

**Education for All (EFA) High-Level Group Meeting  
(11 - 13 December 2007, Dakar)  
Speech by Deputy Foreign Minister (G8 Sherpa) Masaharu KOHNO  
“Japan's perspective on assistance for education as the next G8 Presidency”**

Dec 12, 2007

**1. 2008: Japan's G8 Presidency**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Next year we reach the mid-point for the achievement of Education for All and Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015. In this important year, Japan assumes the G8 Presidency and takes up the EFA-FTI Co-chair, and will play host to several major international conferences related to development, particularly the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV), and the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit.

Japan regards these conferences as an opportunity to sequence a coherent and high level agenda for education. We will play a leading role in raising the profile of education within the wider development agenda, and work with UNESCO and other key partners to ensure continuity of momentum towards the next EFA High-Level Group Meeting.

**2. Current situation and challenges towards EFA**

There is good news in the 2008 Global Monitoring Report (GMR). The number of out-of-school children has declined worldwide since Dakar. Especially Sub-Saharan Africa and South-West Asia have made rapid progress in expanding access. This progress shows that we can make a difference, if increased domestic resources and well-coordinated education sector plans of developing countries, backed up with their national political will, links to international support. In this context, we appreciate the UNESCO's leadership and efforts for coordination in EFA, especially in providing annual GMR.

The remaining challenges laid out in the GMR are that education policy priorities must focus on inclusion, literacy, quality, capacity development and finance as well as strengthening the international architecture for EFA.

Concerning **inclusion and quality**, we need to reach the remaining 72 million out of school

children, and to address disparity both within countries and among regions. Urgent attention to quality, particularly through a focus on learning outcomes is vital in order to ensure education investments actually result in a positive impact on individuals and the socio-economic development of countries. **Literacy** is also an important issue to be tackled for empowering people.

Regarding **Financing** needs for EFA, we would emphasise a need to promote diversified approaches to maximize resource mobilization from bilateral and multilateral channels. It is clear that national political commitment and ownership is the primary driver of sustainable education progress, therefore international support must start from taking an analysis of country needs and optimal balance of domestic and external resources. We should also work in practical ways to ensure maximum complementarity of different aid channels and modalities for maximum effectiveness of aid to education. Furthermore, it is vital that we move beyond traditional OECD donors to emerging donors and private sectors, and maximize the capacities of NGOs, particularly at the local level and in fragile contexts.

Also, **Capacity development** at all levels is another key element to ensure self-sustainability.

### **3. Japan's emphasis on issues surrounding EFA**

To achieve EFA, where should the international community go from here?

Here, I would like to highlight the following three points: (1) the importance of a perspective of "human security" for inclusion and empowerment; (2) a holistic approach, which includes education's link to growth and self-sustainability; and (3) taking a multi-sectoral approach to maximize education and development outcomes.

Firstly, in order to achieve EFA, I would like to underline the concept of "**Human Security**", which focuses on empowering the individuals and communities while building state capacity in planning and managing sustainable education system. We should work for ensuring the participation of the excluded based on this perspective of Human Security.

Secondly, we should look at the importance of **education linked to growth and self-sustainability**. Growth is an exit strategy to aid dependency, and education development plan with an emphasis on growth can be a part of country-owned long-term solution to poverty. In this context, I would like to emphasize a holistic approach to the education system that balances the role of basic education with secondary and higher education as well as Early Child Care and Education. All these levels of education play a vital role in providing the teachers so urgently needed, in creating a pathway towards higher level and sustainable socio-economic development outcomes, and in providing impact on learning ability later in life.

Lastly, we need to strengthen **multi-sectoral approach** and synergy with other sectors such as health and water and sanitation.

#### **4. Closing**

Realizing EFA goals and education and gender MDGs are key commitments for the international community and vital contributors to all the other MDGs and wider development outcomes. Japan, as G8 presidency, will play a leading role in raising the profile of education in the development agenda, and will work closely with key partners to ensure that events in 2008 will build momentum and gain significant results for Education for All.

(End)