

EDUCATION

THE COMMITMENT

At the 2005 Gleneagles Summit, the G8 reiterated its commitment to support African efforts to ensure that all children are able to complete a full course of primary education by 2015 (also known as ‘universal primary education’ or UPE). They also promised to bolster African efforts towards achieving this goal, specifically through support of the Education for All–Fast Track Initiative (FTI). The G8 reiterated their strong support of the FTI at the 2007 and

2008 summits, and pledged to fill the financing gaps faced by FTI-endorsed countries. To track the G8’s progress towards meeting their education commitments, ONE monitors progress towards the goal of UPE and measures each country’s contribution towards delivering the financing required to achieve UPE in sub-Saharan Africa (approximately \$5.8 billion annually).²⁸ With 75 million children out of school worldwide and 35 million out of school in Africa, the G8’s commitment to contribute their share of the financing to reach UPE is an ambitious one that could transform the future for African children and communities if it is met.

FIGURE 4

ODA FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (\$ MILLIONS, 2008 PRICES)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2004–2007 INCREASE
CANADA	142.90	120.39	205.97	97.55	-45.35
FRANCE	170.71	57.81	191.01	195.36	24.64
GERMANY	46.12	159.90	65.97	178.59	132.47
ITALY	32.91	78.36	45.83	32.95	0.05
JAPAN	145.16	127.66	199.77	166.90	21.74
UK	212.46	337.79	848.68	297.75	85.29
US	217.72	169.77	243.01	259.49	41.78
G7	967.97	1,051.69	1,800.23	1,228.58	260.62
NON-G7 DAC	1,350.81	1,653.52	2,401.56	1,889.94	278.51
DAC	382.84	601.82	601.34	661.35	539.13

PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE G8 COMMITMENT TO UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

ACHIEVEMENT OF UPE REQUIRES PROGRESS ON TWO FRONTS: ENROLMENT AND COMPLETION

In terms of enrolment, significant progress has been made in sub-Saharan Africa in expanding access to primary school in recent years. Savings from debt relief, increased ODA for education and prioritisation by national governments have helped to eliminate school fees and other barriers to enrolment in many African countries. Gross enrolments in primary school increased by 34 million between 1999 and 2006. Also, the number of primary school-aged children not enrolled in sub-Saharan Africa dropped by 10 million between 1999 and 2006, a remarkable feat considering that the primary school-aged population increased by 17 million children over the same period.²⁹

ENROLMENT

The percentage of primary school-aged children enrolled in sub-Saharan Africa (known as the net enrolment ratio, or NER) grew from 56% to 70% between 1999 and 2006, reflecting an annual increase that was six times greater than between 1990 and 2000.³⁰ Despite this progress, with nearly one in three primary school-aged children not enrolled, sub-Saharan Africa still has the world's lowest NER.³¹

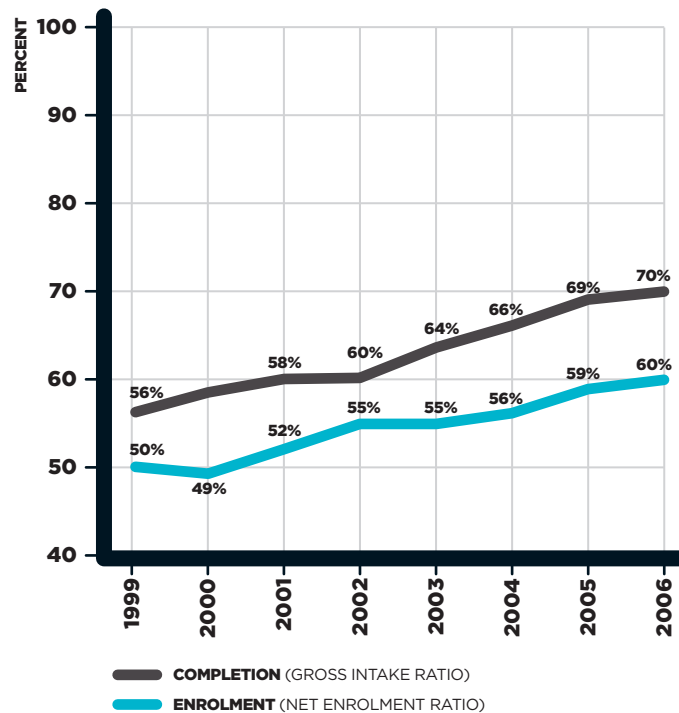
COMPLETION

Although the primary school completion rate (PCR) in sub-Saharan Africa increased from 50% in 1999 to 60% in 2006, it is still the lowest in the world.³²

As Figure 5 shows, achieving universal primary education in sub-Saharan Africa by 2015 will require a rapid increase in primary completion and enrolment rates, a task that will become more challenging as demographic pressures increase over the next few years. In 2015, there will be 26 million more primary school-aged children in sub-Saharan Africa than there are today. This rapidly growing population will mean that enrolment rates will have to accelerate in order to get all children into school.

FIGURE 5

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA'S PROGRESS TOWARDS UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION



ODA FOR EDUCATION

In 2007, the G8 directed \$1.2 billion to primary education in sub-Saharan Africa, falling \$1.3 billion short of the \$2.5 billion they would have had to contribute to meet their proportionate share of the UPE goal for the region and therefore to meet their commitment. The G7's 2007 spending on UPE also showed a decline from the \$1.8 billion it spent in 2006. As shown in Figure 6, of the G8, only the UK is fulfilling its proportionate share of financing for UPE.

THE CHALLENGE

35 million

African children who are not enrolled in primary school.

THE IMPACT

40%

Educating girls for five years increases child survival rates by 40%.

THE G7'S RESPONSE

ODA ↓ 1/3

The G7's ODA commitments for UPE decreased from \$1.8 billion in 2006 to \$1.2 billion in 2007.

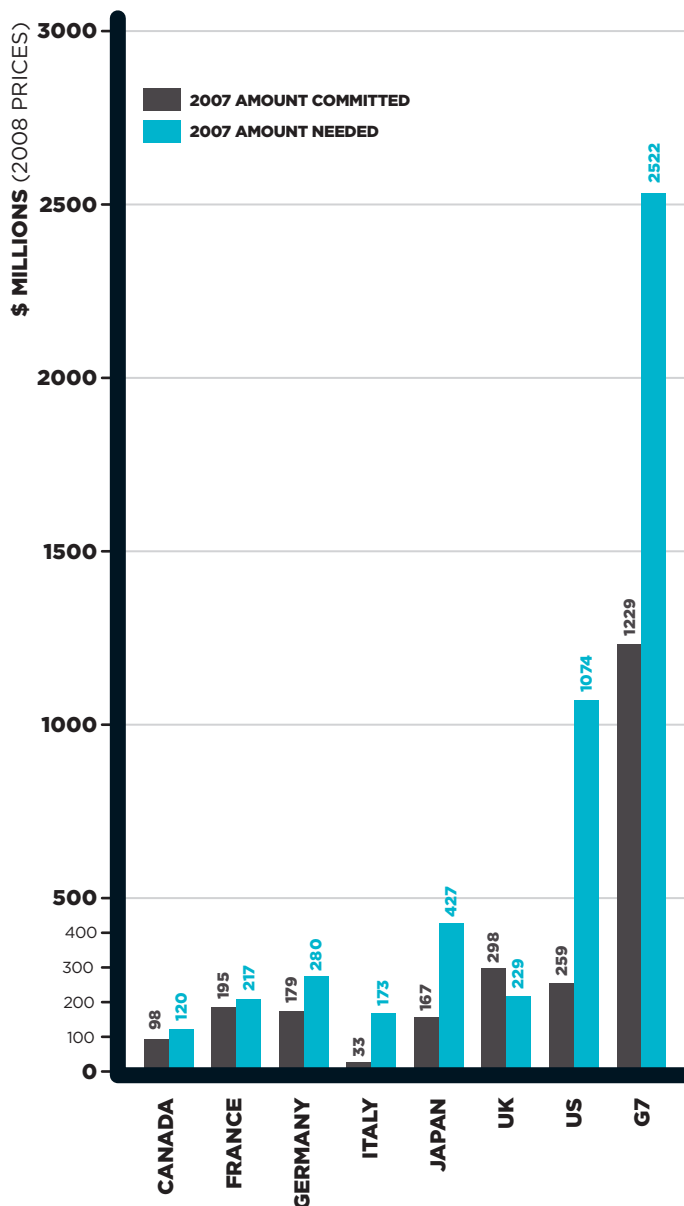
THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

10-20%

In low income countries, a young woman's average earnings increase by 10-20% with each additional year of education.

FIGURE 6

ACTUAL ODA COMMITTED IN 2007 TO PRIMARY EDUCATION COMPARED WITH EQUITABLE SHARE OF TARGET



WHAT DO THE G8 NEED TO DO?

Achieving the G8's and Africa's goal of UPE will require a more rapid scale-up of funding and some policy changes to improve both the quality and scope of development assistance for education.

FILL THE FUNDING GAPS FACED BY FTI-ENDORSED COUNTRIES

The 22 FTI-endorsed African countries face a collective financing shortfall of \$558 million in 2009 to implement their national education plans. This gap is expected to grow to \$1.4 billion by 2010 as more countries are endorsed.³³ The G8 should fill their equitable share of this gap and follow through on their Hokkaido commitment to monitor their support for the FTI in a report that is supposed to be released by the 2009 G8 Summit.³⁴ In addition, the G8 should ensure that the two multi-donor trust funds administered by the FTI (the Catalytic Fund and the Education Program Development Fund) are adequately resourced, so that new countries can overcome short-term financing gaps and enhance their national education plans.

ENSURE THAT FINANCING IS LONG-TERM AND PREDICTABLE TO HELP WITH RECURRENT COSTS

Recurrent costs such as teachers' salaries make up 70-80% of education budgets in most developing countries and require resources that are long-term and predictable. Education and finance ministers are often hesitant to use development assistance to recruit and deploy teachers because they are not confident that financing will be available from year to year. The G8 should address this obstacle through specific attention to the duration and certainty of financing to enable sub-Saharan Africa to recruit the 1.6 million additional teachers it needs to reach all children with a quality education by 2015.³⁵

DEVELOP NEW STRATEGIES TO FOCUS ON EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN IN FRAGILE STATES

More than half of the world's out-of-school children live in conflict-affected fragile states.³⁶ Meeting the G8's goal to support UPE will not happen without support for children living in fragile states. The FTI Steering Committee has reflected the urgency to reach children in fragile states with its decision to bring the UNICEF-administered multi-donor Education Transition Fund (ETF) for fragile states into the FTI framework.³⁷ The FTI Secretariat estimates that the ETF will need approximately \$290 million in 2009–10 to support education in 7–10 fragile states. The G8 should ensure that the ETF has adequate resources, and should also continue to support education in states that fall outside the FTI framework by utilising the expertise and responsiveness of international organisations, local NGOs and faith-based programmes working in those countries.

TARGET EDUCATION QUALITY AS WELL AS ACCESS

In many sub-Saharan African countries, the surge in enrolment has not been accompanied by a parallel investment in quality. Crowded classrooms, a shortage of supplies and limited capacity for testing and evaluation mean that learning outcomes remain low in many African countries. To help ensure that investments in education are equipping students to become productive members of their communities, scaled-up funding from the G8 should support critical inputs such as teachers and learning materials and should also help support national and regional efforts to enhance monitoring and evaluation of learning outcomes such as literacy and numeracy skills.

CONCLUSION

Sub-Saharan Africa has made substantial progress towards universal primary education with commendable support from a small number of donors. However, the global compact on education needs to be reinvigorated if the world is to meet the 2015 deadline on universal primary education. While increasing development assistance, donors should explore new opportunities to enhance the current architecture of development assistance for education that could accelerate. Despite major progress in coordinating donor support for national education plans, the FTI has faced chronic funding shortfalls and a limited mandate since its inception. The FTI has taken on many of the reforms necessary to expand its reach and capacity. However, FTI should be strengthened and reformed further to ensure that an increased quantity and quality of resources flow towards country-owned plans.