

[Keynote Speech]

Education for All: what has been achieved and challenges beyond 2015? -Experiences from Ethiopia-

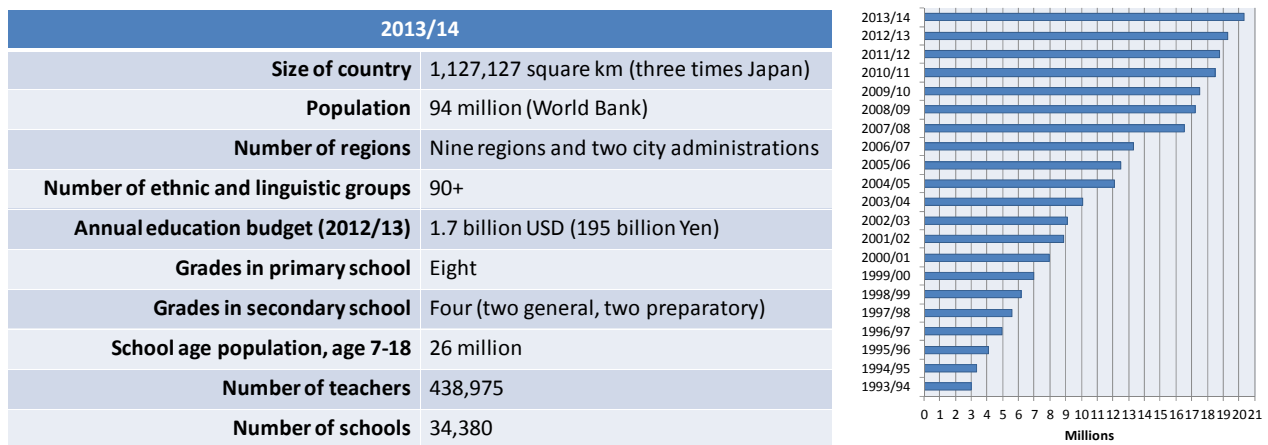
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1. Ethiopia in context

Ethiopia is a large and diverse country with a population approaching 100 million, distributed amongst over ninety ethnic and linguistic groups. The school age population this year is twenty-six million. General primary education lasts for eight years and general secondary for two years.

Figure 1: a snapshot of key statistics & enrolment growth in primary and secondary schooling in past twenty years



In 1997, on the basis of early 1990s data – a time when gross enrolment rates were around 20%, the following prediction was made: “*in spite of recent enrolment increases, with no other changes to admission rates or to progression rates within the system, by 2008/09 almost two-thirds of the school-aged population will still remain out of primary school, and the gender gap will worsen*”. Ethiopia has, however, delivered a remarkable increase in enrolment – and a great step towards education for all – over the twenty years from 1993/4 to 2013/14.

2. What has been achieved?

In striving to achieve education for all, Ethiopia has moved away from an education system that provided for a small elite and has expanded enrolments in every region of the country. In particular, Ethiopia has achieved:

- **Increased access:** primary (grades 1-8) Gross Enrolment Ratio up from 26% in 1994 to 97% in 2014
- **Huge expansion of facilities:** schools up from 7,900 in 1985 to 35,380 in 2014; primarily rural areas

- **Educated at the correct age:** improved structure of primary school enrolment with Net Enrolment Ratio up to 89% in 2014
- **Greater gender equity:** emphasis on access for girls lifting gender parity index from 0.66 in 1991 to 0.94 in 2013

In achieving this progress, four important factors can be identified:

- **Sustained government commitment**
 - A genuine commitment to transform a traditionally elitist system to one that provides education for all. All government activities are guided by the strong Education and Training Policy, 1994, which emphasises equality and accommodates the country's diversity. This policy has been – and continues to be – implemented through a clear set of medium-term Education Sector Development Plans (ESDPs). The government is now preparing its fifth consecutive ESDP for 2015-20. The government supports policy and strategy objectives with public commitments involving significant increases in financial resources (26% of government expenditure in 2010, 25% in 2013)
- **Increased decentralisation**
 - The government has achieved a structural transformation of service delivery through sincere decentralisation of resources and decision-making authority to progressively lower administrative levels. Decentralisation is supported by block grants from federal government to regions and on to districts. It allows for more effective responses to local needs and stronger citizen voice; with service providers strictly accountable to local governments for producing results and local authorities held accountable by regional and federal governments.
- **Strong community participation**
 - Thousands of schools constructed by communities, to bring service provision closer to settlements. A special support program is in place for hard-to-reach communities. School planning and management is then led by parent and teacher associations – with budget responsibility. This mechanism ensures local ownership and broad-based decision making as well as raising awareness amongst communities of the importance and value of education for individual and national development.
- **Effective development cooperation**
 - Ethiopia has experienced a rapid increase in donor cooperation since 2001. Government leadership has mobilised large donor commitments to education sector reforms. Donor partners are engaged in preparation of Education Sector Development Plans and support pooled funds (such as the General Education Quality Improvement Program) which are better capable of targeting donor finance and improving capacity for service delivery. In the past five years, international cooperation and development finance accounts for between 15% and 20% of education expenditure.

3. Challenges beyond 2015?

To make the final steps towards education for all, familiar challenges require new or improved strategies to provide all children with equitable access to a quality education. These challenges relate primarily to (a) access and equity; and (b) quality.

- **Access and equity:** Ethiopia's size and diversity supplies a constant challenge to providing educational opportunities for all. Three million children remain out of general education - many of whom are chronically poor; have special educational needs; and are the most vulnerable. Significant gender and regional gaps in enrolment remain. Improved strategies are needed to reach all children in all areas and from all backgrounds.
- **Quality:** high-quality education is fundamental to Ethiopia's goal of achieving long lasting and equitable economic growth. Poor outcomes in national learning assessments need to be improved – students are not acquiring the expected knowledge, abilities and skills. The task is not small, with hundreds of thousands of teachers in tens of thousands of schools; but improved quality will also increase efficiency by reducing dropout, reducing repetition and increasing completion and achievement.



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Education for All

**What has been achieved and future
challenges beyond 2015**

Experiences from Ethiopia

This presentation



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- 1. Ethiopia in context: a snapshot**
- 2. Ethiopia in context: enrolment growth**
- 3. What has been achieved**
 - Major steps towards EFA
 - Sustained government commitment
 - Increased decentralisation
 - Community participation
 - Effective development cooperation
- 4. Challenges beyond 2015**
 - Access
 - Equity
 - Quality

Ethiopia in context: a snapshot



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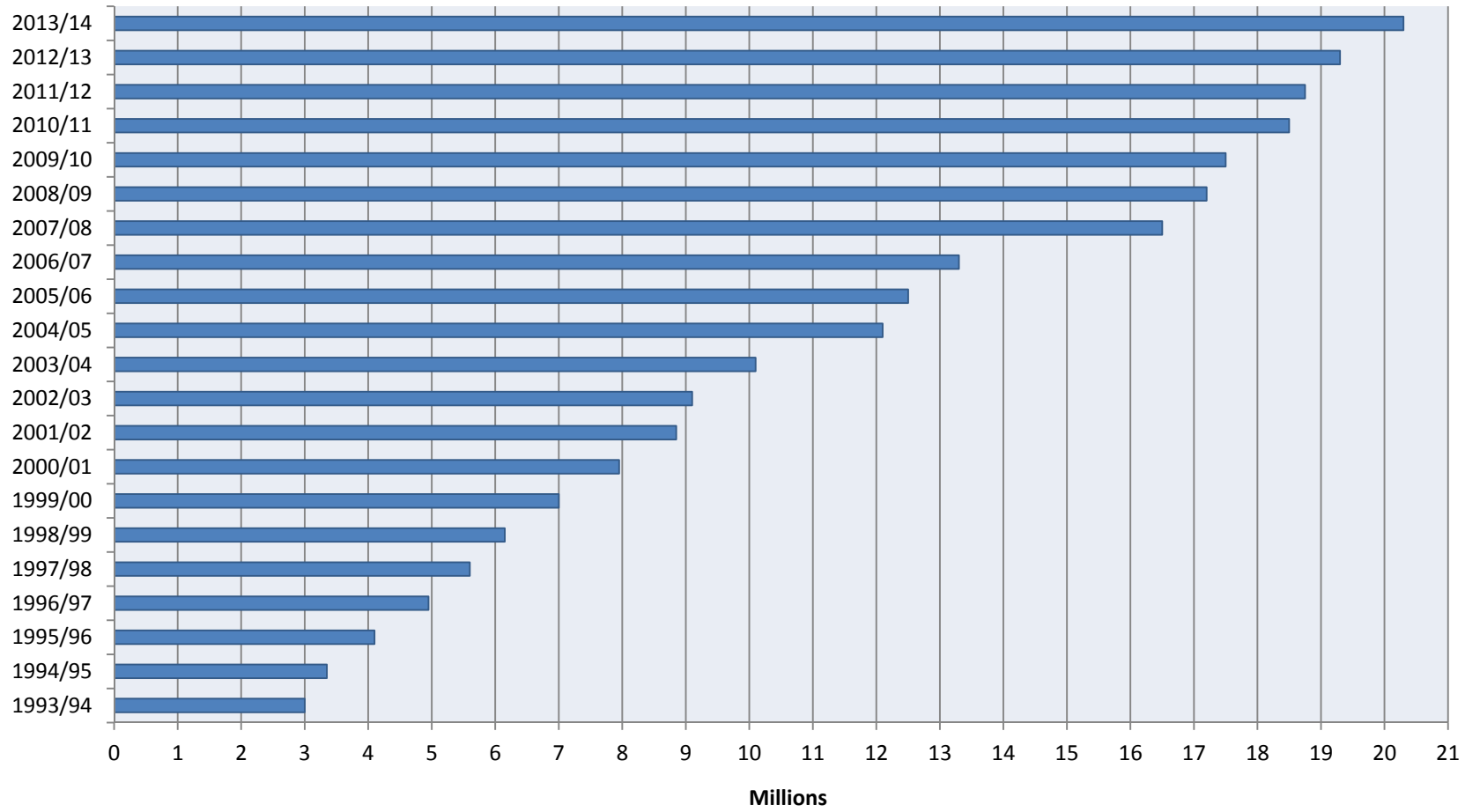
2013/14	
Size of country	1,127,127 square km (three times Japan)
Population	94 million (World Bank)
Number of regions	Nine regions and two city administrations
Number of ethnic and linguistic groups	90+
Annual education budget (2012/13)	1.7 billion USD (195 billion Yen)
Grades in primary school	Eight
Grades in secondary school	Four (two general, two preparatory)
School age population, age 7-18	26 million
Number of teachers	438,975
Number of schools	34,380

Ethiopia in context: enrolment growth



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Figure 1: Enrolment growth in primary and secondary schooling in past twenty years





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“ In spite of recent enrolment increases, with no other changes to admission rates or to progression rates within the system, by 2008/09 almost two-thirds of the school-aged population will still remain out of primary school, and the gender gap will worsen ”

A prediction made in 1997, on the basis of data from the early 1990s, when the gross enrolment ratio was in the 20% range



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What has been achieved?

Major steps towards EFA



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- **Increased access:** primary (grades 1-8) Gross Enrolment Ratio up from 26% in 1994 to 97% in 2014
- **Huge expansion of facilities:** school numbers up from 7,900 in 1985 to 35,380 in 2014; primarily in rural areas
- **Educated at the correct age:** improved structure of primary school enrolment with Net Enrolment Ratio up to 89% in 2014
- **Greater gender equity:** emphasis on access for girls lifting gender parity index from 0.66 in 1991 to 0.94 in 2013

“ He could learn as there is a school nearby and everyone is going. I saw my friends sending their children to school and I followed suit “

A parent in Bilballa, Ethiopia



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**Four important factors have
influenced Ethiopia's progress**

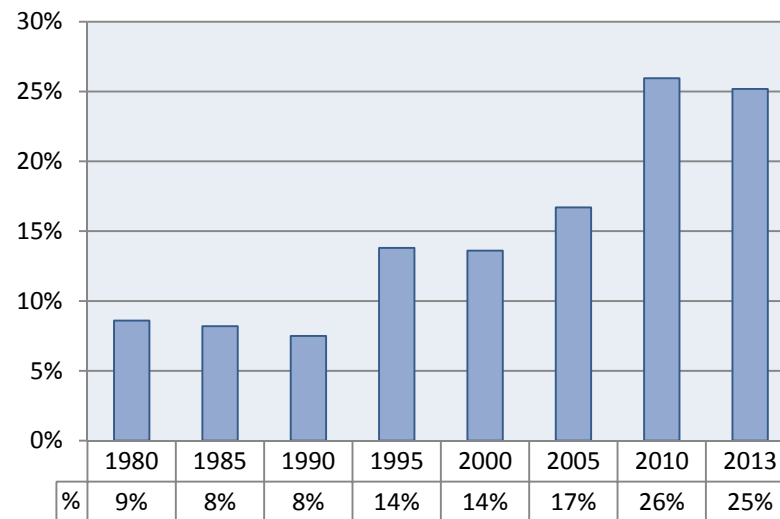
1. Sustained government commitment



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- A genuine commitment to transform a traditionally elitist system to one that provides education for all
- A strong guiding document (Education and Training Policy, 1994) which emphasises equality and accommodates the country's diversity
- A clear set of medium-term Education Sector Development Plans (ESDPs) to lead implementation. The government is now preparing its fifth consecutive ESDP for 2015-20.
- Public commitments have been supported by sustained implementation, involving significant increases in expenditure

Figure 2: Education's share of government expenditure



2. Increased decentralisation



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- Structural transformation of service delivery: sincere decentralisation of resources and decision-making authority to progressively lower administrative levels
- Decentralisation supported by block grants from federal government to regions and on to districts
- Decentralisation allows for more effective responses to local needs and stronger citizen voice
- Service providers are strictly accountable to local governments for producing results
- Local authorities are held accountable by regional and federal governments
- Services are provided more efficiently than by a highly centralised government

3. Strong community participation



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- Parent and teacher associations lead school planning and management, with budget responsibility
- Thousands of schools constructed by communities, to bring service provision closer to settlements
- Local ownership and broad-based decision making
- Special support programmes for hard to reach communities
- Greater awareness amongst communities of the importance and value of education for individual and national development

4. Effective development cooperation



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- Rapid increase in donor cooperation since 2001
- Government mobilised large donor commitments to education sector reforms
- International cooperation and development finance accounts for between 15% and 20% of education expenditure in past five years
- Large, government led projects with consortiums of donor groups (including General Education Quality Improvement Program; and Promotion of Basic Services) target donor finance and improve capacity for service delivery
- Donor partners engaged in preparation of Education Sector Development Plans – a consultative process



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Challenges beyond 2015?

Familiar concerns that require new or improved strategies to provide all children with equitable access to a quality education

Access and equity



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- Ethiopia's size and diversity supplies a constant challenge to providing educational opportunities for all
- More than four million children remain out of general education - many of whom are chronically poor; have special educational needs; and are the most vulnerable
- Significant gender and regional gaps in enrolment remain
- Improved strategies are needed to reach all children in all areas and from all backgrounds
- Remarkable expansion of primary schooling demands efforts to ensure expansion of secondary schooling can keep pace

Quality



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- High-quality education is fundamental to Ethiopia’s goal of achieving long lasting and equitable economic growth
- Extraordinary achievement in expanding enrolment, but that increases the challenge to provide quality education
- Poor outcomes in national learning assessments – students not acquiring the expected knowledge abilities and skills
- Hundreds of thousands of teachers in tens of thousands of schools – major teacher and facilities’ upgrading exercise
- Improved quality will also increase efficiency by reducing dropout, reducing repetition and increasing completion



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Thank you