

Education for all: For Pakistan, still a long road ahead

ISLAMABAD: A review of the six 'Education For All' goals from 2000 to 2015 has been disappointing on many ends and encouraging on a few notes, with Pakistan only being able to reduce the gender gap.

According to the EFA Development Index, Pakistan ranks 106 out of 113 countries only above Eritrea, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad. Similarly, despite Pakistan's annual economic growth being 4.1 per cent, growth in expenditure on education is less than 2.5 per cent.



UNESCO report suggests govt has only partially achieved one goal.

The staggering figures released on Wednesday in Islamabad in a Global Monitoring Report 2015 by UNESCO suggested that Pakistan has moved slightly ahead particularly in the early years after the goals were set — there were 68 girls enrolled for 100 boys then but by 2007 the girls' figure reached 83, and then 87 by 2012.

"There is a need to focus on what needs to be done urgently to make sure we reach the goals as fast as possible," UNESCO Country Head Vibeke Jensen said while shared the report findings.

She stressed that plans for achieving new goals will need to ensure implementation of the government's commitment to raise the share for education from 2 per cent to 4 per cent of the GDP. In the first goal — expand early childhood care and education — about 47 per cent of the countries reached the goal and another eight per cent were close, including Pakistan. However, 20 per cent failed from a huge margin.

Only 52 per cent of the countries achieved the universal primary education goal while only 10 per cent are close and the remaining 38 per cent are far from achieving it, including Pakistan.

Education ministers in the previous government (2013) and the incumbent have been of the view that "Pakistan could not achieve the EFA goals but efforts would continue", the report said.

The third goal to 'ensure equal access to learning and life skills for youth and adults' was reached by 46 per cent of the countries. Less than half of adolescents are enrolled in lower secondary education in Pakistan.

Pakistan is among the 32 per cent countries which are far from achieving the fourth goal of a 50 per cent reduction in adult illiteracy levels.

The same was with the goals of achieving gender parity and equality and improving the quality of education and ensuring measurable learning outcomes for all.

Contrary to government claims, the report states that spending on education in Pakistan fell from 2.6 per cent of GNP to 2 per cent.

The report recommends countries to complete the EFA agenda and make at least one year of pre-primary education compulsory. It also called on the international community to close the finance gap in partnership with countries and find means to bridge US\$22 billion annual finance gap for quality pre-primary and basic education for all by 2030.

Source: <http://tribune.com.pk/story/874440/education-for-all-for-pakistan-still-a-long-road-ahead/>