



October 1, 2009

Dear Excellencies,

We, African Ministers, send you our warmest greetings and request your help in securing a successful replenishment for the Education for All Fast-Track Initiative, which faces an immediate funding shortfall of US\$ 1.2 billion through the end of 2010, and will require significantly more resources over the coming years for our countries to achieve our education Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

We know that you share our determination to achieve the Millennium Development Goals for universal primary education and gender equality. Education is one of the most powerful ways for developing countries to reduce poverty and to spur opportunity for our young people. For every year they spend in the classroom learning how to read, write, and count, our students can boost their potential future wages by as much as 10 percent. At the community level, education has proved it can dramatically lower maternal and child deaths, reduce the spread of HIV /AIDS and other infectious diseases, promote better nutrition, and create a healthier, more skilled population.

A key ally in our efforts to educate our boys and girls is the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (EFA FTI). This global partnership has already achieved impressive results, and with your timely and generous help it will achieve even more -- and help millions of new school students to stretch their minds to achieve a better life than their parents.

Consider FTI's excellent track record to date: Getting all boys and girls into school—20 million more children have enrolled in primary school in FTI countries in Sub-Saharan Africa since the partnership began in 2002, a 64% jump in enrollments and double the rate in non-FTI countries.

Improving school completion rates—15 FTI countries are on track to reach the goal of 95% of all children completing primary school by 2015. Another 11 countries are close behind and should reach this goal soon after 2015.

Leaving no girls behind—girls account for a remarkable 60% of new enrollments in FTI countries. 16 FTI countries already have achieved the goal of gender parity in school enrollment, and another 16 FTI countries are on track to reach this goal before 2015.

Ensuring aid harmonization and effectiveness—The FTI is the epitome of donor coordination and collaboration. It works with our countries to help us develop and carry

out our national education plans with the goal of getting all our boys and girls into class, and ensuring that they receive a quality education.

We were very pleased that the leaders of the Group of Eight meeting in L'Aquila, Italy in July this year reaffirmed that, "No country seriously committed to EFA will be thwarted in the achievement of this goal by lack of resources....We reiterate our support to the Education for All - Fast Track Initiative as a good practice for aid effectiveness...We, along with other donors, are committed to a unified approach, mobilizing predictable bilateral and multilateral resources in order to fulfill the financial shortfall estimated by the FTI at \$1.2 billion over the coming 18 months, and to close gaps in education data, policy, and capacity to accelerate action on Education For All."

With your financial support, a re-energized FTI can set its sights on the estimated 75 million children around the world—about half in Sub-Saharan Africa—who still do not go to school. In 2010 and beyond, FTI aims to support us to substantially reduce the remaining number of children out of school and help them complete their primary education. At least 20 million out-of-school children, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, live in countries now seeking support from FTI by the end of 2010. At the behest of partner countries, FTI will set up a new, flexible financing window to help roughly the 40 million out-of-school children living in conflict-afflicted countries.

Of course it is not enough to get children into school. They must also learn the basic cognitive skills that will help them seize future opportunities and make a real difference in their lives. That is why we are partnering with FTI to expand efforts to improve education quality, supporting reforms that improve teaching, curriculum and instructional materials, and student assessments.

We appeal to you, as leading Ministers in donor countries, to grasp this historic opportunity to move our African countries closer to our 2015 Millennium Education Goals, and to give our boys and girls their ultimate passport to escape poverty and embrace their God-given potential. We believe that a successful FTI replenishment is a vital step forward in this effort, and we respectfully urge you to pledge your strongest possible support.

With our sincere regards,

The Hon. Lucien Marie Noel Bembamba
Minister of Economy and Finance, Government of Burkina Faso

The Hon. Marie Odile Balima Bonkougou
Minister of Basic Education and Literacy, Government of Burkina Faso

The Hon. Ato Sufian Ahmed
Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Government of Ethiopia

The Hon. Ato Demeke Mekonnen
Minister of Education, Government of Ethiopia

The Hon. Alex Tettey-Enyo
Minister of Education, Government of Ghana

The Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Government of Kenya

The Hon. Ken Kandodo
Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, Government of Malawi

The Hon. George Chaponda
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The Hon. Salikou Sanogo
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The Hon. Aires Bonifacio Ali
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The Hon. Charles Murigande
Minister of Education, Government of Rwanda

The Hon. Kalidou Diallo
Minister of Pre-School, Elementary and Middle School Education, Government of Senegal

The Hon. Syda Bbumba
Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Government of Uganda