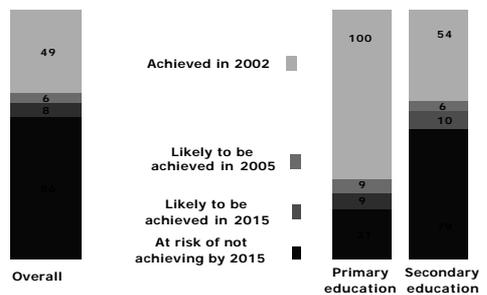
Gender parity

- Considerable progress in countries with lowest gender parity index
- Disparities at primary level in over 60 countries are nearly always at the expense of girls
- At secondary level, boys are under represented in 56 countries
- The 2005 gender parity goal has been missed by 94 countries



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Gender parity: the prospects at both levels

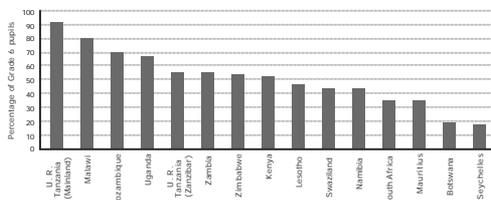


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Quality of learning

Poor learning outcomes remain a concern in many countries. Lack of school books is one reflection of impoverished learning environments

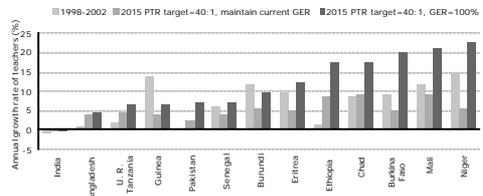
Percentage of Grade 6 pupils in African classrooms where there are no books available, 2000



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Quality: trained teachers in demand

The number of **additional** teachers needed to increase gross enrolment ratios to 100% and to achieve a 40:1 pupil-teacher ratio is probably **unreachable** in several countries



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Early childhood care and education: limited progress

A strong influence on future school performance, a positive impact on girls' enrolment in primary

- Slow global progress: in the majority of countries, GER in pre-primary education is still below 50%
- Children from disadvantaged backgrounds more likely to be excluded
- Attendance rates considerably higher for urban children than those living in rural areas
- Theme of 2007 EFA Global Monitoring Report

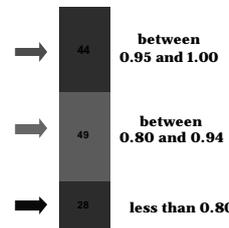
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Overall progress

The EFA Development Index covers 121 countries and incorporates the four most "quantifiable" EFA goals

EDI is:

Countries have achieved the goals or are close to doing so



Countries in intermediate position.

In these countries, quality of education is an issue, especially in Latin America. In the Arab States, low adult literacy is stalling progress

Countries far from meeting the goals, including 16 in sub-Saharan Africa

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Benefits: why literacy matters



- Self-esteem and empowerment:** widening choices, access to other rights
- Political** benefits: increased civic participation in community activities, trade unions and local politics
- Cultural** benefits: questioning attitudes and norms; improves ability to engage with one's culture
- Social** benefits: better knowledge of healthcare family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention; higher chance of parents educating children
- Economic** benefits: Returns on investment in adult literacy programmes are comparable to those in primary level education

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Evolving understandings

Definitions of literacy have broadened in the past 20 years

- The most common understanding of literacy: a tangible set of skills, particularly the cognitive skills of **reading** and **writing**
- Notion of **functional** literacy focuses on how these skills are applied in relevant ways. UNESCO's 1978 definition still in use today
- Literacy as **transformative**: an active process of learning involving social awareness and critical reflection
- Literacy is widely viewed as a **continuum** of skills
- Increasing reference is made to the importance of rich **literate environments**

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Measuring literacy: towards greater accuracy

Conventional measures

- Based on national censuses
Rely on:
 - self declaration
 - report by household head
 - years of schooling
- Define a person as literate/illiterate

Improved measures

- Based on direct testing
- Literacy skills in several domains are tested on scales
- Provide more accurate knowledge about literacy

Direct assessments show that conventional evaluation methods often overstate literacy levels

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Evidence from direct assessments

Direct assessments show that conventional evaluation methods often overstate literacy levels

- Pattern found in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Morocco, Tanzania
- The gap between indirect and direct assessment is highest among least educated and where **school quality** is weakest
- An increasing number of developing countries are designing literacy surveys (Brazil, Botswana, China, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lao PDR, Nicaragua) to provide more accurate knowledge of needs

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Literacy: a three-pronged approach

1. Universal quality basic education for girls and boys

Reducing fees
Teachers
Gender
Inclusion and language
Health and nutrition
Public spending

2. Scale up youth and adult literacy programmes

National coordination
Partnerships
Literacy educators
Good curricula
Language policy
Public spending

3. Develop rich literate environments

School textbooks
Local language newspapers
Book publishing
Public broadcasting
Libraries
Access to information

Strong political commitment is the starting point

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Thinking through good programmes



- What **motivates** learners to acquire literacy skills?
- Are curricula relevant to people's lives and aspirations?
- Is teaching **participatory**?
- Are teaching hours sufficient?
- Are **learning groups** appropriate and sensitive to cultural and social norms?
- Do learners have enough and well-designed **teaching materials**?
- Are programmes available in mother tongue languages?

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The low status of literacy educators

Better professional development is imperative

- Training:** either too short or too lengthy. Non-formal courses last one to two weeks; formal training can run 1-3 years
- Importance of **accreditation** and on-the-job support
- Pay:** most programmes surveyed pay between one-fourth and one-half of a basic primary-school teacher's salary
- ICTs** and distance learning have immediate potential for offering professional development

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The language-literacy nexus

Linguistic diversity is the reality in a majority of countries facing literacy challenges

- Use of **mother tongue** in adult programmes is pedagogically sound
- Encourages **community** mobilization and social development; allows room for political voice
- Learning only in the mother tongue can be a barrier to **broader** social and economic **participation**
- Importance of:
 - learners' demands
 - consultation with local communities
 - locally written produced teaching materials
 - transition to an additional language

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Enriching the literate environment

The influence of print materials, mass media and ICTs

- Contributes to the **spread** of literacy
- Helps individuals **sustain** their newly acquired skills
- Positive **impact** of literacy materials in the home
- Literate environments encompass a range of **lifelong learning** opportunities. Importance of:
 - ⇒ Print and broadcast media
 - ⇒ Publishing and information policies
 - ⇒ Special publications for newly literate
 - ⇒ School textbook investment strategy
 - ⇒ Public reading rooms and libraries

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Public spending: mobilizing resources

Budgetary allocations to literacy must increase, but not at the expense of investment in quality schooling

- As a share of **national** income, public spending on education has increased in about 70 countries
- Rapidly expanding **secondary** school enrolments puts many countries under further pressure
- Adult literacy: **1% of national education** budgets typically allocated to literacy

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Costing literacy programmes

The average cost of literacy programmes is on a par with primary education

Estimated average per learner:
US\$47 in Africa, US\$30 in Asia and US\$61 in Latin America

- Cost parameters are difficult to **standardize**: start-up costs, training of educators, production of learning materials, operating costs
- Preliminary work on cost of providing a 400-hour literacy programme to 550 million people: at least **US\$2.5 billion** per year to 2015
- A survey of bilateral donors and development banks shows that few explicitly refer to literacy in their aid policies

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Signs of renewed attention to literacy

A few recent national developments

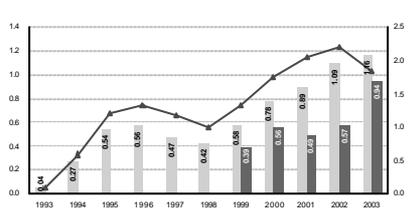
- Brazil**: launch of accelerated Literacy Brazil Programme
- Burkina Faso**: setting up of a ministry for literacy and NFE
- Indonesia**: president launches a national literacy movement
- Morocco**: creation of a State Secretariat for literacy and NFE
- Mozambique**: launch of new literacy strategy
- Nicaragua**: increase of share of adult education in overall education budget from 1.5% in 2000 to 2.2% in 2002
- Senegal**: commitment to private-public partnership approach
- Venezuela**: campaign to extend literacy to all youth and adults and education at least through Grade 6 to all children

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The aid record

Bilateral aid to basic education almost trebled between 1998 and 2003 but still accounts for less than 2% of total bilateral assistance. Multilateral aid is steadily rising



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UK aid: strong focus on basic education

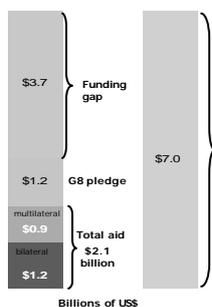
The UK is among the countries that could have a dramatic impact by increasing their education aid to over 0.4% of gross national income

- UK assigns relatively low importance to education in its aid portfolio (7.3% against 9.7% average for DAC members)
- Gives the **highest relative priority** among DAC members to basic education (**89%** of aid to education)
- UK is sixth contributor to education (4.9%) but fourth to basic education (accounts for 11% of bilateral aid to basic education)
- Aid to **basic education** represents 0.014% of its GNI
- Regional spread**: strong focus on sub-Saharan Africa (nearly 50%) and devotes more than 20% of its education aid to South and West Asia

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A funding gap remains

'No country in need should be denied international assistance'



- Aid to basic education should increase from 2.6% to 5% of total aid
- Aid must be aligned more closely with educational needs
- Long-term predictable aid is essential
- The Fast Track Initiative received strong endorsement at G8. A step for harmonization but no significant aid increase

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The EFA balance sheet ten years left, major challenges remain

- 100 million children out of primary school
- Girls: highly unequal chances
- Fees still pervasive
- Impact of HIV/AIDS
- Education quality too low
- 771+ million adults without literacy skills
- Often-considerable progress in low-income countries
- Impressive reductions in illiteracy in several high population countries
- Public spending on education has increased
- Donors have committed to increase their aid

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