

Education for All – *Fast Track Initiative*

Fact Sheet: About the *Fast Track Initiative*

Fast Track Initiative: Building a Global Compact for Education

The World's Education Crisis

Around the world, there are still over a 100 million children out of school, including 58 million girls. Despite overwhelming evidence that education - particularly for girls - can halt the spread of AIDS, increase economic growth and break the cycle of poverty, Official Development Assistance (ODA) for education has only increased modestly since 2000 when world leaders gathered for the Millennium Development Goals Summit and unanimously endorsed universal primary education by 2015.

Education for All -*Fast Track Initiative*

In response, in 2002, the Education for All - *Fast Track Initiative (FTI)* was launched as a global partnership between donor and developing countries to ensure accelerated progress towards the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015. All low-income countries which demonstrate serious commitment to achieve universal primary completion can receive support from the *FTI*.

FTI is built on mutual commitments. Donors provide coordinated and increased financial and technical support in a transparent and predictable manner. Conversely, partner countries have agreed to put primary education at the forefront of their domestic efforts and develop sound national education plans.

***FTI* is a global education partnership which aims to support and promote:**

- Sound Education Plans
- Better Coordination
- Country led Programs
- Predictable Aid
- Measurable Results & Best Practices

Who Supports *FTI*?

Globally, the *Fast Track Initiative* encompasses all major donors for education—more than 30 bilateral, regional and international agencies and development banks including; Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and USA. And the Multilaterals: AfDB, ADB, IADB, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO and the World Bank.

How Does FTI endorsement help countries?

- While *FTI* has the benefit of being a globally agreed upon partnership, it is implemented through country-owned programs, avoiding fragmentation and creating coordinated approaches.
- *FTI* enables current and new donors to confidently provide increased and more effective aid to country-led education programs – through existing bilateral and multilateral channels.
- *FTI* endorsement signals to the world community, including potential investors, that a country's education plan is sound, sustainable, and therefore a good investment.

Therefore:

- *FTI* countries **with sufficient donors** present can receive increased and better coordinated aid directly from existing donors and from potential new donors.
- *FTI* countries with **an insufficient number of donors** (donor orphans) and good absorptive capacity are eligible to receive **transitional funding from the FTI Catalytic Fund**, for two to three years, until more donors come on board.

Placing More Countries on Track:

- For those **countries without education plans**, and weak capacity, the **Education Program Development Fund (EPDF) can provide technical support and build capacity required to prepare a sound education plan**.

FTI Aims to Expand

FTI is open to all low-income countries demonstrating serious intent toward achieving universal primary completion. **As of January 2006, the following twenty countries have had their education plans endorsed**, and are receiving support from *FTI*: Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Moldova, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Tajikistan, Timor Leste, Vietnam, and Yemen.

It is expected that over the next two years there could be as many as 60 countries within the *FTI* partnership. But successful expansion of *FTI* will require greater financial commitments by donors and greater action toward reform by recipient nations.

More information on the *EFA-Fast Track Initiative* is available online at www.fasttrackinitiative.org or contact Abby Spring at +1 202 458-9491 aspring@worldbank.org

Updated January 12, 2006