

# The Nation

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## **Pakistan may miss EFA goals by 2015-16: Report**

Islamabad - It seems unlikely that Pakistan will attain six Education For All Goals by 2015-16, as the progress on all indicators has been slow, reveals the Pakistan EFA Review Report 2015.

The launch of the report coincided with the World Teachers' Day falling on October 5. UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO and WFP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training organised a conference here in Islamabad to mark the World Teachers Day 2014. This year's theme for the Day is "Invest in the future, invest in teachers". The EFA Goals focuses on early childhood care and education, universal primary education and secondary education to youth, adult literacy with gender parity and quality of education as crosscutting thematic and programme priorities.

The report stated that despite repeated policy commitments, primary education in Pakistan is lagging behind in achieving its target of universal primary education. Currently the Primary Gross Enrollment Rate stands at 85.9 per cent while Pakistan requires to increase it upto 100 per cent till 2015-16 to fulfill EFA goals. Of the estimated total primary school going 21.4 million population of ages 5-9 years, 14.7 (68.5 per cent) are enrolled in school, of which 8.2 million (56 per cent) are boys and 6.5 million (44 per cent) are girls. However, due to a variety of reasons only 66.8 per cent survive till class V and 33.2 per cent drop out before completing primary. As a result, there is a large stock of 6.7 million out of school children, which for years have posed a major obstacle in achieving EFA targets. Likewise, youth literacy rate stands at 71.6 per cent whereas the EFA set target is 81.6 per cent till 2015-16. Other goals of eliminating gender disparity and improving all aspects of the quality of education are far likely to achieve as mentioned by the report. "Poverty, law and order situation, natural disasters, budgetary constraints, lack of access, poor quality, equity, and governance are the key challenges towards the achievement of EFA goals," the report added. The report highlighted that an average at the national level, 89 per cent of education expenditures comprise current expenses as teachers' salaries while only 11 per cent comprise development expenditures which are not sufficient to raise quality of education.

Speaking on the occasion, representatives of WFP, UNICEF and ILO emphasised the need for more joint efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, particularly in education. However, they applauded the Pakistani government for taking a number of initiatives to accelerate progress towards the achievement of EFA goals and stressed the need for improving the educational planning and management system of Pakistan, aligning and enrolling over 6 million out-of-school children and improving incentives for teachers.

At the concluding session, Secretary Ministry of Education Muhammad Ahsan Raja and the representative of UNESCO distributed souvenirs among the outstanding teachers from different provinces in recognition of their services.

But some seemed concerned over ignoring teachers from Balochistan and Sindh as they were not invited in the award giving ceremony.

Source: <http://nation.com.pk/islamabad/03-Oct-2014/pakistan-may-miss-efa-goals-by-2015-16-report>