



# PROGRESS IN EDUCATION

PROGRESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY

With linkages to improved health, economic growth and community-building, investment in education is a central building block for sustainable development.



Over the past decade, countries across the developing world have made remarkable progress in enrollment of children and many have begun to make strides in completion and education quality. Participation in secondary and tertiary education has also increased.

## Results

**Enrollment:** Countries have significantly increased the number of children attending primary school, many by abolishing school fees, one of the biggest obstacles to enrollment. It is estimated that 69 of 155 developing countries have achieved or are “on track” to reach Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015.<sup>1</sup> The number of children out of school globally decreased from 105 million in 1999 to 72 million in 2007.<sup>2</sup> South and West Asia more than halved the number of children out of school – a reduction of 21 million.<sup>3</sup> Despite the increase in the school-age population of 26 percent since 1995, enrollment rates in sub-Saharan Africa increased at five times the rate they did in the 1990s.<sup>4</sup> Nearly 75 percent of African children are now enrolled in school, up from 56 percent in 1999.<sup>5</sup>

- Ethiopia’s education budget grew from 3.6 percent of GNP in 1999 to 6 percent in 2009. 6,000 schools have been built since 1997, 85 percent in rural areas. Textbook distribution has improved and contents revised to enhance quality and relevance, and are now published in 22 local languages.<sup>6</sup> Primary school enrollment in Ethiopia skyrocketed from 36 percent in 1999 to 78 percent in 2008.<sup>7</sup>
- Since 2001, India enrolled 20 million out-of-school children, including first-generation learners from long-deprived or minority communities, and children with special needs. India will achieve UPE by 2015.<sup>8</sup>
- Benin had one of the world’s lowest enrollment rates in 1999, but is now on track to reach UPE by 2015. Primary school completion has jumped from 18 percent in 1990 to over 65 percent in 2008.<sup>9</sup>

- In Tanzania, as a result of an education development program focused on primary education, net enrollment rates soared to 96 percent in 2006, up from 58.6 percent in 2000.

**Primary school completion:** On average since the 1990s, approximately 16 percent more students in developing countries are completing their primary education.<sup>10</sup> South and West Asia showed marked improvement. In 2007 they achieved 86 percent primary school completion, up from 69 percent in 2000. Sub-Saharan Africa increased primary school completion from 53 percent in 1999 to 63 percent in 2007.<sup>11</sup>

- Niger, Mozambique, Malawi, Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Cape Verde have all more than doubled their primary completion rates since 1990.<sup>12</sup>
- Djibouti improved access to and quality of basic education. 71 percent of students completed primary education without repeating a grade in 2008 to 2009, up from 52 percent in 2003 to 2004.<sup>13</sup>
- A World Bank sponsored program focused on improving school quality increased primary school completion rates in Sri Lanka using a modernized curriculum and improved child-friendly learning practices. Sri Lanka achieved gender parity through grade 9 and reached 78 percent completion in 2004, up from 59 percent in 2006.<sup>14</sup>

**Gender parity:** Progress getting more girls in school has been particularly rapid over the past decade. 59 countries sent equal numbers of boys and girls to school in 2006, 20 more than in 1999.<sup>15</sup> South and West Asia achieved rapid improvements in gender parity in primary education, increasing the ratio from 16.8 girls for every 20 boys in school in 1999 to 19 girls per 20 boys in 2007. In the same time period, sub-Saharan Africa increased their ratios from 17 to 18 girls per 20 boys.<sup>16</sup>

- Bangladesh increased girl’s secondary enrollment to 3.9 million in 2005, from 1.1 million in 1991 through an

International Development Association (IDA) funded stipend program. 33,000 teachers were trained for 7,000 participating schools, and 25 new secondary schools were built in remote areas to reach disadvantaged communities. Secondary School Certificate pass rates for girls in the project increased from 39 percent in 2001 to 62.8 percent in 2008.<sup>17</sup>

- In Mexico, the Oportunidades incentive program offers a greater stipend for girls than boys, and for primary rather than secondary attendance. The program had the largest impact on secondary school students – the percentage increase in enrolments was over 20 percent for girls and 10 percent for boys.<sup>18</sup>

**Education Quality:** The ultimate purpose of schooling is to provide children with an education that provides them with the skills to participate and contribute fully in their societies and economies. It is estimated that over 10 million teachers will be needed worldwide by 2015.<sup>19</sup> Improving the quality of education will require recruiting and retaining trained teachers, increased inputs such as textbooks and classrooms, and increased monitoring and evaluation with national and regional testing.

- Tanzania hired 32,000 primary school teachers in 2002 to 2004. Grants for materials and teacher education significantly improved education quality, and non-salary spending increased from 4 percent of primary education budget to 27 percent in 2004.
- An IDA-financed education reform program reopened 1,000 schools in the Punjab region of Pakistan. It provided improvements to over 30,000 schools and distributed 28.6 million free textbooks for the 2008 to 2009 academic year. As a result, primary school enrollment increased 62 percent in 2007 from 45 percent in 2002, and primary completion rates in public schools increased to 61 percent from 58 percent over the same period.
- The Kyrgyz Republic attempted to combat the declining quality of the

rural educational system. A performance evaluation system has awarded 2,972 teacher bonuses of \$10 to \$30. \$20 is the average monthly pay. Teachers are better motivated, and are overwhelmingly in favor of the incentives.

**Literacy:** While there are 110 million fewer illiterate adults in 2007 compared with 1994,<sup>20</sup> women still make up two-thirds of the 759 million illiterate adults in 2008.<sup>21</sup> Increased country focus on adult literacy has been encouraging. Adult literacy rates in developing countries have increased nearly 12 percent in the last 20 years to 79 percent. Youth literacy in developing countries reached 87 percent in 2008.<sup>22</sup> In sub-Saharan Africa, the adult literacy rate climbed by an average of 17 percent between 1985 to 1994 and 2000 to 2007 to reach 62 percent.

- With some of the world's lowest literacy rates, Burkina Faso increased their adult literacy rate from 14 percent to 29 percent between 1985 to 1994 and 2000 to 2007, and Chad's increased from 12 percent to 32 percent.

### Global Partnership

Momentum has been building for increased attention to making education available for all. The 1Goal Campaign recruited the support of 18 million people worldwide.

**The Fast Track Initiative (FTI)**, formed in 2002, is the first-ever global compact on education. FTI is a partnership between donors and developing countries to accelerate progress toward UPE. In the African FTI-endorsed countries alone, 15.2 million children were enrolled in school between 2000 and 2006, a 52 percent increase. Developing countries must increase their expenditures on education to maintain the progress that has been made.

Donors have provided \$2 to \$3 billion annually in new and additional finance for low-income countries, principally through the International Monetary Fund, but sub-Saharan Africa faces an estimated revenue shortfall of \$80

billion per year in 2009 and 2010. It is estimated that it would cost \$16 billion a year to achieve UPE and wider Education for All goals by 2015.

African governments are also increasing expenditures for education. In 2007, half of sub-Saharan African countries with data devoted 17.5 percent or more of their national budgets to education.

### Moving Forward

In order to reinvigorate commitments to global education, donors and developing countries need to use the momentum generated in 2010 to increase the quality of education and reach marginalized children.

#### Improve education quality

Although developing countries have significantly increased the number of children enrolled in primary school over the past decade, progress improving primary school quality and completion, as well as access to secondary school and higher levels, has been much slower. Donor partners need to support country efforts to improve quality and completion, and focus on ensuring long-term and predictable development assistance to enable countries to meet recurrent costs such as teacher salaries, which make up 70–80 percent of education budgets in most developing countries.

#### Focus on marginalized children

The majority children out-of-school globally belong to marginalized groups: young girls, children in rural areas or fragile states, and children with disabilities. Reaching these children will require targeted policies and additional resources. New estimates predict that sub-Saharan Africa is facing a \$6.8 billion annual external financing gap in meeting UPE, with most of the increase reflecting the additional resources needed to reach marginalized children.<sup>23</sup> 60 percent of countries have not reached gender parity in primary and secondary education.<sup>24</sup> The difficulties faced by marginalized children in attaining an education have widespread ramifications.

## Improved FTI

An enhanced FTI partnership is critical to improving quality and completion and reaching marginalized children. In 2010, FTI will undergo a wide range of necessary reforms. The implementation of comprehensive reforms is critical to ensuring that the FTI is equipped to help countries leverage new resources and implement the policy changes needed to reach UPE by 2015. FTI also faces persistent funding shortfalls. The 36 countries that have FTI-endorsed national education plans currently face a financing gap of \$818 million, and is expected to grow to \$1.3 billion by 2010 as more countries are endorsed.

## Endnotes

1. World Bank. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1089739404514/frontmatter.pdf>
2. UNESCO Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2010
3. UNESCO Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2010
4. World Bank.
5. UNESCO Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2010
6. UNESCO Global Monitoring Report 2009. Box 2.6
7. UNESCO Institute of Statistics Table 5 Enrolment Ratios by ISCED level <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=182>
8. World Bank. <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/IDA/0,,contentMDK:21388039~menuPK:3266877~pagePK:51236175~piPK:437394~theSitePK:73154,00.html>
9. CGD MDG Progress Index. <http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1424377/>
10. CGD MDG Progress Index. P 27. <http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1424377/>
11. UNESCO Institute of Statistics. 'Table 12: Measures of progression and completion in primary education (ISCED 1)'. Downloaded from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=166>. This figure represents gross intake ratio (GIR) to the last grade of primary school, which is the closest proxy indicator for primary school completion.
12. CGD MDG Progress Index. <http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1424377/>
13. World Bank. <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/IDA/0,,contentMDK:22332090~menuPK:4754051~pagePK:51236175~piPK:437394~theSitePK:73154,00.html>
14. World Bank. <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/IDA/0,,contentMDK:21388004~menuPK:3266877~pagePK:51236175~piPK:437394~theSitePK:73154,00.html>
15. United Nations Population Fund. "State of World Population". 1990.
16. UNESCO Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2010 Table 2.2
17. IDA at Work, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/IDA/0,,contentMDK:21227882~menuPK:3266877~pagePK:51236175~piPK:437394~theSitePK:73154,00.html>
18. World Bank <http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/reducingpoverty/case/119/summary/Mexico-Oportunidades percent20Summary.pdf>
19. UN <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=36338&Cr=UNESCO&Cr1=>
20. UNESCO Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2010
21. UNESCO Global Education Digest 2010 [http://www.uis.unesco.org/template/pdf/ged/2010/GED\\_2010\\_EN.pdf](http://www.uis.unesco.org/template/pdf/ged/2010/GED_2010_EN.pdf)
22. UNESCO Institute of Statistics. Region Literacy Rates. <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=201>
23. UNESCO Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2010
24. UNESCO Global Education Digest 2010 [http://www.uis.unesco.org/template/pdf/ged/2010/GED\\_2010\\_EN.pdf](http://www.uis.unesco.org/template/pdf/ged/2010/GED_2010_EN.pdf)

Living Proof is about telling the real story of the incredible progress being achieved by people in developing countries, backed by the support of governments like ours. Investments in global development are achieving real results. They are saving lives, preventing and curing disease, and helping people, communities, countries escape from poverty for the long term. See the living proof for yourself. [www.one.org/livingproof](http://www.one.org/livingproof).