

Educational Challenges of the Post 2015 – What does a Vision for the Near Future Tell Us about EFA in Sub-Saharan African countries?

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INTRODUCTION

Most regional and international forums for the past few decades have identified education as a key factor of a country's development and a fundamental right for every individual. Yet, despite repeated declarations and commitments (e.g. Addis Ababa 1961, Jomtien 1990, Dakar 2000) many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) will not reach the four most quantifiable EFA goals by 2015.

As we try to make informed guesses of what education will or should be like after 2015 in our part of the world we can argue that while a tiny group of SSA countries can hope to join developed countries in the third or fourth quadrant of the Ninomiya & Mutch (2008) model, many others will still need the renewed support of the international community, for another decade at least, to consolidate access and participation, improve the quality and above all the relevance of their educational systems. We shall however mention a few achievements of one of the low achievers in terms of EFA (Burkina Faso) to show that despite the remaining challenges there is room for mild optimism.

SSA countries and the 2015 EFA target: statistics and stark field realities

According to the 2008 EFA Monitoring Report

- Only 51 out of 129 countries surveyed have achieved or are about to achieve the 4 most quantifiable EFA goals (universal primary education, adult literacy, gender parity and education quality),
- 53 countries have reached an intermediate level,
- 25 countries, mostly in SSA, are far from achieving EFA goals as a whole.
- Some of the statistics need to be carefully weighed against the realities of EFA implementation on the field
- Some SSA countries such as Burkina Faso, Niger, Eritrea, the CAR and Liberia clearly deserve their rankings as low achiever because of their current Primary school NER
- One may be however skeptical about the classification of countries like Zambia and Madagascar as high performers (over 90% net primary school enrolment ratios)
- Can we accept uncritically that a country is close to achieving UPE when a sizable proportion of its children are taught in disused peasant's houses without doors or windows by untrained teachers who are not always very fluent users of the language their pupils will be tested in at national exams?
- The Dakar framework of action states clearly that EFA means quality education for all

What can a vision of the near future tell us?

Most SSA countries will still face the following challenges, among others:

- How to reduce disparities and inequities in the provision of education in increasingly inequitable societies
- How can education prepare children to cope with an uncertain future (poverty, rising cost of living and food insecurity, unfair trade, natural and man-made disasters, political instability, social unrest, wars, insecurity,

pandemics such as HIV-AIDS and Malaria, youth unemployment, etc.)

- The need to look inward to find endogenous solutions to local problems (Improving indigenous skills and creating better ties between education and local development initiatives) while looking outwards to try to keep abreast with the skills required for survival in the global village (ICT, service economy)

LOOKING BEYOND 2015

Improving equitable access to education

Beyond 2015 equitable access and participation will remain a key challenge for many SSA countries. There is a need to

- consolidate the infrastructures by building more schools and replacing gradually the temporary or run-down infrastructures with JICA type of schools, built to serve several generations of pupils
- erase disparities to give equal access to every child
- recruit massively and train new teachers
- retrain and motivate contractual, volunteer or community teachers
- abandon the elitist approach to education particularly in francophone Africa

Improving the quality and relevance of education

Most SSA countries will need to

1. provide the basic inputs known to promote quality: school meals for rural and disadvantaged urban pupils, textbooks, water, sanitation and latrines to encourage girls' retention in schools,
2. upgrade teachers' competences and skills by a good combination of pre- and in-service teacher education and development
3. renew the curricula to stress the knowledge and skills likely to empower the learners to cope with an uncertain and rather bleak future
4. move away from the current pedagogical approaches, based on memorization and restitution, towards learner-centred approaches focusing on discovery procedures, critical thinking, initiative, creativity and autonomy
5. establish stronger links between schools and the local realities and needs (local curricula, bringing local knowledge and expertise into the classroom and opening the school to the community)
6. take bolder initiatives to reduce adult illiteracy and improve the basic skills of the youth (some improved forms of mass literacy campaigns)
7. improve the financial and administrative management capacities to take the best advantage of local and external funds
8. adopt a markedly different approach to educational innovations and reforms to involve all stakeholders in a bottom-up participatory process

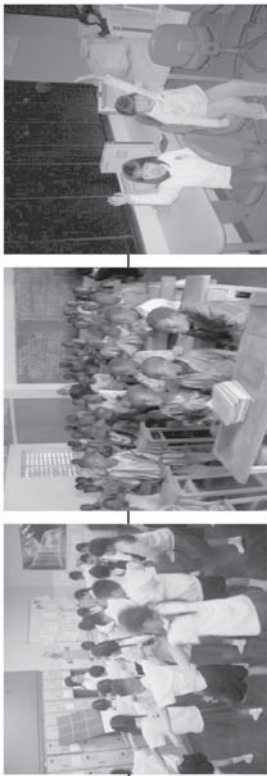
Some reasons for mild optimism: the case of Burkina Faso

A few facts and figures from Burkina Faso can be used to illustrate a statement made by the 2008 EFA global monitoring report that "national political will combined with international support can make a difference":

- Significant progress since the inception of PDDEB, the ten-year development plan: steep rise of the primary school GER
- Legal framework for enforcing EFA (The 2007 Education Orientation Law)
- Efforts to erase regional disparities (20 priority provinces)

- Incentives to promote gender equity
- Special fund for literacy and non-formal education (FONAENF)
- Creation of a Ministry of Youth and Employment
- Second phase of PDDEB and a general educational reform aiming at improving the quality and relevance of the whole educational system





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A contribution to Session 2 of the Japan Education Forum 2010

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- II.1 Improving equitable access to education
- II.2 Improving the quality and relevance of education
- II.3 Some reasons for mild optimism:
 the case of Burkina Faso

INTRODUCTION

- Education is a key factor of a country's development and a fundamental right for every individual.
- Yet, despite repeated declarations and commitments made at international forums many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) will not reach the four most quantifiable EFA goals by 2015.
- Predicting the future of education in SSA beyond 2015 is a difficult and highly speculative exercise

I. SSA COUNTRIES AND THE 2015 EFA TARGET

I.1 Statistics and stark field realities

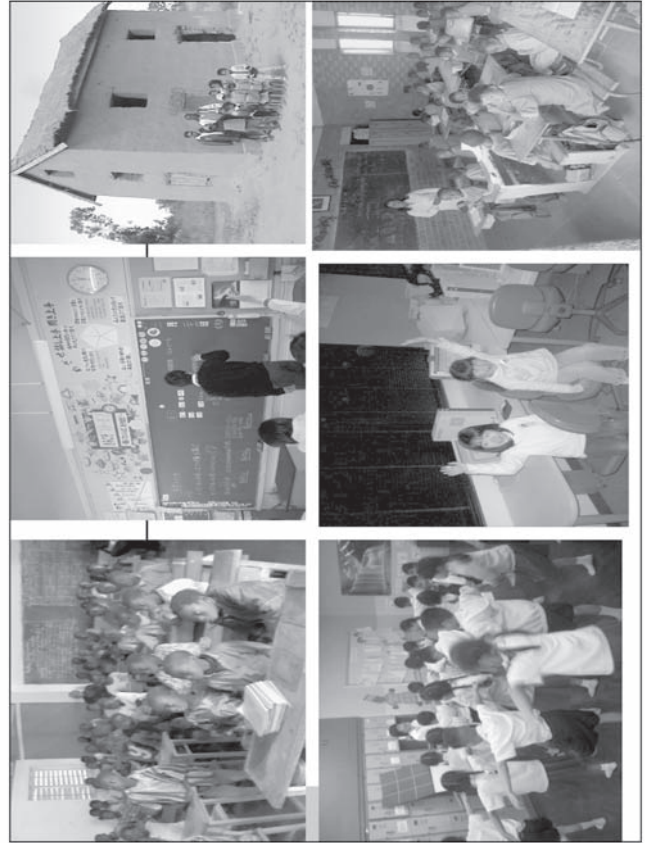
According to the 2008 EFA Monitoring Report

- Only 51 out of 129 countries surveyed will have achieved the 4 most quantifiable EFA goals by 2015
- 53 countries have reached an intermediate level,
- 25 countries, mostly in SSA, are far from achieving EFA goals as a whole.
- Some of the statistics need to be carefully weighed against the realities of EFA implementation on the field
- Some SSA countries such as Burkina Faso, Niger, Eritrea, the CAR and Liberia clearly deserve their rankings as low achiever because of their current Primary school NER

I. SSA COUNTRIES AND THE 2015 EFA TARGET

I.1 Statistics and stark field realities

- One may be skeptical about the classification of some countries as high performers (over 90% net primary school enrolment ratios)
- Some of these countries may achieve mass education but not quality EFA by the target year with run-down infrastructures and poorly qualified teachers
- Yet the Dakar framework of action states clearly that EFA means quality education for all



REASONS FOR MILD OPTIMISM THE CASE OF BURKINA FASO

- Significant progress since the inception of PDDEB
- Steep rise of primary school Gross Enrollment ratios
- Efforts to erase regional disparities (20 priority provinces)
- Incentives to promote gender equity
- Special fund for literacy and non-formal education
- Legal framework for enforcing EFA (The 2007 Education Orientation Law)
- Second phase of PDDEB and general educational reform aiming at improving quality and relevance of the whole educational system

REASONS FOR MILD OPTIMISM THE CASE OF BURKINA FASO

- The 2007 Education Orientation law makes basic education free and compulsory for all children from 6 to 16.
- Article 2 of the law defines education as “the set of activities aiming at developing a human being’s physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, psychological and social potentials in order to ensure their socialization, his autonomy, their welfare and their participation in the economic, social and cultural development of their country.”
- Article 3 states that Education is a national priority and that “Any person living in Burkina Faso has a right to education without any form of discrimination based on sex, social origin, race, religion, political opinions, nationality or health condition.”

REASONS FOR MILD OPTIMISM THE CASE OF BURKINA FASO

- The key words of article 13 which spells out the aims and objectives of education include among others: responsible citizen, productive, creative, enterprising, integral and harmonious development of the individual, democracy, national unity, social justice, solidarity, integrity, equity, loyalty, tolerance and peace, gender equity, universal values, etc.
- The aspirations are noble just like most statements in African constitutions and laws and the achievements within the last 10 years are quite encouraging as the following facts and the statistics below show.

REASONS FOR MILD OPTIMISM THE CASE OF BURKINA FASO

- This may incite one to draw a highly positive scenario for an ideal 21st century school that could take us through short-cuts into the knowledge society (know-what, know-why, know-how, know-who) in a democratic and equitable society more likely to promote sustainable development.
- Basically these low performing SSA countries aspire to move from the first quadrant to the fourth quadrant of the the Ninomiya & Mutch (2008) model and if possible jump from 1 to 4.

SSA COUNTRIES AND THE 2015 EFA TARGET I.2 What can a vision of the near future tell us?

- The educational systems of these countries will however still face the following challenges, among others
- ▶ How to reduce disparities and inequities in increasingly inequitable societies
 - ▶ How to prepare children to cope with an uncertain future
 - ▶ The need to look inward to find endogenous solutions to local problems
 - ▶ The need to look outwards to try to keep abreast with the skills required for survival in the global village

II. LOOKING BEYOND 2015

II.1 Improving equitable access to education

- Beyond 2015 equitable access and participation will remain a key challenge for many SSA countries.
- There is a need to
 - consolidate the infrastructures by building more schools and replacing temporary or run-down infrastructures
 - erase disparities to give equal access to every child
 - recruit massively and train new teachers
 - retrain and motivate contractual, volunteer or community school teachers
 - abandon the elitist approach to education particularly in francophone Africa

II. LOOKING BEYOND 2015

II.2 Improving the quality and relevance of education

Most SSA countries will need to

1. provide the basic inputs known to promote quality
2. upgrade the competences and skills of teachers and principals by a good combination of pre- and in-service teacher education and development
3. renew the curricula to stress the knowledge and skills likely to empower the learners to fight against poverty

II. LOOKING BEYOND 2015

II.2 Improving the quality and relevance of education

4. move away from the pedagogical approaches, based on memorization and restitution, towards learner-centred approaches
5. establish stronger links between schools and the local realities and needs
6. take bolder initiatives to reduce adult illiteracy and improve the basic skills of the youth
7. improve the financial and administrative management capacities to take the best advantage of local and external funds

BASIC FACTS ABOUT BURKINA FASO

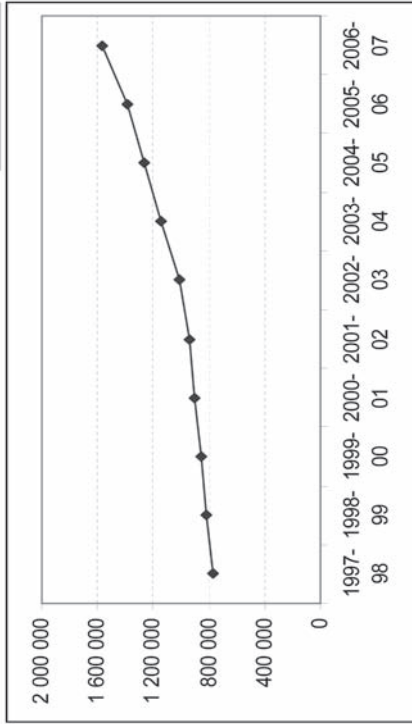
Surface area of the country	274 000 sq km
Population	14 800 000
Literacy rate	28% (2005)
Gross primary school enrolment ratio	(2008): National (72.5%) Boulkiemde Prov. (100.7%) Kadiogo Prov. (84.8 %) Oudalan Prov. (37.9)
Gender parity	0.85
Primary school completion rate	(2009): National (57.9%) Kadiogo Prov.(66.3%) Seno Prov. (32.3%)
Number of teachers (2006/2007)	28 886 (28.5% women)
Medium of instruction	French NL (Exp. Biling. Ed.)

Evolution of school-age population from 1997 to 2008

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total	1 800 757	1 852 802	1 906 475	1 961 809	2 018 834	2 077 667
Boys	900 028	926 258	953 298	981 175	1 009 896	1 039 510
Girls	900 729	926 544	953 177	980 634	1 008 938	1 038 157

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total	2 138 317	2 200 865	2 265 369	2 331 896	2 426 835	2 631 415
Boys	1 070 033	1 101 508	1 133 953	1 164 491	1 217 506	1 332 100
Girls	1 068 284	1 099 357	1 131 416	1 167 405	1 209 329	1 299 315

Evolution of the number of primary school pupils from 1998 to 2007



Evolution the number of teachers in class from 2000/01 to 2007/08

Type of School	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Public	15,091	15,779	17,053	18,760	20,636	22,374	24,277	26,565
Private	2,203	2,397	2,687	3,124	3,714	4,184	4,609	4,955
Total	17,294	18,176	19,740	21,884	24,350	26,558	28,886	31,520

PDDEB RESULTS

EVOLUTION OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL GER FROM 1997/98 TO 2008/2009

Year	1997/8	1998/9	1999/0	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3
B&G	43.2	44.1	44.7	45.9	46.5	48.7
Boys	51.9	52.5	52.9	53.9	54.1	56.3
Girls	34.5	35.6	36.5	37.9	38.9	41.1

Year	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9
B&G	53.3	57.7	61.4	67.0	71.8	72.4
Boys	60.5	64.9	68.4	73.8	77.9	77.1
Girls	46.1	50.5	54.3	60.1	65.7	67.7

PDDEB RESULTS

EVOLUTION OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL NER FROM 1997/98 TO 2008/2009

Year	1997/8	1998/9	1999/0	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3
B&G	34.9	35.3	36.1	36.9	36.3	38.2
Boys	42.0	42.2	42.8	43.4	42.3	44.2
Girls	27.8	28.4	29.3	30.3	30.2	32.1

Year	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9
B&G	40.7	45.3	48.2	53.5	58.8	57.9
Boys	46.5	51.1	53.8	59.1	63.8	61.3
Girls	34.9	39.5	42.6	47.9	53.7	54.5

PDDEB RESULTS

EVOLUTION OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL COMPLETION RATES
FROM 1997/98 TO 2008/2009

Year	1997/8	1998/9	1999/0	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3
B&G	24.6	24.2	26.2	27.4	28.0	29.5
Boys	30.3	29.3	31.6	33.3	33.5	34.7
Girls	19.0	19.3	20.9	21.5	22.6	24.5

Year	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9
B&G	31.0	32.2	33.3	35.4	38.9	41.7
Boys	36.1	37.4	38.2	40.6	44.3	45.6
Girls	25.9	27.1	28.5	30.2	33.5	37.8