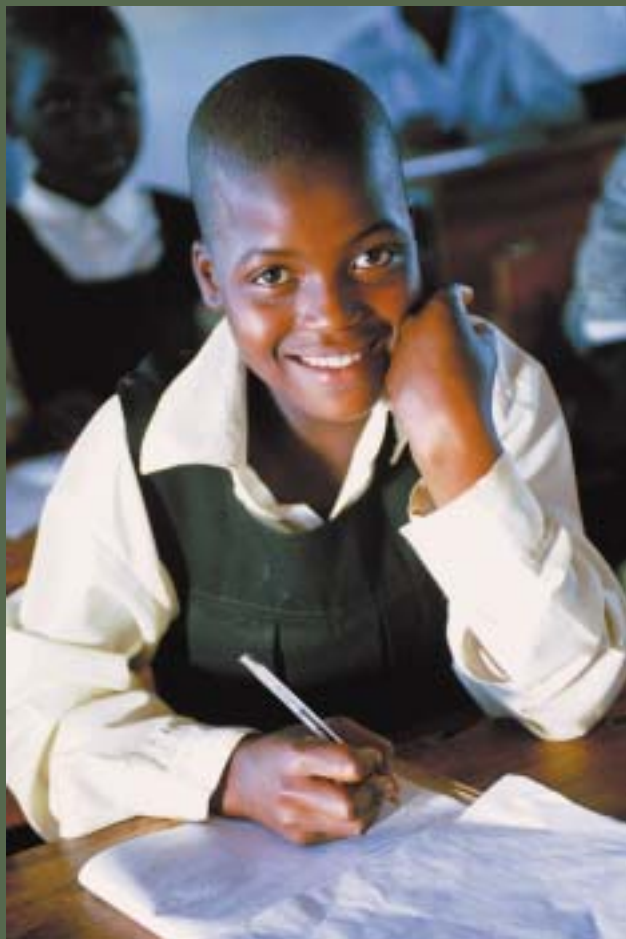


Education for All – Fast Track Initiative

Accelerating progress towards quality universal primary education

FRAMEWORK



2004



EDUCATION FOR ALL
FAST-TRACK INITIATIVE

FRAMEWORK

2004

EDUCATION FOR ALL FAST-TRACK INITIATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Education for All (EFA) Fast-track Initiative (FTI) is an evolving global partnership of developing and donor countries and agencies to support global EFA goals by focusing on accelerating progress towards the core EFA goal of *universal primary school completion (UPC), for boys and girls alike, by 2015*.

The FTI was established in 2002, following the development consensus reached at Monterrey; it is a new compact for the education sector that explicitly links increased donor support for primary education to recipient countries' policy performance and accountability for results. Initiated by 22 bilateral donors, development banks, and international agencies active in supporting education in low-income countries, the FTI is co-chaired on a rotating basis by one G-8 and one non-G-8 donor, supported by a Steering Committee, and a Secretariat that is housed in and managed by the World Bank.

FTI GOALS

The FTI aims to accelerate UPC by promoting:

- **More efficient aid for primary education**, through actions of development

partners to maximize coordination, complementarities and harmonization in aid delivery and reduce transactions costs for FTI recipient countries;

- **Sustained increases in aid for primary education**, where countries demonstrate the ability to utilize it effectively;
- **Sound sector policies in education**, through systematic review and indicative benchmarking of recipient countries' education policies and performance;
- **Adequate and sustainable domestic financing for education**, within the framework of a country's national poverty reduction strategy, medium-term expenditure framework, or other country statements as appropriate;
- **Increased accountability for sector results**, through annual reporting on policy progress and key sector outcomes against a set of appropriate indicators in participating countries, and transparent sharing of results.

Globally, the FTI also aims to promote:

- **Mutual learning on what works** to improve primary education outcomes and advance EFA goals.

FTI GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles of the Fast Track Initiative are:

- **Country-ownership:** The FTI is a country-driven process, with the primary locus of activity and decision-making at the country level. It fosters a long term development partnership at the country level between the government and other partners, in support of the country's effort to accelerate progress towards EFA goals, focusing on UPC. The FTI presents a framework to further coordination, complementarities and harmonization of partner efforts in a manner that strengthens country governments to manage their own development process more effectively.
- **Benchmarking:** The FTI encourages the use of indicative benchmarks (the FTI Indicative Framework) locally adapted to enlighten debate, in-country reporting on policies and performance, and mutual learning on what works to improve primary education outcomes which can provide lessons learned across countries for the acceleration of UPC.
- **Support linked to performance:** The FTI links increased funding to country performance. It is the first global initiative to operationalize the Monterrey Consensus as a partnership between developing countries and the donor community, at the international and country level. The FTI is intended to provide more sustained, predictable and flexible financial support to countries that have demonstrated commitment to the goal of UPC, adopted policies in full consideration of a locally adapted FTI Indicative Framework, and which have a need for, and the capacity to use effectively, incremental external resources.
- **Lower transaction costs:** The FTI encourages donor actions to provide resources to developing countries in a manner which minimizes the transaction costs for recipient countries. The FTI promotes improved coordination, complementarity and harmonization in donor practices and financing to flexibly support country-owned education sector strategies. The FTI implies moving towards a sector-wide approach (SWAp), wherever appropriate, in fast-track countries.
- **Transparency:** The FTI encourages the open sharing of information on the policies and practices of participating countries and donors alike, through indicative benchmarking, systematic cross-country monitoring, strengthened donor collaboration and harmonization, and making best efforts to provide resources in a predictable and sustained manner.

PARTICIPATION IN THE FTI

The Fast Track Initiative is open to all interested funding agencies, and low-income countries¹ that seek and receive

¹ Low-income refers to the classification utilized by the World Bank for determination of IDA eligibility.

endorsement through the FTI review process of their plans to achieve the MDG and EFA goal of a complete primary education of good quality for all children by 2015.

Endorsement through the FTI review process normally requires the following as depicted in the chart on page 7.

- An approved national poverty reduction strategy, or a similar national strategy that would help ensure that education strategies are anchored in country level consultative and budgetary processes;
- A sector-wide program for education agreed with in-country donors and including a strategy for HIV/AIDS, gender equality, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation;
- Agreement to monitor benchmark indicators.

There may be exceptions to the strict application of these requirements where justified by country circumstances.

The FTI process begins prior to endorsement, however. It includes upstream technical studies, and capacity and consensus-building as countries develop the education component of a PRSP and/or prepare or revise national education sector plans. If national capacity is insufficient, local donors make their best efforts to mobilize support. To assist, the FTI has established the Education Program Development Fund (EPDF) to support these efforts through the provision of funding for priority studies, capacity building, national outreach and stakeholder consultations.

(i) Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS)

The PRS signals that countries participating in the FTI are committed to poverty reduction. It helps ensure that the education strategies supported by the FTI are country-owned, focus on improving education outcomes for poor people (which is essential for achieving UPC) and are nested in a coherent overall development strategy. The PRS criterion helps ensure that the education strategy emanates from a national consultative process, inclusive of civil society. It also helps ensure government-wide commitment to education financing.

(ii) Education Sector Plan

The FTI seeks to accelerate country progress towards the goal of UPC by supporting credible and sustainable education sector plans. In general, the sector plan would address key constraints to accelerating UPC in the areas of policy, data, capacity, and financing and align primary education priorities with those for pre-school, secondary, tertiary, and non-formal education. It would:

- provide a costed strategy for accelerated progress towards UPC;
- identify nationally-appropriate policy actions designed to improve education quality, equity, efficiency and fiscal sustainability;
- provide an appropriate strategy for addressing HIV/AIDS, gender equality and other key issues;
- identify implementation capacity constraints and strategies to address them;
- review the total resources available (domestic and external) to implement

the sector plan and estimate the incremental domestic and external resource requirements in light of short-to-medium term implementation capacity;

- indicate how the country intends to carry out monitoring and evaluation; and
- identify annual targets for measuring progress on key policies and outcomes, including those of the FTI indicative framework as locally adapted.

The development or revision of sector plans is driven by the Government's own timetable. For FTI endorsement, the primary education component of the sector plan is assessed in full consideration of the benchmarks of the FTI Indicative Framework (Annex 1) as adapted locally.

The FTI Indicative Framework is a limited set of education policy, service delivery and financing benchmarks, drawn from empirical analyses of a set of low-income countries. The benchmarks of the FTI Indicative Framework do not substitute for the broader range of outcome targets and indicators that countries may establish for measuring progress against national education goals. Rather, they help determine the evolution of a common set of indicators. Indicative framework targets also need to be complemented by measurements of student learning and the quality of teaching. For these reasons, countries' commitment to setting annual targets on the FTI Indicative Framework indicators and monitoring them is important.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

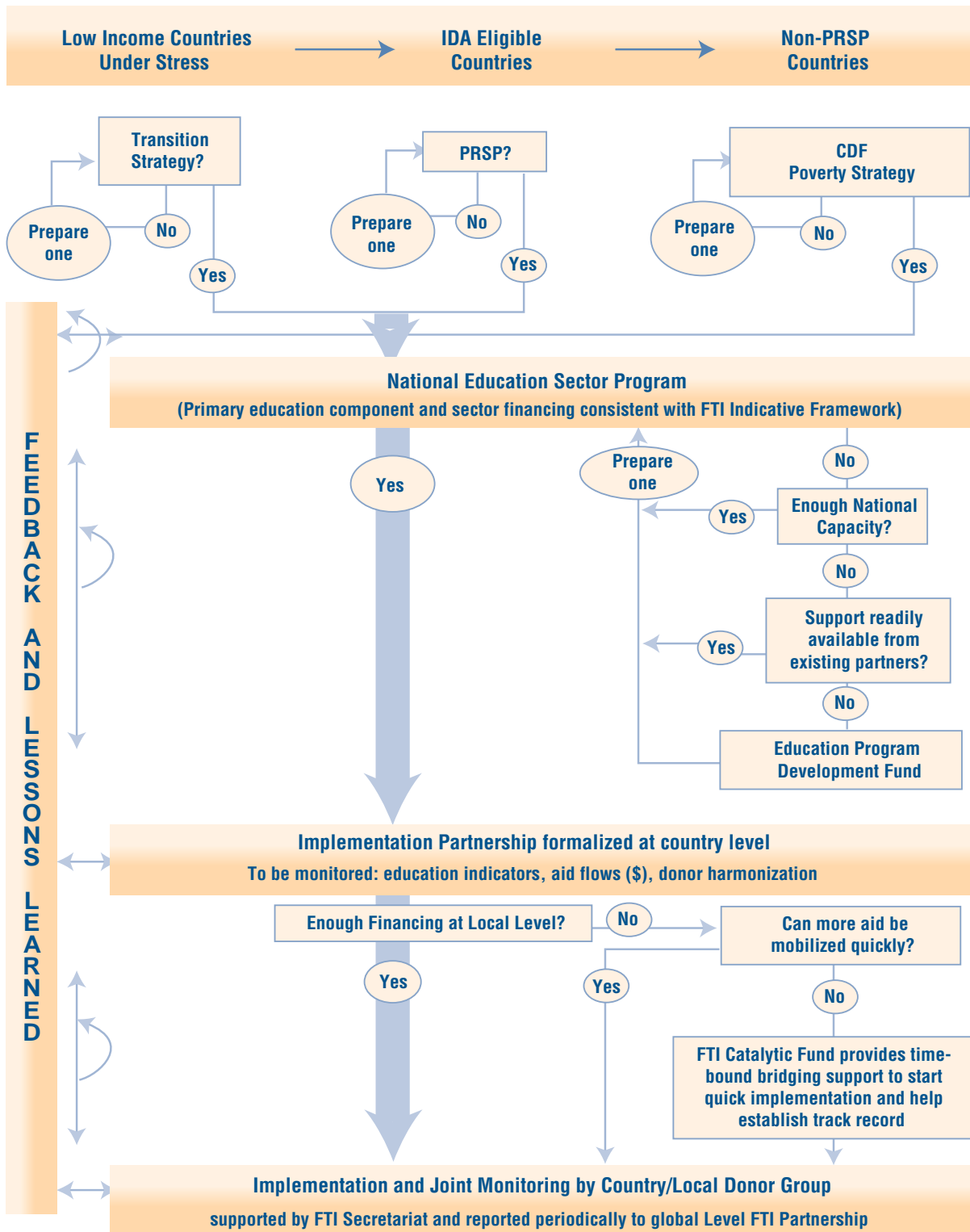
The FTI preparatory phase culminates in the review and endorsement of credible sector plans and is operationalized through partnership in the process outlined below. The integrity of the FTI is reflected in a rigorous assessment of the primary education component of education sector plans.

(i) Submission of Sector Plans

A government may submit its education sector plan for FTI review and endorsement at any time. The process is typically triggered by a letter from the Government to the local coordinating agency, transmitting the sector plan it has developed in consultation with domestic stakeholders and local donors, and requesting formal FTI review. The coordinating agency leads country level efforts to inform the FTI Partnership (through the FTI Secretariat) of the Government's request. In the rare event that a local donor group has not been established and/or there is no clear lead agency, the Government may contact FTI partners directly to request assistance.

In the event that a country's education sector plan has been agreed with donors prior to the establishment of the Fast Track Initiative, countries and their donor partners are advised to conduct a light local review process that aims at (a) assessing the match between the sector plan, and the country's sector policy and current and planned assistance programs; and (b) fostering collaboration, complementarity and harmonization, as appropriate, among development partners to support the

The EFA FTI PROCESS



plan. The coordinating agency is requested to inform the FTI Partnership (through the FTI Secretariat) of the outcome of the review.

(ii) In-Country Review Process

The assessment and endorsement process is conducted in-country, led by local donor agency representatives, as they are best placed to evaluate the feasibility and credibility of sector plans. Unless otherwise requested by the government, the formal in-country review is conducted as part of the regular annual education sector review. The FTI Secretariat provides a coordinating function at the international level on behalf of participating donors.

During the formal review, local development partners are expected to critically assess the feasibility and sustainability of the sector plan and conclude whether it provides a sound basis for accelerated progress towards UPC. The in-country review should include examination of the plan's costs, financing, and implementation. Agencies are encouraged to consult with their Headquarters during the review process, as their agencies will be responsible for mobilizing the bulk of external resources required for implementation of the plan, once endorsed.

For the review process, the local donor group in general, and the coordinating agency in particular, are encouraged to ensure that:

- existing donor commitments are accounted for;
- disbursement issues or questions related to the effective utilization of

available external financing to the country are being addressed;

- the implementation plan, and increased external resources requested to support it, are consistent with the country's short term implementation capacity; and
- where appropriate, measures to strengthen local implementation capacity to support scaling-up and improved sector results are part of the plan.

(iii) Review Guidelines

As a global initiative, the FTI supports the utilization of a common framework for in-country review of plans, and consistent and equitable treatment across countries. Assessment Guidelines and the FTI Indicative Framework assist in this. They suggest six basic assessment areas to guide country level assessments of the primary education component of the sector plan. These are:

- country ownership and consultation with key stakeholders and civil society groups in the design of national education priorities and policies;
- feasibility of strategies, priority public actions, and investments proposed to address key issues constraining progress towards UPC;
- specific strategies for addressing high priority issues as appropriate, such as gender equity, rural access, HIV/AIDS prevention, and meeting the needs of a substantial number of vulnerable children;
- projected evolution of sector costs and financing (internal and external);

- strategies to support capacity enhancement;
- adequacy of monitoring and evaluation capacity and capacity building activities to strengthen them as appropriate.

(iv) Endorsement (see chart in annex 2)

The FTI encourages a general consensus among in-country donors to endorse a country's sector plan. When the in-country donors are satisfied that key issues have been adequately addressed, the sector plan is considered endorsed for FTI support. The coordinating agency is requested to ensure the preparation of a report of the conclusions of the review meeting, for the Government and the FTI Partnership (through the FTI Secretariat), for broader dissemination and information.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

The FTI encourages a commitment on the part of all funding partners to make best efforts to increase assistance for primary education in a sustained and predictable manner in countries which are assessed to have convincing sector plans, taking also into account the country's utilization of existing donor support and performance in implementing the sector program and policies.

Resource mobilization starts with the development community at the country level, that is with people best positioned to evaluate and support. Country-level development partners lead the effort to

mobilize increased funding as needed, in consultation with the Ministries of Education, Planning and Finance. In the event of financing gaps, the FTI Partnership (through the FTI Secretariat) assists in identifying potential sources of resources.

The FTI recognizes the importance of financing recurrent costs where these are a key constraint to achieving UPC, while working with Governments to address long term sustainability.

Meetings of the FTI partners at the global level have both an action and advocacy role with respect to resource mobilization. They support the commitment of development partners to meet the resource requirements of countries that demonstrate results, mobilize resources and actively seek new partnerships with, for example, foundations and charities.

Donor Collaboration and Harmonization

In order to lower transaction costs for recipient countries and improve sector results, a key objective of the FTI is to achieve a more coordinated approach among donors who support a country's sector program.

The FTI encourages partners to:

- coordinate their interventions at the country level in a sector-wide approach and common work program,
- align their support with the national education program while recognizing the importance of alternative modes of education,

- channel funding in flexible and innovative ways suitable to the financial management capacities of the country,
- use silent partnerships, in which donors not present in a country channel their support through another agency,
- disclose all assistance transparently to the national budgetary authorities and the other donor partners active in the country, and
- make best efforts to ensure predictable support for countries that perform well.

Catalytic Funding

The FTI Catalytic Fund (CF) is a multi-donor trust fund at the global level, established in 2003, that helps to finance FTI-endorsed education sector plans that mobilize insufficient resources at the country level. The Catalytic Fund provides transitional grant financing over a maximum of two to three years to enable such low-income countries to scale up implementation of their sector programs, and establish a track record that may leverage longer-term support.

Given its transitional role, the CF is expected to remain small relative to support provided by the development partner community as a whole. However, the Catalytic Fund provides important backing to the FTI commitment that realistic financing needs in all qualifying countries will be met.

The Catalytic Fund is administered by the World Bank, under the direction of a

Strategy Committee consisting of representatives of the participating donors. In general, meetings of the Strategy Committee follow directly after FTI Partners' meetings, so as to address the needs of countries for Catalytic Fund support. The FTI Secretariat reports periodically to the FTI Partners on the Fund's activities.

IMPLEMENTATION

The FTI is intended to mobilize expanded support for UPC within the context of a country's PRSP (or similar strategy), education sector plan and other means as the Partnership may deem appropriate.

(i) Accountability

The FTI endorsement process implies a set of reciprocal commitments among recipient governments and development partners. This expression of partnership is proposed to be set out in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or partnership agreement for the education sector (or a modification of an existing MOU as appropriate).²

For its part, the government would agree that performance in implementing its education sector strategy will be transparently monitored on an annual basis in full consideration of the FTI indicative framework, as adapted lo-

² Where funding is provided by the Catalytic Fund, a World Bank representative is a signatory to the MOU.

cally, and other agreed targets and indicators.

For their part, development agencies would mobilize to supply, at least on an annual basis, their specific commitments and proposed intents and agree that their own progress towards increased coordination, complementarity and harmonization, as well as effective support for education in each FTI country will be monitored against a set of agreed indicators³. MOUs signed by FTI countries and their donor partners are available for reference on the EFA-FTI website.

(ii) Monitoring and Evaluation

The FTI aims at stronger development results, based on a framework of mutual responsibility and accountability. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the FTI at the country level has the following goals:

- transparent annual monitoring of indicative framework and other nationally-appropriate targets, agreed by countries and their donor partners;
- strengthening of statistical and analytical capacity and EMIS (Education Management Information Systems), to promote results-based management;
- transparent monitoring of donors' progress in increasing the quantity and quality of their assistance to primary education in FTI countries against an agreed set of common coordination and harmonization indicators;
- comparative benchmarking of progress and performance across countries in the Initiative and rapid

diffusion of global practice and lessons; and

- in-country monitoring of progress and dialogue to address non or under performance.

At the country level, the monitoring of FTI targets and outcomes, donor financing flows and progress in aid coordination, complementarity and harmonization will be built into existing processes of annual review of the implementation of the sector plan. Annual sector reviews are conducted by the recipient country and its donor partners in a spirit of peer reviewing and learning; it is good practice also to bring teachers' associations, private providers, parents' associations, and other civil society organizations into the review process. The results of each joint sector review are communicated to the FTI Secretariat in order to track progress at the global level, in conjunction with UNESCO, and to foster cross-country diffusion of lessons and good practice.

At the global level, UNESCO holds the mandate for monitoring progress and overall coordination of the EFA process, of which the FTI is one element. As such, progress towards the MDG of universal primary education and the other Dakar EFA goals are monitored by UNESCO. UNESCO ensures full coordination between the FTI and the EFA High Level Group. The FTI partners with UNESCO to support the continued

³ Proposed indicators are being developed by the FTI working group on donor harmonization, in coordination with EC and DAC initiatives in this area.

development of appropriate monitoring indicators.

The FTI Secretariat will also prepare regular reports to the FTI Partners on recipient country and donor performance and the lessons learned from the FTI, based on information drawn from annual country-level sector reviews.

GOVERNANCE

The FTI has a two-tiered decision-making structure which is rooted in the interactions between FTI countries and their development partners at the country level, and includes mechanisms for escalating financing and other issues which cannot be resolved at the country level to the global level meetings of the FTI Partnership. The Development Committee provides political leadership for the FTI and directs and authorizes the involvement of the World Bank.

National Governments

The FTI is nationally driven and dependent on the leadership and commitment of countries. Responsibility for the development of sector plans, their implementation, and monitoring and evaluation, rests with the country in consultation with civil society and development partners.

Local Donor Representatives

In-country donor representatives, in consultation with their respective head-

quarters, are the primary interlocutors with governments on operational issues in the FTI process. The FTI relies on the local donor group to assess the scope, volume and timing of development assistance needs, and make funding decisions according to the policies and regulations of each donor, within a framework of commitment to maximize coordination, complementarity and harmonization. The Coordinating Agency in particular has an important leadership and advocacy role to play as regards FTI information to the country, other local donors and in the mobilization of incremental donor funding in support of endorsed country plans.

FTI Partnership Meetings

Collaboration at the international level is assured through regular meetings. The full FTI Partnership, which includes participating FTI countries, donor agencies and NGOs, meets annually. Recognizing that FTI is a support to EFA, the meeting is timed to follow directly after the annual meeting of the UNESCO High Level Group on EFA, as scheduled for 2004. Representatives of global and regional civil society groups attend the FTI Partnership meeting.

The FTI Partnership meeting sets the strategic policy direction for the FTI, and reviews and addresses systematic issues affecting progress towards UPC. It provides an advocacy function in relation to the commitment of resources to the FTI and identifies issues related to support in specific countries, global support for the FTI, and projected country financial gaps that require the attention of FTI part-

ners. It also identifies new mechanisms and modalities for increased resource mobilization.

In addition to the annual meeting of the full FTI Partnership, the FTI donor partners, the FTI recipient country partners, or subgroups of these with common sets of interests, are encouraged to organize technical or consultative meetings as appropriate.

FTI Chairs

The FTI Partnership is co-chaired by two bilateral agencies. The co-chairs provide political leadership for the Initiative during their one-year tenure, and serve as co-conveners of the FTI Partnership meetings. By convention, the G8 president serves as one co-chair and a non-G8 country as the other co-chair. The rotation of the G8 co-chair is on a calendar year basis. To facilitate continuity, the non-G8 co-chair serves from July-June. By convention, the non-G8 co-chair has been selected by the non-G8 partners through an informal process of negotiation.

FTI Steering Committee

A Steering Committee provides overall policy guidance to the FTI, gives direction to the Secretariat between Partnership meetings, and helps ensure coordination. The five standing members of the Steering Committee are the two current co-chairs, UNESCO, the World Bank, and the most recent out-going co-chair for a six month period following its tenure. The composition of the Steering Commit-

tee is open to revision as the Partnership, as a group, may decide.

The EFA FTI Secretariat

The FTI Secretariat is comprised of staff of the World Bank and partner agencies and is managed by the World Bank under the direction of the FTI Steering Committee. It provides technical and administrative support to the Initiative including:

- Overall development of the Fast Track Initiative, including:
 - ▶ Communicating information about the FTI
 - ▶ Organizing FTI meetings
 - ▶ Facilitating collaboration at all levels
 - ▶ Monitoring FTI implementation
- Administration of the EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund, including:
 - ▶ Setting up the Fund
 - ▶ Overseeing implementation
 - ▶ Preparing meetings and background documentation for the CF Strategy Committee
 - ▶ Annual reporting of Fund activities
- Supporting the development of cross-country performance measures
- Knowledge sharing, communications and outreach.

REVISIONS TO THE FRAMEWORK

The provisions of this Framework and associated documents, decisions, practices and policies will be reviewed and

modified on an on-going basis in light of experience in implementing the FTI. Amendments to the Framework will be formalized at the FTI Partnership meetings.

Annex 1: Indicative Framework Benchmarking Tool for EFA/Education Sector Development Plans

Indicator	Average for some successful countries	Baseline	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	2015
Resource mobilization							
Public domestically-generated revenues as % of GDP	14–18						
External grants as % of GDP	—						
Education share of budget (%)							
<i>Defined as public recurrent spending on education as % of total public recurrent discretionary spending^a</i>							
• Estimate including grants	20						
• Estimate excluding grants	20						
Primary education share of education budget (%)							
<i>Defined as public recurrent spending on primary education as % of total public recurrent spending on education, including grants^b</i>							
Student flows							
Intake into first grade, total ^c	100						
• Girls' intake rate	100						
• Boys' intake rate	100						
Primary completion rate, total^d							
• Girls' completion rate	100						
• Boys' completion rate	100						
% repeaters among primary school pupils	10 or less						
Service delivery							
Pupil–teacher ratio in publicly-financed primary schools ^e	40:1						
Average annual salary of primary school teachers: ^f <i>(for countries with both civil service and contract teachers, use the weighted average salary)</i>	3.5						
Contract teachers							
• Number of new contract teachers recruited this year							
• Total stock of contract teachers							
• Average salary Civil service teachers							
• Number of new civil service teachers recruited this year							
• Total stock of civil service teachers							
• Average salary							
Recurrent spending on items other than teacher remuneration as % of total recurrent spending on primary education ^g	33						
Annual instructional hours							
<i>Estimated effective hours of schooling (not official hours) in publicly-financed primary schools</i>							
	850–1000						
Private share of enrollments % of pupils enrolled in exclusively privately-financed primary schools	10 or less						

Notes:

- ^a Public recurrent spending on education includes all spending through ministries or other government units providing primary and secondary schooling, vocational/technical education and higher education. It also includes public expenditures for education transferred to private and non-government providers and educational grants and subsidies to students or their families. Public recurrent discretionary spending is defined as public spending from all sources—including external grants—less debt service (interest payments only). The education share of total public recurrent spending should be presented both including and excluding external grants.
- ^b This benchmark is pro-rated to the nationally defined length of the primary cycle, i.e. 42% if it is 5 years, 50%, if 6 years, 58% if 7 years, and 64% if 8 years. Countries whose basic education cycle is longer than 8 years are encouraged to report data for a primary-equivalent subcycle of 5 or 6 years.
- ^c Defined as students enrolled in grade 1, net of repeaters, as a percentage of the population cohort at the official age of entry to first grade.
- ^d Defined as students completing the final grade of primary school as a percentage of the population cohort of official graduation age. If data on students completing the final grade are not reported, a proxy primary completion rate should be used, defined as: students enrolled in the final grade of primary school, adjusted for the average repetition rate in last grade, as a percentage of the population cohort of official graduation age.
- ^e Includes all teachers on payroll. “Publicly-financed schools” refers to schools supported by government whether publicly or privately managed and all teachers fully paid by the government, either directly or indirectly.
- ^f Expressed as a multiple of GDP per capita. Includes salary and budgeted cost of benefits (i.e. pension, health services, transport, housing and other items paid for by the state). For countries with a two-tier teacher contracting system, disaggregated information on teacher stocks, flows and average monthly salaries (in local currency units, with exchange rate, or in US\$) should also be presented.
- ^g Recurrent spending on items other than teacher remuneration includes all non-salary spending (e.g. teaching/learning materials, student assessment, school feeding, student stipends, etc.) plus salaries of administrative and other personnel who are not classroom teachers.

Annex 2: FTI Endorsement Process

What is the Purpose of FTI endorsement?

FTI endorsement is intended to give recognition to education sector programs /plans prepared by countries and to signal to potential investors, whether they be international or domestic, public or private, that the program /plan is credible, sustainable and, therefore, a good investment.

The FTI endorsement process encourages collaboration and harmonization among those supporting the sector program to lower transaction costs and ensure that all sources of support converge in support of the same Government plan.

