



A quality education for all:

Priority actions for governments, donors and civil society

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A quality education system is one that succeeds in meeting its own goals; one that is relevant to the needs of children, communities and society; and one that fosters the ability of children to acquire knowledge and critical learning skills. Quality is not the only factor keeping children out of school, but when effective learning is not taking place in schools, parents are more likely to withdraw children from school early or not to send them at all. Improving quality is therefore essential to achieving the 2015 goal of universal access to and completion of primary education. This paper outlines the priority actions needed to deliver quality education, both within national education plans and donors' approaches. Finally, it points towards some ways of monitoring improvements in education quality.

About the GCE

The Global Campaign for Education is a worldwide alliance of NGOs and trade unions active in more than 150 countries. Members of the GCE's elected Board are: Actionaid Alliance, Asia-Pacific Bureau for Adult Education (ASPBAE), Brazilian National Campaign for the Right to Education, Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE Bangladesh), Education International, Global March Against Child Labour, Oxfam International, South African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO).

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Summary

The majority of children, especially girls, the poor and children from minority communities, gain far less from school than they deserve. Recent studies show that many children in developing countries are leaving school without learning to read, write or do basic sums. This is an injustice and a waste of human potential that must be challenged. Improving the quality of public education is also one of the fundamental actions – along with expanding access and abolishing fees and charges - needed to achieve the 2015 goal of universal completion of primary school.

All of these steps will demand significantly increased investment in public basic education, but failure to improve quality is even more costly. High drop-out and repetition rates mean high costs, while the benefits of education to society and to individuals are much reduced when effective learning does not take place.

Quality education is not a mystery. It can be achieved when all teachers are properly trained, supported and paid; when every classroom has enough textbooks, desks and learning materials; when schools provide a safe and welcoming environment; and communities have a say in decision-making. Above all, it can be achieved when governments and civil society build a strong political commitment to the ideal of good public education for everyone, and take specific steps to improve school conditions in the poorest communities and for girls and disadvantaged children.

Recommendations

These are our suggestions for objectives that are likely to strengthen any national education plan.

- 1. Ensure that every classroom has a trained teacher who turns up every day to teach.**
- 2. Ensure that every classroom has an adequate supply of books and learning materials.**
- 3. Agree a ceiling for class sizes, and ensure that the budget prioritises teacher recruitment to meet this target in all schools.**
- 4. Invest in teacher training and support teachers to broaden their teaching approaches based on the active involvement of children – both boys and girls.**
- 5. Support local officials to make schools more responsive to local needs and more accountable to parents and communities.**
- 6. Put communities and children at the heart of processes to monitor the effectiveness of education.**
- 7. Make schools safe, and ensure they are seen to be safe.**
- 8. Include issues of citizenship, values, tolerance and life-skills in the curriculum.**
- 9. Ensure that children are taught in a language they understand, using the mother tongue in the early years of school.**
- 10. Support appropriate, good quality early years provision, focusing on particularly disadvantaged groups of young children.**

In order to make progress on these objectives; it is essential that governments bring together all education partners within the planning process to agree which quality interventions are possible and appropriate priorities for a country. Dramatic increases in donor funding for long-term recurrent costs will be essential, as will support for civil society groups to bring their perspectives on appropriate quality interventions into national planning processes. Civil society groups should strive to ensure that the planning process responds to the interests and needs of all groups, particularly the marginalised. NGOs should seek to promote innovation and strengthen capacity within the government system rather than developing parallel solutions. Ideal models of education that are developed in isolation from the government system have rarely succeeded in improving education quality for significant numbers of children in the long term. Finally, significant strengthening of monitoring systems, to better reflect and track the quality of education processes as well as education outcomes, will be needed. The use of primary completion rates, rather than enrolment rates, as the benchmark for EFA progress is recommended as a useful first step.

1 Why is the quality of education important?

The majority of children, especially girls, the poor and children from minority communities, gain far less from school than they deserve. The costs of education are disproportionately high for the poorest families; in Nepal; for example, poor households devote 29% of their non-food expenditure to schooling.¹ Yet, many poor children spend years in school without learning to read, write or do basic sums. Poor quality leads others to drop out early. This is an injustice and a waste of human potential that must be challenged. Improving the quality of public education is also one of the three fundamental steps – along with expanding access and abolishing fees and charges - needed to achieve the 2015 goal of universal completion of primary school.

The failure to improve the quality of public schools is often excused or disguised by treating quality as a great technical mystery, which only consultants with doctorates in education can pronounce upon. But running decent schools is not a mystery. Fundamentally, it is a political challenge. It can be achieved when all teachers are properly trained, supported and paid; when every classroom has enough textbooks, desks and learning materials; when the environment is safe and welcoming; and when schools are held accountable to communities. Above all, it can be achieved when governments and civil society build a strong political commitment to the ideal of good public education for everyone, and take specific steps to improve school conditions in the poorest communities and for girls and disadvantaged children.

Many colonial education systems offered a high standard of education to a tiny minority. The challenge facing post-colonial governments has been to transform this elite system into a mass education system, *and* to maintain standards, all on a very tight budget. But it has often proven easier to get children into schools than to ensure that they actually learn during the time that they spend there. The latter is a task that demands imaginative policy-making, innovative management, substantial investment of technical and financial resources – and above all, a strong political commitment to levelling the playing field for rich and poor, boys and girls, and majority and minority communities.

Yet governments and donors neglect quality at their own peril, for the quality of education is fundamentally important to parents and children – particularly in poor households, where every penny spent on schooling is keenly felt. When schools cease to deliver useful learning, or are out of step with parents' values and aspirations, the proportion of students repeating years or dropping out will rise quickly. Moreover, evidence shows that poor quality has an even stronger impact on the initial decision to send children to public schools than the decision to keep them there. Wealthier parents can opt for private schooling, but often the only choice available to poor parents is simply to withdraw their children from education altogether. On both counts, the 2015 goal of universal completion of primary education is unlikely to be achieved without significant effort to improve the quality of public education, particularly in poor and marginalised communities.

A good quality education is also an essential part of children's enjoyment of their childhood; equally, it is the means for them to realise their dignity as human beings and fulfil their potential. Bad schooling, which tends to rely on rote learning instilled by intimidation or force, can quash children's natural ability to question, explore and learn for themselves. In the worst cases, it is largely irrelevant to children, and is even abusive. In these circumstances, children equate schooling with either boredom or fear.

Box 1 Quality and efficiency: a fundamental connection

Poor quality education leads to a waste of time and money through children dropping out and repeating grades. Insufficiencies generate inefficiencies: when schools are starved of resources, not only does quality suffer – so does the capacity of the system to use resources effectively. Investing in a parallel expansion of quality and access achieves considerably more than using the same resources simply to get children into school. But quality itself requires financing: investing in quality will increase the impact of donors' and governments' overall education spending. Shortsighted approaches that drive down unit costs at the expense of quality, such as the use of "volunteer" teachers or double-shifting, can in practice increase the waste of resources.

When budgets are cut back so that the main ingredients of effective schools – teachers, books, and school facilities – can no longer be provided, education becomes inefficient (see box 1 above). Failing schools contribute much less than

they could and should to increasing productivity, building human capital and decreasing inequality. High drop-out and repetition rates mean high costs, while the benefits of education to society and to individuals are much reduced when effective learning does not take place.

Time is one of the few assets that poor families have. Spending time in school carries considerable opportunity costs, in addition to the direct costs, which are also steep. While abolishing fees and charges for education is crucial to enable poor children to stay in school, it is also essential that education systems can demonstrate to parents and children that their time is not being wasted. Girls in particular suffer from parents' perception that school is neither useful nor safe for them: the Millennium Goal of achieving gender equity in schools is itself threatened by the failure to improve the quality of education.

Elements of a successful public education system

A useful framework is provided by UNICEF, setting out five dimensions or principles of quality in basic education – to which the GCE would add a sixth, cross-cutting principle.

Box 2 Six dimensions of quality (based on UNICEF, Quality Education Consultation, Oct 2000)

1. Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities.

2. Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities.

3. Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention, peace.

4. Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities.

5. Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

6. Responsiveness to the diverse needs of children, and accountability to parents, communities and taxpayers for education outcomes, must be emphasised across all five dimensions of quality.

There is no uniform recipe for translating these principles into concrete policy measures. Indeed, while it is important for governments to have access to good analysis of what has worked in other countries, this should never be used as a shortcut for the essential process of involving all local stakeholders in developing local solutions to local problems. Well-meaning attempts to use one country's experience as a "model" for others to follow have often proven disastrous. However, we believe that the following points should be considered in national and local planning processes.

Learners

- Improving quality depends on improving children's experience in school; many of the changes outlined below are preconditions for children to be "ready to participate and learn".
- Good quality early childhood provision within families and communities can dramatically improve children's readiness for primary school; it can be particularly effective in preparing the most marginalised groups of children for their first experiences of primary school.
- Children learn faster where they are able to practice their new skills outside school: there is a strong link between adult education for parents, and children's own learning.

Environments

- Safe and protective environments require strategies to root out abuse by teachers and bullying between children, with a particular focus on girls' security. Employing more women teachers is key to ensuring both girls' safety and their ability to learn. Risk factors in the environment beyond the school need to be addressed, for example, on children's journey to school, and as a precondition for promoting learning from spaces outside schools.
- Little learning can occur in class sizes greater than 30 to 40. Beyond this, it becomes impossible for teachers to engage with children as individuals. And large classes encourage gender inequity, with girls finding it even harder to be heard or to access resources such as books.
- Adequate facilities should include improved classroom quality (protection from the weather, and sufficient ventilation and light); the provision of toilets for both girls and boys, and water points, books and other materials.
- Corporal punishment and other harsh or laborious forms of punishment have no place within a protective school environment. Their application is frequently discriminatory. They cause drop-out and are barriers to learning, as are the use of stereotyping and sarcasm in discipline.
- School buildings need to be made accessible for children with disabilities.

Content

- Curriculum and materials need to be more responsive to children's diverse needs. While overall quality needs professional oversight, there should be sufficient flexibility to use local examples, where possible in local languages, and to respond to local issues and local culture.
- Curriculum reform is particularly important where indigenous people's own knowledge, skills and values are not be reflected in dominant groups' views of what should be included in a curriculum.
- However, curriculum reform should not be embarked on lightly; it is a long, costly and difficult process with a long history of failure. As the content of what is taught in schools is an unavoidably political issue, we believe that success is more likely when national education planning includes democratic processes to shape the curriculum.

Processes

1. Learning/teaching processes

- Central to children having a good school experience is the relationship between teachers and children. Improving this often requires changes in approaches to teaching, hence more effective teacher training, and ongoing support to teachers beyond in-service training.
- Investing in more and better training and support for teachers, and improving their conditions of employment, is a fundamental prerequisite for improving quality. The employment of untrained "volunteers" in place of trained professionals is not consistent with an effort to provide quality education, and should cease.
- Education cannot be considered quality education if it is meeting only the needs of particular groups of children. Training and disciplinary procedures should orient schools towards becoming responsive to the different needs of all children, and emerging as non-stigmatising environments in which diversity is celebrated and prejudices are actively challenged.
- The delivery of adequate hours of instruction needs to be enforced in all schools. It is typical for schools in disadvantaged rural areas to provide far fewer hours of instruction than the supposed legal norm, while average annual instruction time is far less in developing than in developed countries. Most African children spend as long in the classroom in a year as Western European children do in a term. Any measure that will result in a further cut in effective hours of instruction – such as multi-shift scheduling or multi-grade classrooms – should be considered with extreme caution.
- Greater flexibility in timetabling and scheduling will enable poor children to attend more consistently.
- Children need to be taught in a language they understand. This needs to be balanced by giving them a chance to learn the languages that give greater access to power and work opportunities. Mother-tongue teaching in the early years can often be successfully combined with introducing majority or national languages as taught subjects later.
- Teaching must work towards deepening children's understanding, not just their ability to learn new facts. The ultimate goal is enabling children to think creatively for themselves. Including music, arts, crafts and drama in teaching styles can aid progress towards this.
- Requiring children to pay for extra tuition in order to succeed is a major barrier to equity and needs to be strongly sanctioned, particularly where it amounts to bribery to pass exams, it needs to be rooted out by inspection. Conversely, teachers need to be paid a living wage without this supplementary income.

- The process of testing children must enable them to learn from their results. End exams have little benefit in the early primary years: other assessment methods can be less disruptive.

2. School management processes

- If responsiveness to children is central to quality, education systems need to strengthen the ability to solve problems at local level. This implies better training and resourcing for head teachers and local officials, to enable them to take on decentralised roles effectively. Renewing the links between schools and society requires local officials equipped with approaches to support community involvement in school management and accountability.
- It is difficult to improve quality without responding to children's perspectives on their school experience. Teachers, inspectors and management authorities need to be sensitised to the benefits of this and supported in ways to make it work in practice.

Outcomes

- Quality in the eyes of parents is visible progress: seeing that their children can actually read, write and count. Regular learning assessments, which are seen to be credible and fair, are important.
- A further important outcome is children's own experience and perception of how far education improves the quality of their lives in the broadest sense. This may reflect a better balance between future opportunities and the relevance of school to their immediate situation.
- Exam results show only one dimension of learning outcomes. A good quality school may have many children facing extreme deprivations who require longer to reach a given level of literacy, but the quality is reflected in considerable learning progress from a low starting point: this is an important outcome, to be monitored.

Recommendations

Priority actions for governments

National education plans need to be simple, with strong analysis identifying a limited number of genuine priorities and outlining strategies to deliver and finance these. It is essential for governments to bring together all education partners within the planning process to agree which quality interventions are possible and appropriate priorities for a country. These are our suggestions for objectives that are likely to strengthen any national education plan.

1. *Ensure that every classroom has a trained teacher who turns up every day to teach.* Guaranteeing regular and adequate payment of teachers is a precondition for teacher motivation. Interventions to improve teachers' status and conditions of service can be equally important for their motivation. Decentralised systems for warning and then removing non-attending teachers from the salary register could release more resources for committed teachers. Provide incentives for good teachers to teach in the most deprived communities and at the levels with the highest drop-out rates, and stop removing teachers to rural areas as a punishment for misconduct.
2. *Ensure that every classroom is well-supplied with books and learning materials.* Specify a proportion of recurrent budgets that will be spent each year on supply and improvement of learning materials, and on teacher training and support. Without protecting this part of recurrent budgets, new resources spent on teachers' salaries and recruitment will have limited effect in improving children's literacy and numeracy. A part of these budgets should be decentralised to support local production of more relevant learning materials. The impact spending on materials should be assessed against targets for materials per classroom and per pupil, and resources directed towards areas where these indicators are weakest.
3. *Agree a national maximum ratio of teachers to pupils in the classroom,* and ensure that the budget prioritises teacher recruitment and training to meet this target in all schools, starting with the early years where class size is a key factor in repetition and drop-out rates.
4. *Support teachers to broaden their teaching approaches* based on the active involvement of children – both boys and girls. These same approaches should be integrated into the ways teachers themselves are trained. In-service training is ineffective without in-classroom coaching in a range of approaches: at a minimum these need to cover learning by doing and by observation, learning inside and outside the classroom, group activities, peer-

group learning and checking understanding. This ongoing support needs to be included within the jobs of head teachers, other experienced teachers, inspectors, and ward/cluster-level officials.

5. *Support local officials to make education more responsive to local needs and to the needs of marginalised groups of children.* Increasing school-level autonomy and school-based improvement plans requires a new vision of decentralisation, ending its role as a cost-cutting measure. It will instead require decentralisation of both expertise and budgets; nation-wide training of local officials in accounting, in supervision of new learning approaches, in support to teacher development, in sensitivity to gender issues, in management of a more flexible school year and daily timetable, in support for genuinely representative community management of schools, and in monitoring quality. Special efforts and radical innovations should be undertaken to facilitate the return to school of girls, working children, and children from marginalised groups who have been withdrawn from formal education. Visionary leadership and stronger accountability is needed to inspire a sense of the importance of quality among officials at all levels, and to end the wastage caused by corruption.
6. *Put communities and children at the heart of processes to monitor the effectiveness of education.* District authorities need to take responsibility for the facilitation of communities' involvement in education, a role effectively piloted by NGOs in a wide variety of contexts. Involving communities and children in holding schools to account for quality can encourage rapid improvements at very low cost. To be effective, it needs to include school committees, parents' associations, women's groups, other community organisations and elected representatives: only by involving this breadth of local interest groups will the school become a part of the community, not apart from it.
7. *Make schools safe, and ensure they are seen to be safe.* Every district authority should have a named official responsible for guaranteeing that schools are free from abuse of children. Teachers who sexually abuse girls must be automatically dismissed and prosecuted, and governments should support teacher unions' own codes of conduct on teacher behaviour. Local officials need to involve communities and children in identifying risk factors in school or on the journey to school, paying particular attention to the risks faced by girls, and developing local strategies to counter these risks. Corporal punishment should be illegal in schools, and teacher training needs to include support in developing alternative forms of discipline.
8. *Include issues of citizenship, values, tolerance and life-skills in the curriculum.* Although curriculum reforms can be difficult, they may be essential to enable teachers to relate the curriculum to issues of immediate relevance to children in their local context – including HIV/AIDS prevention. It can be a key arena for challenging the prejudices that prevent girls from benefiting fully from school. A further dimension of this curriculum reform should be the opposition to all forms of fundamentalism: education cannot be considered good quality if it becomes the medium for promoting one ideology to the exclusion of all others.
9. *Ensure that children are taught in a language they understand.* Where feasible, teaching and learning through the mother-tongue in the early years of school can dramatically improve children's learning rates. Introducing the majority/national/international language as a subject taught initially through the mother-tongue medium can be an effective approach to ensuring that the benefits of grasping the languages of power are not restricted to a privileged elite. In multiple-language classes, teachers or assistants who can explain in the children's mother-tongue can make a significant impact where the language of instruction is not well understood.
10. *Support appropriate, good quality early years provision,* focusing on particularly disadvantaged groups of young children, who are most vulnerable to making poor progress in their learning and would be most at risk of dropping out of primary school. Priority should be given to enabling key groups of adults – such as parents, pre schools teachers and child care workers – to provide opportunities for learning through play and, more broadly, responsive environments that will support both girls' and boys' healthy all-round development and transition into schools.

Priority actions for donors

1. Quality improvements should become a top priority in aid allocation decisions. Donor financing priorities need to demonstrate that commitment to quality reaches beyond the pages of international documents. Donors have sometimes given mixed messages on what kinds of education strategy will be rewarded with new resources, adding to pressure on governments for very rapid enrolment increases with no attention to the associated deterioration in quality. Donors should consistently stress that a good education strategy is one that improves both access and quality in parallel, and that they will fund all strategies that work towards this aim, in line with their Dakar commitment. They should use their policy dialogue with governments to ensure that meaningful targets and timelines for quality improvement are agreed by all stakeholders within the framework of national education plans. As part of this process, they should support civil society groups to bring their perspectives on appropriate quality interventions into national planning processes.

2. More effective aid makes for more effective education systems. Despite growing commitment, at least in rhetoric, to “country ownership”, too many donors still succumb to the temptation to superimpose their own priorities, initiatives and projects on top of national plans in the name of improving quality. The proliferation of parallel and sometimes competing donor initiatives, together with the failure to deliver predictable and coordinated budgetary support for agreed plans, plays a significant part in the policy incoherence and implementation failure that plagues struggling education systems. Reform of donor technical assistance strategies, and an end to tied aid, would also significantly increase the impact of aid on quality improvement.

3. Financing gaps and recurrent costs. Quality improvements cost money, but there are high returns on this investment. National education plans need to identify financing gaps that must be filled to deliver priorities for improving quality, and donors must meet their pledge to fill these finance gaps. Many of the costs of quality improvements are recurrent costs. If donors are serious about the Dakar financing pledge, dramatic increases in funding long-term recurrent costs will be essential. Donor capacity-building for national revenue-raising capacity (e.g. support for reform of taxation systems) is also essential, but is no substitute for supporting recurrent costs of quality investment.

4. Donors’ responsibilities in countries emerging from conflict. Children’s right to a quality education was guaranteed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and reaffirmed in the Dakar Framework for Action. Donors cannot ignore their responsibility for securing this right in situations where national capacity is very limited, such as in post-conflict contexts. Civil society and community-based initiatives to develop quality education will be essential to meet the immediate gap, but must be designed in ways that expand state capacity in the long term. Education provision should also be integrated into all humanitarian responses to emergencies.

5. Strengthening capacity to make decentralisation work. In supporting the strengthening of state capacity to deliver quality education, donors need to move beyond technical support to central Ministry staff, and fund training to equip local government officials to take on the roles outlined in the national priorities above. Responsibility for education quality within decentralising systems lies increasingly at this level, yet capacity here often remains low. Support for decentralisation should go beyond the education sector, facilitating wider public service reform and capacity building across administrative functions.

Priority actions for civil society

1. Expand the vision of what can be achieved in a successful primary school. In many contexts, this has been lost. Through targeted low-cost innovations, working through government schools, civil society groups can demonstrate the dramatic effects of investing in quality. Advocacy based on these innovations can then influence national planning processes to incorporate this learning, and can also change both public and officials’ assumptions about what is possible.

2. Represent communities’ and all learners’ perspectives in national education planning processes. This involves providing a reality check, that central planning is responding to the diverse needs of communities, and

particularly ensuring that marginalised groups' interests are represented. It is also a vital channel for the creative ideas on developing quality that originate at community level and may be missing within Ministries of Education.

3. Share learning through networks and coalitions. These alliances are essential for effective challenging of other powerful interests in national education planning processes. But they also help build consensus among civil society groups on the priority interventions to improve quality, and ensure that different innovations on improving education are built on a shared understanding of past experience.

4. Strengthen government education systems rather than develop parallel service-delivery approaches. Civil society innovations within the government system can demonstrate approaches that could be extended to benefit all children in a country. For example, some NGO training programmes for government officials, inspectors, head teachers and school committees have led to permanent improvements. But ideal models of education quality that are developed in isolation from the government system have rarely succeeded in improving education quality for significant numbers of children in the long term.

Monitoring quality improvements

Even where donors' and southern governments' education policies have acknowledged the importance of quality, their progress indicators have generally held them accountable only for improvements in access. This has skewed interventions towards those that increase enrolments often at the expense of quality. And too little attention has focused on inequity in the provision of quality education: even simply publishing data on per capita spending on education in different regions can provide a starting point for challenging inequitable investment in quality.

Simple quality indicators need to be developed within national education plans that measure progress across the different dimensions of quality outlined at the beginning of this paper. Improvements in education processes, inputs and outputs are in many contexts a precondition of improvements in learning outcomes: effective process indicators (for example, on community involvement) need to be developed both during national education planning, and at local level.

Literacy and numeracy rates are of course essential outcome indicators. But because they have become a rudimentary basis for inter-country comparisons of quality, too much reliance has been placed on national average figures. A far more important use of all quality indicators is to challenge inequity in quality provision within countries. Hence measurement of these indicators needs to be disaggregated, related to children's ethnic, linguistic, social and economic background and gender, and analysed for evidence of improvements over time. Exam results are inadequate and often contain inherent biases: indeed, they frequently skew investment towards privileged urban groups whose results are the easiest to improve.

Management information systems need to be decentralised, drawing on communities' ability to monitor quality, and supporting local analysis and action to improve quality. Communities are also best placed to assess the impact of quality improvements over the longer term – on work prospects and on broader aspects of community life. Monitoring the quality of educational processes is inherently difficult to collate at national level: to be of value, it needs to reflect local diversity. But the use of sample, case-study-based analysis of this detail can provide vital information on quality improvements for national planners, to compare with national-level indicators. Conversely, simply sharing official assessment data with communities has (e.g. in Ghana) led to greater accountability and consequential improvements in quality.

Ideally, monitoring systems should include the collection of longitudinal data to track how far education is enabling families to escape from poverty – outcomes in terms of real livelihood benefits linked to education. We urge the World Bank to work with UNESCO's Institute of Statistics (UIS) to develop ways of using existing instruments, such as household poverty studies (e.g. Living Standards Measurement Surveys) and Participatory Poverty Assessments, to glean such data.

Donors, UIS, and the annual EFA monitoring report all need to move away from sole reliance on indicators of educational progress that are easy to measure but distort policy priorities. A useful start would be to replace enrolment rates with primary completion rates as the basis for comparisons between countries: completion rates are more

indicative of real learning outcomes. But donors and international agencies also need to support and respond to national efforts to measure detailed progress in both quality outcomes and processes, within national education planning and in implementation.

References

¹ World Bank, “Education for Dynamic Economies”, Technical Appendix, April 2002.

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