

EFA Progress for Girls and Women Maryam Bibi, Pakistan

'No society has ever liberated itself economically, politically and socially without a sound base of educated women' (Mahboob ul Haq, 2000)

1. Big Picture

Timeline of Key Dates

1948	Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including: Elementary Education should be free and compulsory Higher Education should be accessible to all on the basis of merit
1979	Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
1990	Rights of the Child (CRC), including: Rights to Education and Gender Equality
1990	Jomtien Declaration
04.2000	World Education Forum: Dakar Framework for Action Education for All – including commitments that: By 2005 gender disparities in enrolment in primary and secondary education should be eliminated By 2015 Gender Equality in Education achieved
09.2000	Millennium Summit: the Millennium Declaration

1.1. Dakar Framework for Action - Education for All

The Six Goals

- Goal 1** Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- Goal 2** Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality
- Goal 3** Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes
- Goal 4** Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults
- Goal 5** Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality
- Goal 6** Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

1.2. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

- Goal 1** Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2** Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3** Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4** Reduce child mortality
- Goal 5** Improve maternal health
- Goal 6** Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Goal 7** Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8** Develop a global partnership for development

1.3. Asia-Pacific Overview: 2000

Countries covered under the Literacy Facts and Figures

(Estimated Adult Literacy Rate in 2000, UNESCO 2002)

Afghanistan (no data)	India (57.2%)	Maldives (96.9%)	PNG (63.9%)
Bang (40.0%)	Indo (86.8%)	Mongolia (98.4%)	Philippines (94.9%)
Bhutan (no data)	Iran (76.0%)	Myanmar (84.7%)	Sri Lanka (91.6%)
Cambodia (79.1%)	Lao PDR (64.8%)	Nepal (41.7%)	Thailand (95.5%)
China (85.2%)	Malaysia (87.4%)	Pakistan (43.2%)	Viet Nam (92.5%)

1.4. Progress for Girls and Women since 2000

The 2002 EFA Global Monitoring Report points out that: girls' enrolment improved in all regions during the 1990s, that 86 countries have already achieved gender parity and another 35 are close to doing so. However, 31 nations remain at risk of not meeting this goal even by 2015.

Despite significant shifts towards greater gender parity, girls continue to face sharp discrimination in access to schooling. In eleven countries, seven of which are in sub-Saharan Africa, girls have 20% less chance of starting school than boys. Countries with a GPI below 0.80 are unlikely to achieve the 2005 goal. Chad, Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, the Niger and **Pakistan are the poorest performers in terms of girls' access to school.**

According to the 2002 EFA Global Monitoring Report, 28 countries, accounting for over 26 percent of the world's population, may not achieve any of the three measurable Dakar goals, ie:

- Universal Primary Education (UPE)
- Gender equality and
- Halving of illiteracy rates.

Two-thirds of these countries are in Sub-Saharan Africa, but they also include **India** and **Pakistan**.

1.5. Countries at Risk of not Achieving One or More of the Dakar Goals

Countries at risk of not achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015

Total = 57

Bahrain, Barbados, Benin, **Bhutan**, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, **China**, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Dem. Rep. of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Guyana, Haiti, **Indonesia**, **Iran**, Jamaica, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Syrian Arab Republic, The Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zambia

1.6. Countries at risk of not achieving gender parity by 2015

Total = 31

Angola, Benin, **Bhutan**, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Grenada, **India**, Iraq, **Lao P.D.R.**, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, **Nepal**, Niger, **Pakistan**, Senegal, Sudan, Togo

1.7. Countries at risk of not halving adult illiteracy by 2015

Total = 79

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, **Bangladesh**, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, **Cambodia**, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, **China**, Colombia, Comoros, Democratic Rep. of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, **India**, Iraq, Jamaica, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, **Myanmar**, Namibia, **Nepal**, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, **Pakistan**, Panama, **Papua New Guinea**, Paraguay, Peru, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, South Africa, **Sri Lanka**, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, **Viet Nam**, Yemen, Zambia

2. What is Gender?

- A Concept, a Theme, Ideology, Approach, Attitude, a Way of Believing, Looking at and Doing Things.

2.1. Examples of prevailing Ideologies, beliefs and practices:

- Men are superior to women
- Poor are less intelligent.
- Girls cannot learn science and technical subjects
- Women's place is only at home.
- Expressing human feelings and passions, such as crying for men is not 'manly'
- Be assertive for women is not 'womanly'
- Men are strong and cruel
- Women are kind and weak.
- Men are rational and logical, and so on.

(Result: unequal relationships between women and men, customs, traditions, laws, even developmental programmes all reinforce the subordination of women at all levels. This include family, institutions and society as a whole, we see injustices, discrimination, illiteracy, disparities and no change in status quo despite LRC, CLCs, and all national above mentioned international efforts)

2.2. The Gender Approach:

- Women and Men are equal as human beings
- Both women and men can be strong and cruel.
- Both women and men can be weak, kind and rational.
- Both men and women can stay at home if they choose to do so.
- Both men's and women's needs and priorities can differ.
- The needs of any man or a woman or a group of men or women can change and be different from another man/woman or a group of another men/women.
- Therefore, both men and women have to be mutually sensitive, understanding respectful, responsive and supportive to one another needs.

2.3. What is Equality?

"...all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities to make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid roles and prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued, and favoured equally. It does not mean women and men have to become the same but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female"

For example, both women and men members on equal standing can build consensus and decide where to establish a CLC, what time to fix for conducting CLC committee meetings that will suit both men and women members' needs so that it doesn't hinder both men and women from their normal work; where a girls school be established in their village which will be easily accessible to

poor children both girls and boys.

2.4. What is Gender Equity?

“... a one-size-fits all approach may not take into account the unique challenges that different individuals and groups face... Gender equity means fair treatment of women and men” For example residential hostels for women teachers/staff in remote areas, quotas and scholarships for minorities.

2.5. In summary:

- The gender approach is seeking for building relationships, roles and responsibilities between women and men at all levels based upon the concept of equality, both working collaboratively together for providing space, conducive environment to each other for self actualisation. (Ms Lim and her husband's example of working in harmony)
- The Gender theme is cross cutting to all sectors and spheres of life.
- The vision is not to disempower men and to empower only women, but to empower whoever is weaker in order to achieve an egalitarian society.

3. Difficulties in Applying the Gender Concept

- Gender is seen as a foreign agenda in the developing countries
- It asks for change in beliefs, attitudes, roles and responsibilities, institutional changes and sharing of power which is extremely threatening and fearful “Gender equity means fair treatment of women and men.
- It is abstract, the results could not be visualised and achieved in the shorter terms.
- Understanding the concept in different and varying contexts is difficult.
- In the way it is used implies as if it is only for women's empowerment leading to confusing the whole approach.
- Lack of technical expertise in translating the concept into practice.
- Lack of ownership.

4. Some Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Adopt a gender mainstreaming strategy for the planning and management of all LRC programmes and activities
2. Declare a commitment to gender equality backed up by appropriate budget and resources
3. Conduct a base-line study of gender issues for personnel, learners, teachers and materials
4. Build the capacity of all LRC personnel to promote gender equality
5. Develop gender responsive teaching-learning materials
6. Develop rigorous indicators to measure gender equality changes
7. Involve large numbers of females at all levels to motivate women
8. Promote women's involvement in decision-making processes at all levels
9. Motivate and train local women to become literacy and numeracy teachers
10. Provide child-care where it will enable women to work at all levels
11. Decrease household workload of women by encouraging and empowering men to take on household responsibilities
12. Establish partnerships with University Departments for Women's Studies, NGOs and organisations working on gender issues and gender equality
13. Involve high profile women as specialists to make key inputs into LRC activities and consciously take on the responsibility of role models
14. Ensure that the culture of fear and insecurity that is rising globally since 11 September 2001 does not impact negatively on the work of LRCs at all levels.

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