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Research · October 2015

DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.1.1133.3844

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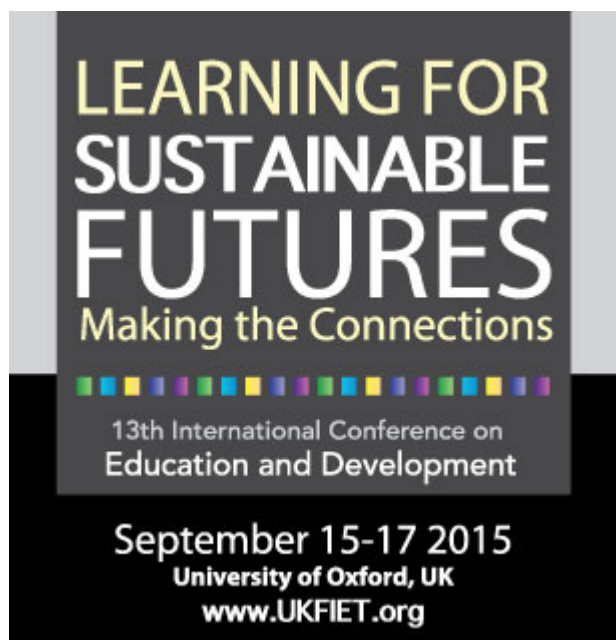


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## **UNESCO in the 2000s: EFA Coordination, GMR Production, and Organizational Legitimacy in the Global Education Policy Field<sup>1</sup>**

### **1. ABSTRACT**

With the deadline of Dakar Framework for EFA approaching and the new set of post-2015 education goals and targets proposed, there has been much reflection on what EFA has meant and achieved.

However, there has been very little research which has turned the gaze back on the major multilateral institutions such as UNESCO that committed to the fulfilment of the EFA goals. Against this background, this paper investigates the way in which UNESCO used its position as the coordinator of the post-Dakar Action Framework to help this institution regain some of the legitimacy that it had lost in the preceding decades. It does so through a rigorous analysis of relevant documents and interviews with key actors inside and outside UNESCO. More specifically, the paper focuses on the role of both the EFA follow-up unit and the production of the Global Monitoring Reports (GMRs) during the 2000s because they were at the forefront of UNESCO's efforts to re-brand and re-position itself in the education for development field.

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<sup>1</sup> The research on which this paper is based was supported by funding from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

Thus, we not only look back at a recent and key period—2000-2014—in the history of UNESCO, but we do so in order to understand better the way that EFA coordination and GMR production may have helped address a crisis of organizational legitimacy in the context of multilateralism. In so doing, this paper intends to offer useful insights into the debate on the conference sub-theme of **“international support and co-operation”** in the field of education for sustainable future

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

As 2015 is now here, there has been much reflection on what EFA has meant and achieved, primarily in terms of the goals that were promoted in Jomtien in 1990 and further institutionalized in Dakar in 2000. In the present paper, however, we focus not on the goals embedded in it, as David Post (2015) has recently done, but rather on a specific aspect of the larger EFA landscape—that is, the way that UNESCO used its position as the coordinator of the post-Dakar Action Framework to help this institution regain some of the legitimacy that it had lost in the preceding decades. More specifically, we focus our analysis on the role of both the EFA follow-up unit and, especially, the production of the Global Monitoring Reports (GMR) during the 2000s because these efforts were at the forefront of UNESCO’s activity to re-brand and re-position itself in the education for development field.

This case is particularly interesting because of the time period that it documents. UNESCO had become by the 1990s an institution that was well-known for its problems and short-comings. By the late 1990s, it can be said that UNESCO was at a low point in terms of legitimacy and respect among its peer institutions and among many development professionals. Yet during the 2000s UNESCO steadily, if not all together successfully, worked to change its image, and while it still may be an under-dog—in terms of financial and political clout—in the field of education for development—we argue partial gains have been made, particularly in relation to (and because of) the GMR. In the end, it is these gains which we seek to characterize, contextualize, and conceptualize.

We also hope this study will bring a new perspective on the politics of EFA specifically and on the dynamics of organizational legitimacy within the context of multilateralism more generally. While there has been much written about the ability of the international community to meet the EFA goals, there has been very little research which has turned the gaze back on the main multilateral institutions that committed to the fulfillment of the EFA goals in order to ask what, from a strategic, social, or political perspective, their involvement in EFA meant. Similarly, as we will explain, there has been very little research on the issue of organizational legitimacy in relation to multilateral institutions. As such, we use the example of UNESCO and EFA as a case from which to contribute new practical and theoretical insights in relation to how these institutions can respond to legitimacy deficits.

## **3. MUTLI-LATERAL INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEGITIMACY: PREVAILING THEORY, PREVIOUS RESEARCH, PRESENT FOCUS**

### **3.1 Prevailing Theory**

Within the literature on organizational legitimacy, most scholars are still using Suchman's (1995) definition of legitimacy as "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions" (p. 574). Building from this, recent scholarship has come to emphasize legitimacy as an entity that is constantly in flux, as it is negotiated, built, maintained and destroyed over time by a variety of different actors and forces (Bitektine, 2011; Buchanan & Keohane, 2006). Other scholars emphasize the way in which legitimacy comes about as the result of actions that are both internal and external to the organization (He & Baruch, 2010) and the ways in which legitimacy is essential to an organization's success and survival (Diez-Martin et al., 2013; Kostova & Zaheer, 1999).

When it comes to using organizational theory for analytic purposes, some authors organize their papers using different types of legitimacy as defined in earlier literature. For example, they looked at normative vs. popular (aka sociological) legitimacy (Bernauer & Gampfer, 2013; Diez-Martin et al., 2013). In a similar vein, other authors have looked at the internal vs. external processes that result in legitimacy (He & Baruch, 2010). Yet other authors rely on moral reasoning (Buchanan & Keohane, 2006), institutional theory (Desai, 2006; Kostova & Zaheer, 1999), organizational identity (He & Baruch, 2010), theories of democracy (King, 2003), communication theory and crisis management (Massey, 2001), and reputation management (Wæraas, & Byrkjeflot, 2012). Dowling and Pfeffer (1975) is a somewhat unique article in that, as an earlier publication, their goal is to actually propose an analytic framework for the analysis of organizational legitimacy. They pose legitimacy as a constraint on organizational behavior and look at the ways that organizations work around and respond to these constraints.

Noticeably, articles on organizational legitimacy tend neither to be working towards a common definition of legitimacy nor to be challenging current definitions. Commonly, and not surprisingly, authors work with a particular definition of legitimacy, one that fits the scope of their research. This is likely due to the fact that all of the definitions of legitimacy are necessarily vague and loose; legitimacy itself can change in nature depending on context and varies over time. Authors, thus, frequently look at what constitutes legitimacy in a given organizational context.

### **3.2 Previous Research**

Within the context of interest here—i.e., multilateralism—one of the most prominent themes across the literature is the increasing importance of democratic processes in securing legitimacy in the context of globalization and the changing nature of multilateral organizations and their missions (Buchanan & Keohane, 2006; Elsig, 2007; Keohane, 2006; King, 2003; Miller, 2007; Zurn, 2004). Democratization has become necessary to securing legitimacy as large multilateral organizations have come to intervene in areas traditionally viewed as internal matters of the nation state (e.g. human rights, environment, etc.) and have thus faced

increased resistance from a variety of groups, from farmers in India resisting the introduction of advanced seed stocks to teachers unions in Argentina resisting World Trade Organization interventions in the provision of educational services. (Bernauer & Gampfer, 2013; Elsig, 2007; Keohane, 2006; Miller, 2007; Zurn, 2004). As such, this process of democratization must enable the involvement and inclusion of a growing number of actors, including civil society groups (Bernauer & Gampfer, 2013).

In terms of losing and regaining legitimacy, Desai (2011) focuses on how a crisis of legitimacy in one organization can affect other, similar organizations operating in the same field. In this article, the crisis of legitimacy stems from a safety issue in one Railroad Company that affects the whole industry, with news reports questioning and conducting investigations into the safety and integrity of a whole range of rail companies as a result. In such instances, companies work with PR management to distance themselves from the crisis and appear as different or unique within their field in order to reestablish trust and legitimacy.

Of course, a company can face a crisis alone. Among prominent examples is that of BP after the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico; other examples include certain clothing companies after factory accidents in Bangladesh led to the tragic loss of lives. Much of the literature deals with such “crises of legitimacy,” but mostly in the abstract, without specific reference to companies and events (Desai, 2011; Elsig, 2007; Keohane, 2006; Massey, 2001; Miller, 2007). Here also, when facing such crises, companies can respond through PR, marketing campaigns, etc., and can try to publicly change their image, though such manipulation can backfire, depending on how it is received by the public (Massey, 2001).

Throughout the literature, scholars suggest that more empirical research is needed into the many aspects of legitimacy. Questions arise about where legitimacy lies within a large, multinational organization, as well as about how crises of legitimacy affect an organization’s overall success. For our purposes, however, the most relevant gap in knowledge pertains to those mechanisms through which different kinds of legitimacy are constructed or can be regained, specifically for multilateral institutions.

### **3.3 Present Focus**

As the preceding sections make clear, there are many ways to approach the concept of legitimacy. While scholarship on multilateral institutions has stressed that legitimacy—or the “generalized perception ... that the actions of an entity are desirable or appropriate” (Suchman, 1995, p. 574)—is correlated with the degree of democratic engagement by stakeholders, in the present study we are interested in a different and, to our knowledge, under-studied aspect of multilateral organizational legitimacy. Specifically, we are interested in legitimacy as “level of social acceptability” (Washington & Zajac, 2005, p. 284), where the relevant social realm is taken to be the global education policy field. As Jakobi (2009) writes, “The idea of one global education policy field does thus not render differences among international organisations irrelevant or in-existent. Rather, it conceptualises a common and international political space, in which policy agencies compete for influencing the shape of national and international

education policy.” (p. 477). Further, this field “points to the fact that an increasingly common ground exist, on which consensus and coordinated policy development takes place” (p. 475).

Though, in one sense, UNESCO may be among the most legitimate multilateral organizations working in education, due to its democratic structure, it is this other, social aspect of legitimacy that we take as our focus. And while it may at first seem odd to conceptualize the political space of the global education policy field as having a social dimension, we note, first, that there is overlap between the source of political influence and the source of social influence (as we discuss below), and second, that social standing can strengthen political clout. The key here, then, is to consider the “common ground” of the global education policy field as a space in which organizational actors must manage their perceived level of social acceptability at the same time that they strive to advance their political agenda, with the later inextricably linked with the former.

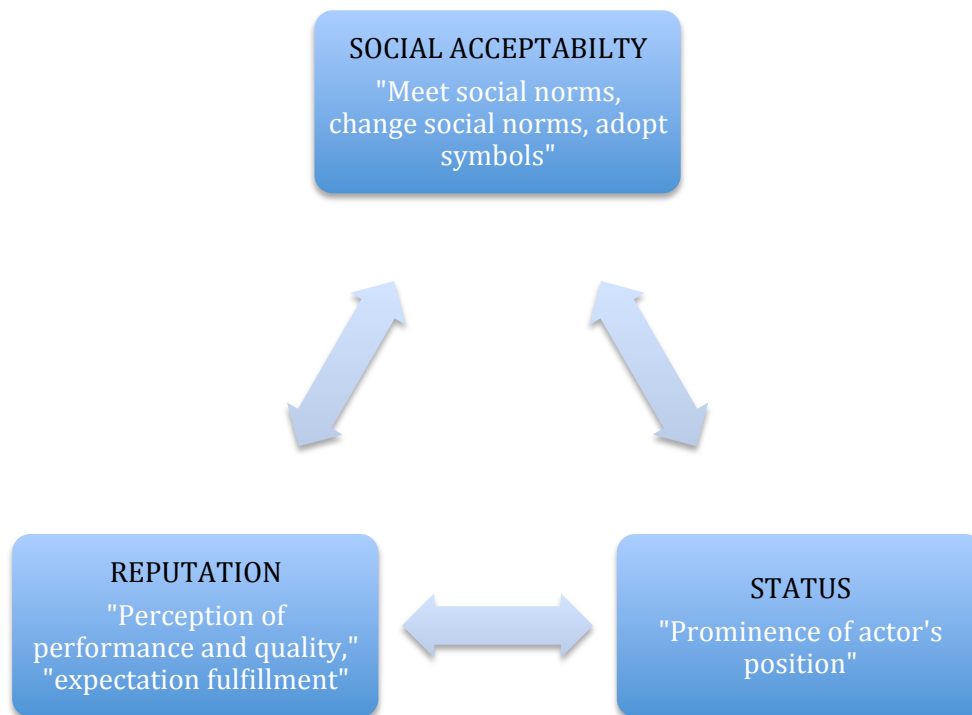
Analytically, we combine a nuanced concept of social acceptability with the concepts of reputation and status so that we can offer more appropriately nuanced findings (Bitektine, 2011). While all three concepts—i.e., level of social acceptability, reputation, and status—are interconnected, they can be distinguished. First, an organization’s level of social acceptability can be raised or lowered depending, on one hand, how it adapts to its social context and, on the other, how the prevailing social values (or expectations) in which the organization is embedded change over time (Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975). Dowling and Pfeffer (1975) specify and comment on three ways that an organization can attempt to augment its legitimacy:

First, the organization can adapt its output, goals, and methods of operation to conform to prevailing definitions of legitimacy. Second, the organization can attempt, through communication, to alter the definition of social legitimacy so that it conforms to the organization's present practices, output, and values. Finally, the organization can attempt, again through communication, to become identified with symbols, values, or institutions which have a strong base of social legitimacy. Since the changing of social norms is a difficult process, it is likely that most organizations will either adapt to the constraints imposed by the requirement to be legitimate or will attempt to identify their present output, values, and method of operations with institutions, values, or outputs which are strongly believed to be legitimate. Legitimation, therefore, involves a change in the organization's mission or the use of symbols to identify the organization with legitimate social institutions or practices. (p. 127)

Reputation is itself a multidimensional concept. In this study, it is defined as (a) the “**prestige** accorded” to the organization “on the basis of how they have performed particular activities in the past” (Jensen & Roy, 2008, p. 497); (b) the organization’s “**relative success in fulfilling the expectations** of multiple stakeholders” (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990, p. 235); and (c) the **perception of the quality of the work** of organization (Rhee & Haunschild, 2006, p. 101). Reputation is therefore the counterpart to an organization’s striving. That is, while an

organization may strive for legitimacy, changes to reputation depend on how those efforts are perceived by others.

Social acceptability and reputation are then linked to status. That is, by improving the perception of its performance, by fulfilling the expectations of its stakeholders, and by ensuring that its work is perceived as high quality, an organization can raise its status among peer institutions, where status is defined as the “Prominence of an actor’s relative position within a population of actors” (Wejnert, 2002, p. 304) and where increased prominence is associated with increased “deference behavior” (Huberman, Loch, & Onculer, 2004, p. 103). Of course, as status is based on perception, it is socially constructed and depends on agreement among the relevant actors in a social system (Washington & Zajac, 2005). Furthermore, as Bitektine (2011) argues, “The status position of an actor is established through behavioral ‘negotiation’ with other actors ... [and,] as a result, status order can be, and often is, openly contested or negotiated by the focal organization” (p. 161). Nevertheless, while it may be sensible for organizations to strive to improve their status, it should be noted that “legitimacy is not something that can be claimed by organizations, but is instead something that is given by stakeholders” (Massey, 2001, p. 156).



**Figure 1: Components of Legitimacy**

Thus, to the extent that an organization can improve its reputation it will also improve its status, thereby enjoying greater prominence and more deferential treatment within its social system. In our case, that social system is the field of global education policy. Moreover, and not surprisingly, improvement in the areas of reputation and status enhance an organization’s legitimacy by bolstering its level of social acceptability, with the implication being

that a stronger reputation and a higher status position can help to make an organization more influential in the “common space” of international education politics (Jakobi, 2009), with the relevant social actors in this space being, e.g., development professionals, international education specialists, and other international organizations. The relationships described here among legitimacy, reputation and status are depicted in Figure 1. From this understanding, the question of interest in this study is how or through what strategies such organizations as UNESCO can respond to crises of legitimacy (meaning damaged reputation and declining status) and with what success.

#### 4. METHODS

We began with an extensive literature review on UNESCO. There is a rich literature on UNESCO that not only details the actions of this institution in the realm of education but that also analyzes the position and standing of this institution in relation to prevailing development trends, other development institutions, and global geopolitics. [See Appendix A for a list of the literature consulted during this stage of the research.] This literature provided excellent information on the nature of UNESCO’s work as well as insight into the trajectory of its legitimacy beginning in the post-WWII context and continuing up to the 2000s. These insights informed and enhanced the interviews we would subsequently conduct.

In the second stage, we conducted interviews with 17 key actors and knowledgeable development specialists within and outside UNESCO. These interviewees have worked with UNESCO and/or other international organizations for extensive periods of time and in positions through which they have intimate knowledge of UNESCO’s activity and efforts during and prior to the period of focus. It bodes well for our findings that we were able to interview all but a few of the individuals considered to be most relevant by our interviewees. To give an idea of the collective experience of the interviewees from UNESCO, consider that, in addition to speaking with core GMR team members from each year of its production during 2002-2015, the individuals with whom we spoke have occupied such positions as:

- GMR Director and Deputy Director
- GMR senior policy analyst
- Program Specialist for the EFA Follow Up and Coordination Units
- Member of the High Level Group on EFA
- Director of the Executive Office of the Education Sector of UNESCO
- Assistant Director General for the Education Sector of UNESCO
- UNESCO country office director

These insider perspectives were complemented by interviews with influential actors from such organizations and initiatives as the World Bank, the Fast Track Initiative, Education International, Save the Children, the Results for Development Institute, the UK Forum for International Education and Training, and the UK Department for International Development, among others. This latter group of interviewees is particularly relevant to our study because they help to provide outsider perspectives (i.e., perspectives from outside UNESCO) on the perceived extent to which UNESCO’s legitimacy was rehabilitated during the 2000s and the



degree to which that was due to the emergence of the GMR, if at all. All interviews were conducted during August and September of 2014.

In the third and final stage of data collection, we again consulted the literature, in addition to collecting and reviewing documents and archives. Noted previously, Appendix A contains a list of the reviewed literature on UNESCO. As can be seen there, many of the articles and other publications deal generally with the efforts, politics and perceptions of UNESCO from 2000 onward in relation to the EFA initiative. Importantly, there is a sub-set of literature wherein development practitioners have commented on and analyzed the role, performance, and impact of the GMR. Perhaps the best example of this is volume 43 of *Norrag News*, published in 2010, which was titled “A World of Reports? A Critical Review of Global Development Reports with an Angle on Education and Training”. This literature was integral to our efforts to complement the perspectives of our interviewees with additional perspectives from other development specialists.

Supplemental documents and archives were also collected, not only through UNESCO’s extensive online repository but also from the personal collection of one of the authors of this study (Kitamura), who worked with UNESCO for two years starting in 2000. Crucially, Kitamura was one of the original members of the EFA Follow-Up Unit, which was tasked with putting together the team that would produce EFA monitoring reports. Through this review of documents, a number of valuable evaluations were found which provide further insight into how UNESCO, its leadership of EFA, and the GMR have been received by those outside UNESCO (see, *Education for Change*, 2014; Packer, 2007; Stern, 2010; Universalia, 2010). Additionally, the personal collections of Kitamura—not to mention his direct involvement with UNESCO during the early 2000s—provide a unique window into the thinking of UNESCO at the time, the pressures and expectations it faced, and the hopes of this institution with regard to EFA leadership and the the GMR. Kitamura’s experience, in turn, is complemented by the personal experience of one of the other authors (Okitsu), who participated during 2003-2004 in the EFA Working Group, one of the core mechanisms for EFA follow-up after 2000 (more on this in later sections of the paper). See Appendix B for a list of some of the documents consulted for this study.

Carefully and repeatedly analyzing information from the above sources has resulted in a thorough understanding of: (a) the dynamics and politics of the education-for-development field during (and prior to) 2000-2015; (b) the internal organization and reorganization of UNESCO’s education sector; (c) the efforts of UNESCO to lead the EFA initiative; (d) the role and activity of the GMR within UNESCO; and (e) the various ways that (c) and (d) have been perceived by a range of key actors and development specialists. Many of these insights are summarized in Appendix C. However, before presenting our findings and discussing their implications for organizational legitimacy, the next section contains background context to characterize the work of UNESCO in the 2000s.

## **5. BACKGROUND**

## 5.1 Prior to 1990s

A number of publications have detailed the attenuation of UNESCO's legitimacy during the 1970s and 80s (see Appendix A). Mundy (1999), for example, describes this period as one in which UNESCO was beset by political divisions as newly independent member countries called for new world economic, information, and communication orders in the 1970s, which was followed in the 1980s by withdraw from UNESCO, first, of the United States and then the United Kingdom and Singapore, with the United States claiming that it "was poorly managed, provided little functional value, and had steadily engaged in issues which were beyond the scope of its constitutional mandate" (Mundy, 1999, p. 42). At heart, the crisis experienced by UNESCO during this time was the result of a combination of factors, including "turmoil over alleged mismanagement, and a tendency to use UNESCO as a battleground for cold war politics" (Heyneman, 1999, p. 68). Given the focus of the present paper, Mundy (1999) saliently characterizes the predicament of UNESCO:

By the early 1980s, Unesco's educational activities were no longer providing the organization with the kind of *legitimacy and authority* which they had once afforded in the 1960s and early 1970s. While the organization had begun to open up new political spaces for more radical Third World demands, these demands had also *undermined the legitimacy and centrality of the organization* within the evolving multilateral system. Unesco's ability to forge an international consensus about the scope and purposes of educational multilateralism had been significantly eroded by the rise of other multilateral actors and by almost a decade of disagreement between Third World and Western members over the organization's broader purposes and roles. Its work in education had become at once more ambitious, diverse, fragmented, and diffuse. It continued to face exceedingly sharp budgetary constraints [due to the withdraw of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Singapore]. Overall, the organization had entered what Haas has characterized as a period of 'turbulent non-growth,' in which it searched unproductively for a core rationale or set of goals with which to bridge the radical demands of developing countries and the liberal, developmentalist ideologies of its core country members (Haas, 1990). (Mundy, 1999, p. 39, emphasis added).

Not surprisingly, these circumstances were associated with a number of negative side effects for UNESCO. That is, within this context, UNESCO's ability to provide technical assistance to member countries was weakened (Mundy, 1999), and its educational statistics—once the go-to source for educational data—came to be seen as unreliable (Heyneman, 1999), with both of these developments occurring just as the World Bank rose in prominence in these areas (Mundy, 1998). Thus, while UNESCO was legitimate as a multilateral organization due to the democratic nature of its structure, it steadily lost legitimacy—at least among key western members and northern development specialists—in terms of its reputation and status.

## 5.2 1990s

UNESCO thus entered the 1990s with “internal fears about losing its status as lead agency for education” (Singh, 2011, p. 57). In order reestablish its credibility, the leadership of the education sector (under Colin Power, the Assistant Director General for education, an Australian who was appointed in 1989) attempted to make this sector more functional (less philosophical) while also launching several flagship publications (such as the World Education Report, similar to reports published by the World Bank [World Development Report] and UNICEF [State of the World’s Children]). At the same time, the Director General sought to rebrand UNESCO as a “global intellectual forum” (Mundy, 1999, p. 43), a role that it attempted to step into as it hosted world conferences on adult education (1997) and higher education (1998).

Of course, much of UNESCO’s energy during the 1990s was directed, initially, at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand, and, then, in the years that followed, at maintaining the momentum behind the agreements made at Jomtien, for example, by facilitating the International Consultative Forum on EFA (“a body created in 1991 to monitor EFA and composed of representatives of the five international agencies that sponsored [WCEFA]—UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, and the World Bank—and of bilateral cooperation agencies, governments and NGOs, as well as some education specialists,” Torres, 2001, p. 1). Thus, UNESCO, in the 1990s, focused on “high-level intergovernmental meetings, the monitoring of EFA goals, partnership with other multilateral and bilateral donors, and the rebuilding of Unesco’s global leadership through public relations, fundraising and gala meetings of heads of states and ministers of education” (Mundy, 1999, p. 44). While these actions clearly show the intention of UNESCO to raise its stature among peer institutions, it should also be noted that this organization was not entirely successful as there was a “lack of sustained follow-up or monitoring mechanisms” following the WCEFA (Limage, 2012).

Thus, by the end of the 1990s, UNESCO was still looking to set itself apart from peer institutions. As Mundy (1999) wrote: “Unesco is still searching for some clear sense of its comparative advantage within an increasingly competitive group of multilateral organizations. It is still too early to tell how successful it will be. Unesco clearly lacks both Unicef’s long tradition of field programming in basic needs and the World Bank’s more systematic approach to global research and policy making” (Mundy, 1999, p. 43). Arguably, efforts that had been made to repair the organization’s image—e.g., co-sponsoring and hosting world conferences, prioritizing basic education and EFA (in accordance with the priorities of other organizations, such as the World Bank), and launching the World Education Report—were undermined, as noted, by poor WCEFA follow-up (in terms of poor collection of educational statistics, poor coordination, poor mobilization of stakeholders for results) but also by a variety of actions taken by Director General Federico Mayor (1987-1999). In contrast to pressure to make UNESCO more functional within the EFA context, Mayor was interested in loft intellectual statements—exemplified by the Delors report in 1996, with its focus on humanism and utopianism (Elfert, 2015)—because he wanted to “recapture the organization’s ethical mission” (Mundy, 1999, p. 45). Mayor also asked “each sector and each division to set aside 20% of its approved budget for special initiatives launched through his Cabinet and special advisors”

(Mundy, 1999, p. 45) in addition to creating additional Unesco-sponsored, semi-autonomous institutes” (p. 45) and increasing the funding of existing institutes. In the view of Mundy (1999):

These recent initiatives suggest an ad hoc program of institute-building and decentralization, launched without concern for resource availability [in the continued absence of the United States, United Kingdom, and Singapore] or impact on existing functional divisions. They threaten attempts to renew Unesco’s work as a standard setting body and central clearing house for educational research, both of which depend upon the maintenance of a functioning education sector and professional staff within Unesco’s Paris secretariat. ... Although Unesco has sought to re-establish its leadership across a number of education subsectors, it is still a long way from providing an effective challenge to the rising role played by the World Bank and other rich country institutions in shaping international educational policy.” (Mundy, 1999, pp. 46- 47)

Other observers, such as Jones (1999) and Rose (2003), to name a couple, have echoed Mundy’s (1999) sentiment, suggesting that, during 1990s, UNESCO was politicized and constrained and needed to reinvent itself in order to be relevant in the 2000s.

### **5.3 World Education Forum, 2000**

The World Education Forum, held in Dakar, Senegal, in April, 2000, would, in fact, provide an opportunity for UNESCO to reinvent itself. This conference was another attempt by the international community to generate action to meet the education goals that had been agreed upon in 1990, at the World Conference on Education for All. Despite limited cooperation among multilateral institutions during the 1990s towards the goals established in 1990, several factors converged to raise the profile of the EFA campaign during the ensuing decade: The World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF and the OECD had been pushing the education agenda (in their own ways), as had strong coalitions of international NGOs who believed in education, such as the Global Campaign for Education (founded in 1999, and which brought together national organizations and powerful INGOs like ActionAid, Care, Global March, Oxfam, Save the Children Alliance, and World Vision International) (Singh, 2011). To help direct and sustain this momentum, many international organizations and their representatives sought to ensure that the Dakar Forum (unlike Jomtien) resulted in specific action frameworks and targets (King, 2007; Packer, 2007). Moreover, as Daniel (2010) notes, “In the run-up to the Dakar World Forum on Education for All in 2000, the World Bank had assumed that it would take the lead in following up on the recommendations that emerged” (p. 42).

The World Bank and, it seems, UNESCO were thus surprised when the participants at Dakar awarded the leadership and coordinating role for EFA to UNESCO. Not surprisingly, this result was not without contestation. Packer (2007) describes this well:

While infighting among agencies is a fact of life in most international conferences, it was particularly unhealthy in Dakar. Distrust of UNESCO was tangible and yet many

developing countries rebelled at what they saw as the undue influence and self-importance of other international agencies. As a result they – with a little help from UNESCO – made it clear that UNESCO should have the central mandate for coordinating Dakar follow up. (p. 9; see also Torres, 2001)

Importantly, although many developing countries were uneasy with the leadership capacity of UNESCO, this outcome of Dakar is notable because it signals that this organization, despite its faults, was still seen as the most legitimate to lead a global education campaign. Yet, again, this outcome arguably speaks to UNESCO's democratic nature and not to other aspects of legitimacy. To that end, the expectations against which UNESCO's reputation would be judged during the 2000s were also laid out at the WEF.

The Dakar Framework for Action was the key outcome to be adopted by the 1,100 participants of the WEF. This document specified steps that should be taken following the conference to meet the six education goals that had been agreed upon and which, it was stated, should be met by 2015. Broadly, the document asserted that "a global initiative" should be launched that was "aimed at developing the strategies and mobilizing the resources needed to provide effective support to national efforts" (World Education Forum, 2000, p. 9). More specifically, the Framework stated that UNESCO would "continue its mandated role in coordinating EFA partners" and that it would maintain collaborative momentum by annually convening "a high-level, small and flexible group" (later known as the "High Level Group") that will serve "as a lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilization" (World Education Forum, 2000, p. 10). Finally, and importantly for our purposes, the DAF not only placed great emphasis on monitoring "progress towards EFA goals and strategies at the national, regional and international levels" (World Education Forum, 2000, p. 9) but this document explicitly stated that UNESCO should be the organization to producing a "monitoring report" (p. 10) that would feed into its coordinating work.

The DAF clearly put a lot of pressure on UNESCO. The expectations for the years to come were high, even if confidence was low, particularly in comparison with the clout and technical capacity of the World Bank. Nevertheless, UNESCO's new Director General, Koichiro Matsuura, whose term began just five months before Dakar, in November 1999, was committed to meeting the expectations for leadership, coordinating and monitoring that had been laid out. Evidence of this is provided by Limage (2007), who explains that in December 2000 Matsuura sent out an internal memo declaring that "the entire Organization has to be mobilized for maximum effectiveness and success in the follow-up in order to *do justice to this show of confidence* by Member States in UNESCO and to *consolidate our pivotal role in the field of education* within the United Nations system." (Limage, 2007, p. 466, emphasis added). The question here is the extent to which UNESCO generally was able to meet these expectations, and, within that, the role that the GMR may have played. In order to answer that question, the present section took pains to depict the GEP field and the hopes to which UNESCO was subject at the beginning of the 2000s because legitimacy (i.e., social acceptability, reputation, and status) is measured by observers in relation to the position of one's peers and in relation to

expectations for organizational performance. Thus, with the details in mind that have been provided above, we can explore changes to UNESCO's legitimacy during the 2000s.

## 6. FINDINGS

In what follows, we attempt to explain the successes and limitations of the GMR and of UNESCO's EFA coordination, in addition discussing the larger constraints that have hindered UNESCO's efforts at repairing its legitimacy. The idea is to address the gains (and losses) made by UNESCO through the GMR and through its EFA leadership, followed by an examination of the more macro internal and external constraints faced by UNESCO that have hampered the achievement of enhanced legitimacy vis-à-vis other actors in the GEP field. Throughout our discussion, it should be remembered that changes in social acceptability, reputation, and status are themselves the result of the accumulation of many smaller actions. This is understandable, since establishing a new track record for performance or for meeting expectations takes time and requires consistent performance or consistent results in the areas or dimensions along which the organization will be judged. As such, the discussion below of changes to UNESCO's legitimacy is not all or nothing but rather reflects the notion that legitimacy (and its component concepts, i.e., level of social acceptability, reputation, and status) can be achieved in degrees and, importantly, is defined in relation to one's peers. For these reasons, in addition to making comparisons with the perceived abilities and demonstrated performance of other multilateral organizations, we will also talk about how various aspects of GMR production and EFA leadership *contributed* (or did not) to increasing (or damaging) UNESCO's legitimacy, as a matter of degree.

### 6.1 GMR

#### 6.1.1 About the Report

The first monitoring report to be produced by post-Dakar was finalized in October, 2001, and was delivered that same month to the members of the High Level Group (HLG) at their first meeting. This report—produced by the Dakar Follow-up Unit and titled, “Monitoring Report on Education for All—was not well-received by the HLG, which made a number of recommendations for its improvement (Packer, 2008; UNESCO, 2001b). Within its 51 pages, it contained brief sections that overviewed (a) progress towards the EFA goals, (b) cooperation with civil society organization, (c) resource mobilization for EFA, and (d) suggestions for follow-up actions. Going forward, the HLG stipulated that “an authoritative, analytical, annual EFA Monitoring Report should be produced [...] assessing the extent to which both countries and the international community are meeting their Dakar commitments. As a matter of urgency, UNESCO should convene key partners to discuss how the report can best be prepared, managed and resourced” (UNESCO, 2001a).

By mid-2002, the Dakar Follow-up Unit had put together an 11-person team with a high-profile director that would work together with the head of the EFA Observatory at the UNESCO Institute of Statistics in Montreal. This team was housed within UNESCO, was given editorial

independence, and was guided by an international advisory board (Packer, 2007). Extra-budgetary support came from donors who saw the report as important to the work EFA, but particularly from DfID, especially in the initial years (Daniel, 2010). These donors also did not want lack of resources, a common problem within UNESCO, to be a constraint on the report's success (INT8).<sup>2</sup>

Subsequent reports grew exponentially in size (topping out at 525 pages in 2010) and focused both on country-by-country progress on the EFA goals as well as on thematic issues. Importantly, it is these reports, starting in 2002, that fall under the label of Global Monitoring Reports. Themes covered in the initial years reflected the EFA goals themselves (e.g., gender, education quality, literacy, and early childhood care and education). The 2008 report was an assessment of whether or not the world was on track to meet the targets the deadline of 2015. The years 2009-2014 then covered other topics, decided in conjunction by the GMR Director and its advisory board, with these topics including inequality and governance, marginalized populations, conflict and education, youth and skills, and teaching and learning.

In terms of timing, the GMR has been launched at the meeting of the HLG, in October (INT3). Other forms of dissemination rely on the internet and, for the hard copies, at least half are sent to UNESCO's field offices (Education for Change, 2014). A testament to the GMR's influence is that, in the mid-2000s, the technical EFA Working Group was resequenced so that it would immediately precede the meeting of the HLG. This was done, at least in part, so that the Working Group would be able to base its discussion and agenda on the topics and analysis contained in the GMR (INT10).

But this is just one example of the GMR's impact. Because reputation is based on the prestige that is accorded by others based on track record, on perceived quality, and on meeting expectations, it is important to speak to these issues with reference to the GMR's performance in order to understand how the GMR has contributed to UNESCO's legitimacy. In other words, by first explaining the legitimacy of the GMR we can later discuss how this legitimacy benefitted (and was also constrained by) UNESCO more generally. Thus, we detail below the numerous ways that the GMR established and raised its reputation, and as a consequence its status, both within and outside UNESCO.

### 6.1.2 Sources of GMR legitimacy

The legitimacy of the GMR is the result of the combination of many factors. (Evidence for these factors has been summarized and can be found in Appendix D.) **First, its organizational context has been important.** That is, while the GMR is housed within UNESCO's headquarters in Paris, and while the GMR is part of UNESCO's overall administrative procedures, rules and regulations (including financial control, contracts processing, recruitment of personnel), the GMR also enjoys strategic freedom (e.g., with regard to how they spend their

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<sup>2</sup> The number of simultaneous donors grew to 10-12 from 2006 onwards, with the GMR having a total of 17 different donors by 2014 (INT5).

funds) and editorial independence (i.e., they do not need approval from the education sector or from the Director General for the report's content) (INT9; see also Education for Change, 2014). This is exceptional, as one Director of the GMR stated: ““what we produce is not vetted politically, or otherwise, by anybody, any of the senior leadership at UNESCO ... there is no other publication that has that kind of independence”—neither within UNESCO nor within other multilateral institutions (INT5, p3). Of course, this independence, and the fact that “nobody at UNESCO will see the final report until it's finished” (INT5, p. 5) was a gamble for UNESCO at first, and one that made it uneasy, particularly since the report bears the UNESCO logo and is, to the general public, seen as a UNESCO report (INT7; INT17).

Not surprisingly, editorial independence put UNESCO in an uncomfortable position at times, since, through this independence, the GMR often characterized the progress made by individual countries in terms that frustrated those countries. The following statement from one observer characterizes this dynamic well:

The other critical feature of the GMR was its location within UNESCO, but its independence from UNESCO. And that was quite hard fought for, and sometimes resisted by UNESCO, particularly in the early years. But it was a critical factor, because it allowed the GMR to criticize nation states and not be bound by the board of UNESCO when a country says that you can't publish that because we don't agree with it. There have been numerous occasions when India was favorite example, India always contested the figures in the GMR. So, [the Assistant Director General for Education] was able to say, in all honesty, you know, it's independent. I can't stop them. And you can have a debate with them, and John Daniel can say, have the debate, bring it to the high-level group, by all means. But I don't have the power to tell them to change the figures. I mean, the reality is, of course, they do – they did try and influence as much as they could. But there were some very strong editors, Chris Colclough, Nick Burnett, and others who pushed back. And I think that was a very important feature of the GMR, it was able to challenge governments on what they were saying. (INT10, p7)

In the end, this independence paid off, as the GMR has been seen not only as perhaps the most reputable and high-quality outcome of Dakar, but one which is associated with UNESCO (INT9). Moreover, the report is embraced by UNESCO. It is considered the flagship publication, is launched with the attendance and endorsement of the Director General, and includes a foreword by the Director General as well (INT5).

Importantly for the GMR, its organizational arrangement has been complemented by **latitude in hiring practices**. As recalled by John Daniel (2010), former Assistant Director-General for Education: “Director-General Matsuura made no attempt to interfere with the management of [the GMR] by appointing people to it for political purposes. This meant that we could appoint a series of outstanding leaders to direct the EFA-GMR: Chris Colclough; Nick Burnett; and Kevin Watkins” (p. 42). According to numerous interviewees, these directors were credible across the global education policy field and were respected by UNESCO's peer institutions, including the World Bank (INT6). Notably, these directors has strong academic credentials but were also



experienced at bridging research and policy (INT5). By hiring on merit, the GMR was able to ensure that it had quality human resource inputs, which are necessary to produce quality analytic outputs.

To that end, **the GMR, as a report, has earned an excellent reputation.** This reputation stems from at least three factors—its trusted statistics, its quality production, and its incisive analysis. On the first issue, a former Assistant Director General asserts the following:

One of the great things about the monitoring report, it did oblige people to be honest. They couldn't just invent the figures themselves because they had to supply them to the Institute of Statistics, which went over them quite carefully. And then they came into the GMR, which often checked it again. So if a minister came out with something quite different, then obviously the press reacted on it and usually believed the GMR over the minister, to his chagrin. (INT6, p13)

Thus, the GMR is “a report ... where your data is validated [and] vetted as reliable and comparable,” in the words of a former Director of the Dakar Follow-up Unit (INT15, p. 14).

The production process then brought the statistics to light, and in a way that enhanced legitimacy. Again, per a former Assistant Director General for Education:

The monitoring report ... confronts people with facts. And that was very important. And also gave people the impression, because it was a glossy production and well done, and lots of figures and so on, and people said, well, you know, this is serious business. We should take this seriously. So it was a fairly major development in getting the show on the road. (INT6, p5)

This sentiment was later echoed by Rosemary Preston (2010), an academic and outsider to UNESCO with over four decades of work in the field of international education.

Many find the EFA GMRs authoritative and attractive in their multiple modes (full and summary, in hard and virtual copy, and video and slide show versions), welcoming their guidance on educational policy and practice to overcome disadvantage. Core texts derive from readily available background papers and syntheses of other research. Complex cross-national consultation suggests a holistic approach and applying lessons learned from earlier volumes implies commitment to relevance and accessibility. (Preston, 2010, p. 61)

From the above quotes, then, we see that—both—the physical production (in that it looks legitimate) and its process of development (in that it transparently relies on background papers by experts) contribute to the GMR's positive reputation.

Lastly, with regard to the report's perceived quality, there is also the issue of analysis. The GMR has been described as including “expert analyses in different parts of the world”

(INT5), “cutting-edge analysis” of major topics (INT17), and, in the words of academic Michele Schweisfurth (2010), “cogent analysis of data, clarity of presentation, and an astute focus on crucial issues” (p. 59). Sufficient resources are undoubtedly required to produce GMRs of the quality described here, a point which has been highlighted by Universalialia’s (2010) evaluation of the GMR, which noted that staff costs alone for 2009 exceeded \$2 million with individual GMRs after 2010 projected to amount to \$4 million in total costs.

However, the payoff from donor investment in the GMR is that the report is broadly seen as effective, in that it meets (if not exceeds) the expectations that were placed upon it at the outset. This has been attested to by interviewees, by external evaluations of the GMR (e.g., Universalialia, 2006), and by academics. Per Gustafsson (2010), “The GMR has gained international recognition and credibility in a short time as ‘the’ international report in education” (Gustafsson, 2010, p. 39). In terms of the analytic framework for this paper, it can be stated that the GMR managed to develop a good reputation, first, because it met the expectations of relevant stakeholders, second, because its work has been perceived as high quality, and, third, because established a track record of excellence, such as prestige has been accorded to it.

### 6.1.3 The Impact of GMR’s Legitimacy

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the impact of the GMR has been felt across the global education policy field. In this section, it is important to highlight the various forms of its impact, because this understanding will further facilitate a discussion of UNESCO’s overall changes in legitimacy in the post-2000 context. That is, juxtaposing the GMR’s success in this section with some of the challenges faced by UNESCO’s EFA leadership in the next section will provide will help to bring into relief the challenges that face UNESCO’s legitimacy more generally. There are four aspects of GMR impact that stand out.

**First, the GMR has certainly left its imprints on UNESCO itself**, for example, in that the report was regularly relied upon—because of its analytical work—by Director General Koichiro Matsuura in his speeches (INT8). But this is a minor example of the GMR’s contribution to UNESCO. More generally, the GMR facilitated UNESCO’s work and leadership around EFA. Perhaps the best example of this is the fact that the GMR informed the work of the EFA Working Group and the High Level Group, as one former High Level Group participant described:

The EFA Global Monitoring Report was very instrumental in the sense that it was the basis of the work for first, the technical working group, and then for the meetings in the high-level working group. So, in that sense it was important because UNESCO’s task was to monitor progress towards EFA, and the EFA Global Monitoring Report permitted that to be done because it was the nature of the work of the EFA Global Monitoring Report. (INT7, p3)

More specifically, it was stated that the GMR helped to “bring more substance into the discussions” of the High Level Group by providing inputs for the ministers “to chew on and to think about and use as a basis [for discussion]” (INT5, p. 11). Even more broadly, Daniel (2010), observed not only that “The EFA-GMR provided an essential support for ...the biennial meetings of the E9 (Education Ministers of the 9 largest developing countries),” but also that, “as the informational foundation for these meetings ... the reports were widely studied, reinforcing an already efficient dissemination system” (Daniel, 2010, p. 32).

**Second, outside of UNESCO, the GMR has come to be used and relied upon by a wide range of actors,** including transnational civil society, peer international organizations, academics, and, to a lesser extent, national-level NGOs and policymakers. The most thorough statement of its use outside of UNESCO is found within the most recent external evaluation of the GMR. As this evaluation describes:

Overall, where stakeholders are aware of the GMR and have access to it, it is playing an important and influential direct and indirect role in policy discourse and policy making. This is particularly the case at international levels. However, the reach and awareness are too low at national levels to provide regular or consistent influence on policy dialogue in many countries. Stakeholders at both national and international levels use the GMR as a reliable and authoritative source of reference to inform and strengthen their work, particularly in research reports and presentations. Within academia it is commonly used to frame and contextualise research questions and is increasing in visibility. ... Stakeholders most often draw on statistics from the GMR, but thematic and EFA progress analyses are also commonly used, as is, to a lesser extent, the work on education financing (where the GMR analysis is very strongly cited amongst those most concerned with this issue). At international and national levels, the GMR provides advocacy stakeholders with valuable and credible evidence to feed into their materials and activities. The annual publication of the GMR provides a vital regular window of opportunity for advocacy organisations as increased attention is drawn to education by the new report. The GMR is also used within international organisations to strengthen internal advocacy for education programming and resourcing. In some cases, however, controversial data, perceived lack of relevance and the tone of GMR messages have undermined the usefulness of the GMR to some advocacy organisations. (Education for Change, 2014, p. viii)

A notable exception to the above characterization is, or perhaps was, the World Bank, which, through at least 2006, “felt that its own data, and its own, indeed, its own reports, its own monitoring reports, albeit extending beyond education, were more important than the GMR” (INT14, p. 12). Although not surprising, the reluctance of the World Bank does remind us of the competition and tension that has, at times, characterized the relationship between UNESCO and the World Bank.

**Third, and relatedly, the GMR has shown that it can affect agendas in the global education policy field.** On this point, Schwiesfurth (2010) writes that the GMRs “reflect (and

therefore help to set) agendas in terms of which themes and issues are at the forefront of development cooperation and national policy concern, and they pull together convincing evidence as to why these themes demand attention” (p. 59). Some of themes covered by the GMR which have garnered significant attention include early childhood education, primary education, adult literacy, gender equality, educational quality, education governance and international cooperation (Limage, 2012). Complementing Soudien’s (2010) perspective that the GMR’s impact is strong in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Korea, Buchert (2010) provides a few additional examples:

On an impressionistic basis and interpreted as a correlation between the publication of the report and reactions in policy constituencies, the report already had some success. Boys’ underperformance compared to that of girls led to headlines and parliamentary debates in the United Kingdom and Sweden (EFA GMR, 2003/4). Lower ranking than neighbouring countries made Brazil reinforce support for education (EFA GMR, 2006). The mid-term review established that progress is fastest in countries furthest from the goals (EFA GMR, 2008). (p. 65)

In practice, the evaluation by Education for Change (2014) concluded that there are four routes by which the GMRs inform policy: “use for regional/global benchmarking; contributing to momentum and policy action around a specific issue; providing tools and examples from which policy-makers can draw; and provoking public reactions from policy-makers” (p. viii).

**Fourth**, one interviewee with senior leadership experience in the Fast Track Initiative went so far as to suggest that **the GMR has lent credibility to the field of global education policy generally**. On one hand, the GMR contributed to the credibility of this field by helping to keep the focus on all six education goals (as opposed to the two education goals specified in the Millennium Development Goals), thereby defending the range of issues that were seen as central within this field; on the other hand, it lent credibility through its systematic and evidence-based reporting of progress towards widely agreed-upon goals:

[The GMR] gave the education sector a lot of credibility, the fact that we have this very robust evidence-based analysis of progress towards education goals coming out every year. It’s the only sector with anything like that, you know. And very often education sector comes out badly in comparison with the health sector, in particular, and infrastructure, water, et cetera. But on this particular issue, on a robust evidence-based report that assess progress towards agreed goals, education was, and I think probably still is, the leader. I mean that was a great credit. (INT10, p7)

Undoubtedly, then, the GMR, beyond having a solid reputation itself, provided, by association, at least a partial boost for UNESCO’s reputation. In part, this boost was the result of the unclear (for many) relationship between UNESCO and the GMR. One interviewee with significant experience within and outside UNESCO explained:

I think there was a gradual realization that this product, which was generally welcomed and reflected, in many respects, partly because people didn't understand the relationship between the GMR and UNESCO in its detail, actually reflected pretty well on UNESCO. Because here was a major annual report coming out which got a fair degree of publicity, which to all intents and purposes, was a UNESCO report published by UNESCO with a strong-ish forward each year from the Director General (INT14, p. 8)

The larger question, however, is whether UNESCO's organizational context and whether its leadership around EFA evolved during the 2000s in ways that would allow UNESCO to benefit from the GMR's legitimacy as it sought to recuperate its own legitimacy.

## **6.2 EFA Leadership**

### 6.2.1 EFA Coordination Mechanisms and the Organizational Context of UNESCO

Overall, the interviewees, documents, and literature consulted for this study coincide that UNESCO's leadership around EFA was not as successful as the GMR, that it was not seen as such, and that it did not necessarily help to raise UNESCO's status or its social position

Subsequent to the World Education Forum in Dakar, while UNESCO's education sector directed considerable attention to supporting the EFA initiative—as “the only game in town” (INT6, p. 7)—two of the primary mechanisms for EFA leadership were the High Level Group and the Technical Working Group.<sup>3</sup> Packer (2007) clearly describes their roles as initially envisioned: “The former is ... a mechanism to sustain and accelerate the political momentum created at the World Education Forum and serve as a lever for resource mobilization; the latter as a means of providing technical guidance to all partners in the Education for All movement and facilitate information exchange” (Packer, 2007, p. 10). It was thought that a communique issued by the HLG after each meeting would “link knowledge to action” through “global, rather than country-specific, action steps” (Buchert, 2010, p. 65).

In practice, however, the discussion of the Working Group was not known for producing concrete recommendations for the High Level Group, which itself was not seen as being terribly impactful (INT6). To that end, the influence of the communiqués of the High Level Group was described as “uncertain” (Bucher, 2010, p. 65). Adding to this, a former Director General of Education shared the following:

I'm not sure how much good the high-level group did, except that once a year it made a whole bunch of people focus on the EFA, which probably is not a bad thing in itself. But it wasn't all that well structured. ... I got the impression that these high-level groups

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<sup>3</sup> For more on the working group, see:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/coordination-mechanisms/working-group/>

were seen as ineffective, particularly by the big donors. (...) [the Director General] was constantly changing the membership [which] was frustrating. (INT6, p16)

Outside of the Working Group and the High Level Group, UNESCO had, by 2002, developed a plan for the operationalization of the Dakar Action Framework, a plan which focused on working with countries to create EFA action plans. However, as early as 2003 the Executive Board showed concern about UNESCO's EFA leadership, particularly as the Fast Track Initiative—i.e., the World Bank's parallel endeavor launched in 2002 to ensure that countries in need of financing for EFA would receive it—was gaining momentum. More specifically, the FTI also required countries to develop strategic plans for the education sector, but the key difference for our purposes is that the education sector plans developed for FTI, and the support offered by FTI, were seen by many, though perhaps not all, as being more credible and impactful because they “involved government systems, budget support, ... and building government capacity to plan” (INT6, p.3). UNESCO's EFA Action Plans, on the other hand, were not only seen as being more philosophical and open-ended—“you want to get all the children into school, how do you do it?” (INT10, p.3)— but it was “unrealistic ...to expect countries to prepare EFA plans without much more support than UNESCO was able to offer them” (INT10, p. 3). Writing at the time, Rose (2003) noted that “Donor and NGO disillusionment at the lack of momentum generated around EFA by UNESCO, post-Dakar, led to a recognition that the World Bank needed to take on a stronger role in uniting major players around a common vision of the global initiative. The World Bank willingly undertook this role” (p. 7). Thus, it was in this context that UNESCO's Executive Board ordered an internal evaluation of EFA strategy and coordination; the board wanted a better definition of “UNESCO's coordination role for EFA and the actual functioning of the Education Sector” (Limage, 2007, p. 463).

This evaluation marked the beginning of a cycle that has been repeated during the ensuing 10 years. This cycle begins with a lack of confidence, frustration with performance, or outright controversy (e.g., about misappropriation of funds), followed by turnover in senior leadership, an evaluation (either internal or external), and then restructuring of the education sector generally and the EFA coordination mechanisms specifically. As evidence of this trend, consider that during 2004-2006 alone the following transpired:

- 2004, New (American) Assistant Director General of Education orders evaluation of the education sector by American firm in 2005, results out in 2006
- 2006, January, evaluation released, critical of education sector management and of UNESCO's country level EFA support—“lack of rigour and professionalism” in EFA support planning (Limage, 2007, p. 461)
- 2006, July, many developing country members ask UNESCO for more credible EFA global action plan; UNESCO's Board again concerned about progress and leadership around EFA (particularly vis-à-vis other development trends), and so the creation of another EFA plan is mandated
- 2006, July, UNESCO restructuring affects EFA coordination; moreover, many ambassadors question the transparency of the restructuring

- 2006, UNESCO staff surprised by announcement of restructuring, third restructuring in 6 years, decreased confidence of staff (Limage, 2007)

This cycle again affected UNESCO's EFA mechanisms in 2011-2012. During this time, the Working Group and the High Level Group were combined into a single Global EFA Meeting (known as GEM). As stated in a report by the Director General on EFA, beginning in 2012:

There will be a single annual Global EFA Meeting (GEM), merging the present HLG and WG. The main purpose of the GEM will be to critically assess progress towards EFA based on the Global Monitoring Report and regional and national reports, and to agree on tangible actions for follow-up. ... To ensure substantive discussions, the GEM will last three to four days and consist of: (1) a technical segment for senior officials; and (2) a ministerial/high-level segment for Ministers, Vice-Ministers and heads of other EFA constituencies. (Unesco, 2011, p. 3)

The outcomes of the GEM would then, along with the recommendations of an EFA Steering Committee guide the agenda of a new EFA High-Level Forum. The EFA Steering Committee, for its part should "provide strategic direction to the EFA partnership, monitor progress, and advise on how to scale up efforts in order to meet the six EFA goals" (UNESCO, 2015b).<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, the EFA High-Level Forum (like the High-Level Group before it) was supposed to "mobilize political support for EFA beyond the education community and to raise the profile of education on the international development agenda" (UNESCO, 2015a). The High-Level Forum has met once per year in conjunction with a major event, such as the UN General Assembly.<sup>5</sup> The relationships among the entities described here are depicted in the diagram below.

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<sup>4</sup> The 19 members of the Steering Committee represented UNESCO Member States, the E-9 Initiative, EFA convening agencies (UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank), the OECD, the civil society and the private sector. Among the 19 members, 6 represent countries, one from each UNESCO world region. Civil society has two seats, with the NGO representatives elected from the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (which has ~300 members). Elections are elections each 2 years (INT12).

<sup>5</sup> The extent of the High-Level Forum's definition is as follows: "It will correspond to the original vision of this event as stated in the Dakar Framework for Action, i.e. 'a high-level, small and flexible group' which will serve as 'a lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilization'. A few world leaders and champions of education will be invited to the Forum. Convened by the Director-General of UNESCO in conjunction with a major Heads of State or Government meeting such as the United Nations General Assembly, the HLF will thus contribute to raising the profile of education on the international development agenda." (UNESCO, 2011, p. 2).

DIAGRAM – NEW GLOBAL EFA COORDINATION ARCHITECTURE

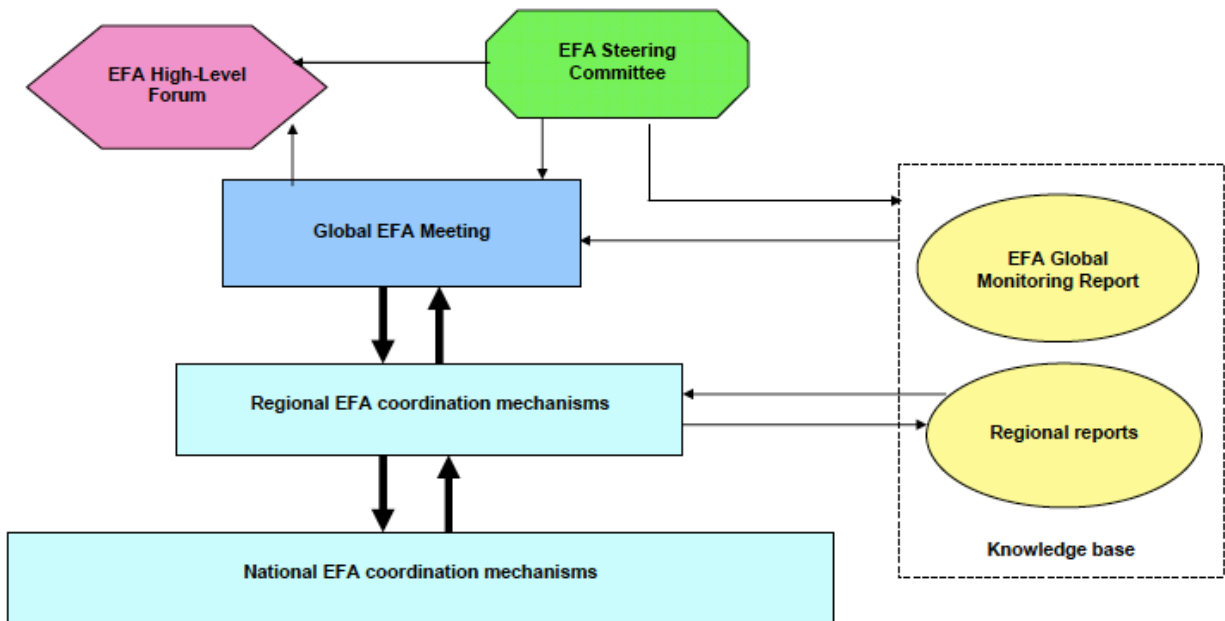


Figure 2: Diagram of Global EFA Coordination Architecture, beginning in 2012

Source: UNESCO (2011).

Within the Education Sector, these mechanisms are complemented by an EFA coordination team. Previously known as the Dakar Follow-up Unit, this team has experienced significant upheaval as well. Starting in 2007-8, “EFA went from a division into a section, which is a sub-element of a division. But then shortly afterwards, ...as soon as 2009, there was yet another restructuring, and the EFA team went back again under the direct supervision of the Assistant Director General [for Education]. And it was still called the EFA – and that’s where it was called, for the first time, team. EFA Coordination Team” (INT12, p. 6). Aside from organizational reshuffling, the EFA team within UNESCO has had to confront funding constraints. While there were 10 professionals in the EFA division in 2004, there were five in 2010 and 3-4 in 2014, in addition to not having a director (INT12).

### 6.2.2 EFA Leadership Potential Unfulfilled

As the above section indicated, UNESCO’s EFA leadership is very much constrained by its organizational context. To summarize, that context has been characterized by a cycle of dysfunction, evaluations (internal and external), restructuring, and partial implementation of reforms to address systemic issues (e.g., lack of accountability, bureaucratization, centralization, politicization, lack of qualified senior staff) (Limage, 2010; Stern, 2010), all while suffering from a restricted budget (in the absence of US contributions, paid during 2003-2011, when it was again a full, fee-paying member, and which represented 22 percent of UNESCO’s



budget) and while not having a clear vision of the over-arching vision or purpose of the organization (Stern, 2010).

Given this predicament, it is not surprising that observers from other international organizations and development institutions have judged UNESCO's performance on EFA poorly, and for exactly the reasons highlighted above. According to one interviewee with extensive experience in a range of bilateral, multilateral and international non-governmental organizations:

With one or two shining exceptions, they have not provided the sort of intellectual leadership that many people would expect UNESCO, as the leading UN agency on education, to provide. They have not been able ... to recruit the best of the thinkers in the world on education. ... It's a challenge for any big organization. But I think UNESCO is particularly bureaucratic, by all accounts, ... particularly dominated ... by internal micro-politics. (INT10, p12)

Another interviewee with a similar profile also commented not only on UNESCO's EFA coordination but also on its involvement in the more recent post-2015 negotiations:

I think it's been modestly successful, but it certainly hasn't lived up to – it certainly hasn't met the potential that it could have met. And we see that today in the discussions around what may follow EFA, or what may follow the MDGs. We see UNESCO scrambling to catch up, running late, not being very creative in ideas, and so on. So I think it's been – it's not good it didn't exercise leadership, but it didn't exercise – insufficient leadership would be the way I would put it. (INT8, p15)

The two assessments shared here by representatives of UNESCO's peer institutions both speak to the issue of expectations and potential. This is an important observation because these reference points serve as the basis for making judgments in relation to reputation specifically and legitimacy generally, since the former is a component of the latter. Of course, when it comes to the focus of this paper, it is clear that leadership of EFA and production of the GMR were not only vastly different tasks subject to different organizational constraints but were also endeavors that were evaluated against vastly different expectations—as further discussed in the next section.

## **7. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS: GMR PRODUCTION AND EFA LEADERSHIP**

Meeting expectations around EFA leadership would have required UNESCO going beyond hosting and coordinating the required meetings of the various incarnations of the Working Group and the High Level Group. It would have required that UNESCO, through its actions and through its communication strategies, *be seen as having*, first, successfully sustained the sense of momentum felt among the participants at the World Education Forum in Dakar, second, successfully coordinated and led its peers in the field of global education policy as these stakeholders contributed various resources to the EFA effort, and, third, successfully

motivated and supported countries to develop and implement plans. This is obviously a very tall order, and one which some interviewees suggested was too tall for any one agency, let alone UNESCO, given the internal and external constraints it faced (INT11). Taking on the EFA mandate was even likened—symbolically—to “Hara Kari,” the Japanese term for suicide (disembowelment in the samurai tradition) (INT11).

While the above sections emphasized the internal aspects of UNESCO’s context in the 2000s, it also needs to be emphasized that the broader field of global education policy was shifting in ways that challenged UNESCO’s legitimacy from the outside. Most notably, the creation of the FTI (in 2002) by the World Bank stole UNESCO’s thunder with regard to EFA leadership. The attention of donors—and their money—flowed to the FTI after its creation, putting pressure on the EFA agenda at the same time to focus primarily on the goal of universal primary access, as FTI did since it was linked to the Millennium Development Goals. Among the reasons for the attention that the FTI received: (a) it was focused on a measurable goal (enrolment), (b) it had significant financing, (c) it aligned with the MDG #2, and (d) it was managed by the World Bank, which was seen as more effective and which had more clout (at least among the donor crowd) in terms of the global governance of education.<sup>6</sup> Relatedly, and in the words of one interviewee, “Everybody ... with all the money [was] around the MDGs” (INT9, p. 11).

Similarly, other conveners of the World Education Forum at Dakar shifted their focus away from UNESCO’s coordination. The UNDP, for example, decided to pivot away from education generally, while UNICEF focus on its own initiative around girl’s education (INT11). The following two quotes, from the same interviewee, speak, first, to the movement away from UNESCO, and second, to the social aspect of these developments:

After UNESCO got the mandate, the World Bank started the FTI, UNICEF started girls education initiative... [they] felt left out/threatened by UNESCO (read: Matsuura) taking over completely without consulting them. ... The UNDP says we’re not going to be bothering with education anymore. So you know it was sort of a catastrophe for the alliance, this whole thing. So, in my view, it was like the kiss of death for EFA, for me, you know, to give the mandate to UNESCO was like a kiss of death because UNESCO alone, no agency alone can handle such a complex task anyway. And UNESCO, absolutely not, you know, without the others. (INT11, p. 5)

(What) caused fallout, in my view, between World Bank (Wolfensohn) and UNESCO (Matsuura) is that Matsuura did not reach out. He didn’t say a word, you know, when he

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<sup>6</sup> At the same time, as interviewees have pointed out, the creation of the FTI by the World Bank represented, according to some, a common sense division of labor between the WB and UNESCO because the World Bank is an expert in finance and because it already had relationships with Ministers of Finance in countries that were struggling to meet the development goals.

made his acceptance speech in Dakar, he was alone on the podium, ... he didn't reach out to them. He didn't say anything ... about working together. (INT11, p. 26)

Interestingly, these insights highlight two things. First, UNESCO, at least in appearance, seemed to want to carry the EFA mandate alone. This is understandable given that Matsuura fought hard to win the mandate at Dakar, and given that this mandate was seen as an opportunity to reestablish UNESCO's legitimacy (in the sense of reputation, status, and level of social acceptance). However, secondly, these insights lead to the question of how much one can improve its status without befriending those who enjoy higher status themselves. It is reasonable to suggest that this is possible, over time, through consistent performance that is viewed by others as quality and in line with expectations. In UNESCO's case, though, the organization arguably took on more than it could individually handle with the EFA mandate. The size of the task, coupled with its internal challenges, leads to the conclusion that such an organization likely cannot address the root issues of social legitimacy—i.e., quality performance vis-à-vis expectations—without drawing on the resources, clout, or expertise of peer institutions, something that UNESCO was hesitant to do. Yet this was UNESCO's most promising recourse given that it could not alter the structure and expectations embedded in the playing field, that is, given that it—alone—could not, in Dowling and Pfeffer's (1975) terms, "alter the definition of social legitimacy" (p. 127).

These obstacles were not experienced by the GMR. In fact, the experience of the GMR was the inverse of UNESCO's experience with EFA leadership. Here, the GMR is a case where an independent entity was housed within a multilateral organization, was funded by outside organizations (mostly with funding from bilateral donors), and, in the end, arguably contributed more to legitimacy of host institution than did that institution's own efforts to meet the expectations against which it would be judged. As noted, this outcome is precisely the result of the GMR's organizational autonomy, the fact that it has been well funded and well staffed, and, because of these conditions, the fact that it has also been exempt from the politics of UNESCO and, largely, from the politics of the global education policy field, especially since its funding has tended to be stable. From this privileged position, the GMR was thus able to meet and, indeed, surpass its own expectations as a report that would monitor and assess the world's progress towards the EFA goals. As such, the GMR, through its reputation and status, became a symbol—in Dowling and Pfeffer's (1975) terms—with which UNESCO was associated and, consequently, from which UNESCO benefitted, even if that benefit was tempered by the struggles that UNESCO experienced in relation to the EFA mandate.

In comparison, then, important differences emerge. First, the GMR enjoyed a rather closed organizational arrangement that shielded it from UNESCO's larger organizational challenges while UNESCO (and its education sector) are faced with the bureaucratic and political challenges that accompany both large and democratic organizations. Second, the GMR enjoyed a robust staff<sup>7</sup> that has been described as high quality and a budget that provided

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<sup>7</sup> The staff of the GMR began with 12 for the 2002 report and topped out at 26 for the 2012 report; from the 2006 report onwards it had at least 20 staff.

sufficient resources while UNESCO has suffered from resource shortages (particularly since the re-withdraw of the United States) and staff cut-backs (leading, e.g., to an EFA Coordination Team with only 3-4 people in 2014). Third, the GMR was a new player that had realistic expectations to meet and which, in legitimacy terms, suffered neither from a track record of (perceived) poor performance that depleted its prestige nor from competition (or non-cooperation) from rival reports. UNESCO, on the other hand, had the weight of the EFA mandate, the weight of decades of unmet expectations, and, further confounding its chances of success, the weight of uncooperative peer institutions who were pursuing their own initiatives. Taken together, these factors explain the differential success and perceived legitimacy of the GMR, on one hand, and UNESCO's EFA leadership, on the other.

In the final analysis, while the GMR, as one of the tasks given to UNESCO at Dakar, helped this organization—partially—to meet its expectations, the other aspects of the EFA mandate were too cumbersome to be met in light of UNESCO's constraints, and thus have seemed to largely outweigh any legitimacy-by-association that accrued to UNESCO via the GMR. That is to say, the GMR has done an excellent job of creating a positive reputation for itself and, over time, has gained in prominence (i.e., status) as report on the state of education in the world. However, while the GMR reflects well on UNESCO, UNESCO's is perhaps more well known in the global education policy field for its struggles in realizing the leadership and coordinating functions that were given to it at Dakar.

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**Appendix C: Matrix for Context, Pressures, and Actions of the GMR and UNESCO within the Global Education Policy Field—2000-2014**

Level/Time Period	2000-2002	2003-2006	2007-2011	2012-2014
<b>GMR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Language for monitoring report in DAF in 2000</li> <li>- 2001 = first monitoring report produced, not acceptable to the HLG (Oct 01)</li> <li>- 2002 = first GMR (Colclough); GMR director reported directly to UNESCO DG, though not accountable to DG</li> <li>- DfID and other funders (Swedes) provide \$ to GMR bc they rely on it (Daniel, 2010), and bc they didn't want UNESCO to fail to monitor for lack of funds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Established/fought for independence of report</li> <li>- Countries start hosting GMR launches in 2006 (if not before)—eg, Nigeria</li> <li>- For influence quotes, see summary docs by time period (esp 2000-2002)</li> <li>- # of funders 10-12 from ~2006-2014.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Certain large member countries of UNESCO's Exec Board attempt to intervene indirectly in the content of the GMR, attempting to prevent negative information from appearing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Through 2011, GMR influenced, to some extent, the agendas of the EFA coordination meetings (e.g., WG, HLG); however, after 2011 (year of EFA mechanisms reform and year of focus on conflict in GMR theme), the GMR no longer "automatically determined" the agendas of these meetings.</li> <li>- More presence on social media, esp under Pauline Rose.</li> <li>- Anticipating post-2015 role for GMR</li> </ul>
<b>Unesco EFA leadership and actions (WG, HLG, etc.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working w countries to develop Natl EFA plans by 2002 (in competition w FTI ed plans and natl ed sector plans)</li> <li>- First HLG meeting in Oct 2001</li> <li>- DAF called for 6 WGs but only one general WG functioned regularly</li> <li>- EFA action plans for each country were different from plans required by FTI, more open ended, less pragmatic (Birmingham, p. 2).</li> <li>- WG always met in Paris; HLG</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Resequencing" occurs when Burnett (06-08) is the GMR director so that the GMR can flow into the WG and then the HLG... the WG was moved from April to Oct, which allowed it to "discuss early findings from GMR and then it fed into the High Level Group"</li> <li>- 2006, Jan, evaluation released of UNESCO's country level EFA support, very critical—"lack of rigour and professionalism" in EFA support planning (Limage, 2007, p. 461).</li> <li>- 2006, July, UNESCO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2007, clear that UNESCO has not pursued consistent strategy re EFA leadership. Initially focused on developing and monitoring national EFA plans and then began to focus on Global Action Plan, under pressure from OECD governments bc this would help more w coordinating EFA activities at the country level (Mundy, 2007, p. 15).</li> <li>- 2007/8, EFA coordination team (previously known as Dakar Follow-Up Unit) restructured, down to 3 divisions from 4 ... "And EFA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overall, HLG wasn't that well structured; and the WG had not been successful in offering concrete recs to HLG (discussion focused on aid modality instead, often)</li> <li>- 2011, by decision of Exec Board, merger of WG and HLG into single meeting, called Global EFA Meeting.</li> <li>- 2012, new architecture for EFA (WG/HLG combined, and new EFA Steering Comm and EFA High Level Forum created) ... the EFA Steering Committee was prev the Intl Advisory Panel</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2006, July, many DCs asked for more credible EFA global action plan</li> </ul>	<p>as soon as 2009, there was yet another restructuring, and the EFA team went back again under the direct supervision of the Assistant Director General. And it was still called the EFA – and that’s where it was called, for the first time, team. EFA Coordination Team”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- By 2010, budget issues take their toll on EFA team—10 professionals in EFA div in 2004, only ~5 in 2010 (Detzel int), further down to 3-4 in 2014 (and w/o director).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 countries on the steering committee, one from each unesco world region, as well as the convening agencies (in addition to OECD) and civil society (w two seats for CS, elected from Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA, which has ~300 members—elections each 2 years).</li> </ul>
<b>Unesco Ed Sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Envious and suspicious of the GMR (bc of independence and funding)</li> <li>- Turnover in senior leadership of ed sector (2000-04) (Limage, 2007)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2004, New (American) Assistant DG, who orders eval of ed sector by American firm in 2005, results out in 2006; internal analysis also critical of ed sector senior management</li> <li>- 2006, UNESCO staff surprised by announcement of restructuring, third restructuring in 6 years, decreased confidence of staff (Limage, 2007)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2007, ADG from the US (Peter Smith) resigns amid controversy and corruption</li> <li>- 2010, DG approves another restructuring for ed sector, eliminating Div of HE, all w/o consultation (Limage, 2010).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EFA coordination group heavily involved in post-2015 agenda</li> </ul>
<b>Unesco (generally)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Surprised to be awarded the EFA mandate at Dakar, though Matsuura had lobbied hard for it; WB thought it would get it</li> <li>- Unesco wanted to show that it deserved EFA mandate, EFA was the main focus, esp in Ed Sector</li> <li>- Pres Bush announces intention to return to UNESCO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2003, Unesco board concerned about EFA leadership, external eval of efa ordered (note that the MDGs and FTI had momentum and were receiving much attention); internal eval ordered by board of EFA strategy and coordination; board wanted better definition of “UNESCO’s coordination role for EFA and the actual functioning of the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New DG of Unesco in Nov 2009</li> <li>- 2010, UNESCO regional offices and country offices are “unclear in their roles, weak in their relevance and effectiveness” (Limage, 2012, p. 6).</li> <li>- 2010, the DG dismantled financial control arms and has not enacted reforms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- politicization of UNESCO appointments to Exec Board during past 10 years (Limage, 2012, p. 6).</li> <li>- 2012, continued identity dilemma re role as intellectual cooperation or development partner (Limage, 2012,p. 8).</li> </ul>

	(becomes official late 2003)	<p>Education Sector” (Limage, 2007, p. 463).</p> <p>- 2006, Unesco Board again concerned about progress and leadership around EFA (particularly vis-à-vis other development trends), and so the creation of another EFA plan is mandated</p>	<p>recommended by the UN since 2005 to enhance internal accountability to member states, to improve transparency re conflicts of interest or to protect whistle blowers, eg. (Limage, 2010).</p> <p>- 2010, Independent External Eval, intended “to refocus the org and strengthen institutional foundations for relevance and effectiveness” (Limage, 2010, p. 8).</p> <p>- 2010, UNESCO still hasn’t addressed those governance issues that have eroded the “respect it held many years ago” (Limage, 2010, p. 13).</p> <p>- 2011, US pulled funding after UNESCO recognized Palestine (22% of regular budget)</p>	
<b>UN system (context, pressures, constraints, etc.)</b>		- Controversy around UN Iraq Oil Food Programme (Limage, 2007).		
<b>Dynamics w other development institutions</b>	<p>-WB felt slighted after Dakar, they wanted EFA mandate, and UNESCO didn’t show interest in working together</p> <p>- WB pursued FTI (initially offered to UNESCO, but turned down), launched in 2002, without fully involving Unesco (though Unesco also skeptical of WB and reluctant to join it too)</p> <p>- UNICEF, after Dakar, focused on its girls ed initiative</p>	<p>- UNESCO still trying to position, trying to define its core mandate w/in the United Nations, as the entire system went through a period of crisis following the Iraq controversy (Limage, 2007, p. 465).</p> <p>- 2004, UNESCO joined FTI w full seat (they waited bc FTI had been seen as WB initiative and because UNESCO saw WB as competitor, not collaborator)</p> <p>- 2003, “Donor and NGO</p>	<p>- 2006-2008, within FTI, discussions focused on country plans, not focused on UNESCO’s coordination or GMR</p> <p>- 2007, perception that UNESCO has not been able to “effectively ensure the services it provides nor a leadership role for EFA” (Smith et al, 2007, p. 239).</p> <p>- 2007, UNESCO doesn’t have money for projects (apart from pilot projects) and so must</p>	<p>- UNESCO and UNICEF worked together through the (EFA?) steering committee to draft a proposal for a post-2015 education agenda</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UNDP dropped education from its priorities</li> <li>- Poor relations with WB, Unicef, Undp and Unpa after Dakar (Matsuura didn't reach out, didn't emphasize collaboration or partnership, and this after a decade of working together through the Consultative Forum around EFA)</li> <li>- FTI linked closely with MDGs, not EFA; "main attention, donors, money, everything went to MDG, not EFA"</li> </ul>	<p>disillusionment at the lack of momentum generated around EFA by UNESCO, post-Dakar, led to a recognition that the World Bank needed to take on a stronger role in uniting major players around a common vision of the global initiative. The World Bank willingly undertook this role." (Rose, 2003, p. 7).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2006, WB took part in roundtable meeting to prepare for new UNESCO's Global Action Plan for EFA bc it was skeptical about UNESCO's leadership on this</li> </ul>	<p>partner w other national and international funding agencies who "too often ... have collaborated w UNESCO on their own terms and have imposed their own objectives" (Smith et al, 2007, p. 235).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2007, WB sees itself as lead donor agency re ed coordination in dev world, and is justified (technical work, trust fund money, FTI) (Smit et al, 2007, 237).</li> <li>- 2011, Dfid's Multilateral Aid Review comes out and ranks Unesco very poorly</li> </ul>	
<b>General Dev Trends and Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2000, donors and CS disappointed w progress made in 90s around EFA, and little confidence in Unesco</li> <li>- 2000, Sept, UN Millennium goals (MDGs) approved, ed goals reflected EFA goals</li> <li>- Emphasis among donors for country-led, participatory, sector-wide planning (PRSPs, SWAPs, later the Paris Accords).</li> <li>- 2002, March, Monterrey conference on Financing for Development</li> <li>- MDGs established in 2002 (?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2003-2006, FTI gaining momentum, support from Netherlands (Packer, 2007)</li> <li>- 2003, UNESCO literacy decade announced</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2013, start preparing for Post-2015 agenda ... UN wanted global consultative process on "the world we want." Process included national consultations, youth consultations, 12 thematic consultations, and regional meetings. All the UN agencies also did internal reviews</li> </ul>

<b>Appendix D: Sources of GMR Legitimacy</b>	
<b>Source of GMR Legitimacy</b>	<b>Sample Evidence</b>
1. Funding	<p>Extra-budgetary support came from donors who saw the report as important to the work EFA, but particularly from DfID, especially in the initial years (Daniel, 2010). These donors also did not want lack of resources, a common problem within UNESCO, to be a constraint on the report's success (INT8)</p> <p>The number of simultaneous donors grew to 10-12 from 2006 onwards, with the GMR having a total of 17 different donors by 2014 (INT5).</p>
2. Organizational Independence	<p>"The other critical feature of the GMR was its location within UNESCO, but its independence from UNESCO. And that was quite hard fought for, and sometimes resisted by UNESCO, particularly in the early years. But it was a critical factor, because it allowed the GMR to criticize nation states and not be bound by the board of UNESCO when a country says that you can't publish that because we don't agree with it. There have been numerous occasions when India was favorite example, India always contested the figures in the GMR. So, John was able to say, in all honesty, you know, it's independent. I can't stop them. And you can have a debate with them, and John Daniel can say, have the debate, bring it to the high-level group, by all means. But I don't have the power to tell them to change the figures. I mean, the reality is, of course, they do – they did try and influence as much as they could. But there was some very strong editors, Chris ColClough, Nick Burnett, and others who pushed back. And I think that was a very important feature of the GMR, it was able to challenge governments on what they were saying." (INT10, p7)</p> <p>And but there were various occasions when – not actually the board as a whole, but board members, including from pretty major countries – I could cite India, I could cite Argentina, I could cite Japan – tried to object to what the – what we were saying, in part, using the argument that, you know, we're a part of UNESCO and we should, therefore, not be saying things that were critical of UNESCO members without them having agreed. And so there was a kind of continuing discomfort. You know, it was never overwhelming or anything, but it was important to, for me to protect the team against this sort of thing. (INT8, p.3)</p> <p>"When countries rant and rave and they stalk into the DG's office and complain about the GMR. There's nothing that can barely be done." (INT5, p. 5)</p> <p>"UNESCO does not, and never did, claim ownership. The accountability for the report was the responsibility of the director of the report. And no director of the report was ever a UNESCO staff. It was basically a team sitting on an island within the organization that is UNESCO." (INT7, p4)</p>
3. Human Resources	<p>The first director was a guy called Chris ColClough, who was extremely well respected by everyone in that – in the World Bank and everyone else. .... So, we not only had – we had distinguished people heading it (GMR) who were credible in the system. And they recruited good teams because given that there was extra money for this, with only a little difficulty, we managed to basically recruit on merit and just get the best people we could find rather</p>

	<p>than having to be weighed down by UNESCO’s processes (INT6, pp3-4)</p> <p>So, I think that the people that have come to the GMR as directors have been with strong academic disciplinary roots that have also had strong experiences on the world of policy. Or have had explicit experience in having worked on the GMR, which by definition, means that you also have bridged these worlds of policy and scholarship in some way. (INT5, p14)</p> <p>“In UNESCO terms, the multi-year grant for the EFA-GMR was large and it allowed UNESCO to set up a dedicated and independent unit for the purpose. Furthermore, and uniquely in my experience as Assistant Director-General for Education, Director-General Matsuura made no attempt to interfere with the management of this unit by appointing people to it for political purposes. This meant that we could appoint a series of outstanding leaders to direct the EFA-GMR: Chris Colclough; Nick Burnett; and Kevin Watkins” (Daniel, 2010, p. 42).</p>
<p>4. Report Quality</p> <hr/> <p>Statistics</p>	<p>One of the great things about the monitoring report, it did oblige people to be honest. They couldn’t just invent the figures themselves because they had to supply them to the Institute of Statistics, which went over them quite carefully. And then they came into the GMR, which often checked it again. So if a minister came out with something quite different, then obviously the press reacted on it and usually believed the GMR over the minister, to his chagrin. (John Daniel p13)</p> <p>It is a report ... where your data is validated, vetted as reliable and comparable. (INT15, p. 14)</p>
<p>Production</p>	<p>“The monitoring report ... confronts people with facts. And that was very important. And also gave people the impression, because it was a glossy production and well done, and lots of figures and so on, and people said, well, you know, this is serious business. We should take this seriously. So it was a fairly major development in getting the show on the road, I think.” (INT6, p5)</p> <p>“Many find the EFA GMRs authoritative and attractive in their multiple modes (full and summary, in hard and virtual copy, and video and slide show versions), welcoming their guidance on educational policy and practice to overcome disadvantage. Core texts derive from readily available background papers and syntheses of other research. Complex cross-national consultation suggests a holistic approach and applying lessons learned from earlier volumes implies commitment to relevance and accessibility” (Preston, 2010, p. 61).</p>
<p>Analysis</p>	<p>“The GMR is a reality check, in some ways. You know, the GMR is trying to understand the realities on the ground. It’s using data; it’s using qualitative information, it’s using expert analyses in different parts of the world.” (INT5, p. 11).</p> <p>“Intentionally designed to include “Cutting-edge analysis of a major topic” (INT17, p. 2).</p> <p>“Since they started in 2001-2, the annual Global Monitoring Reports (GMR) have become essential documents to a range of constituencies concerned with Education for All (EFA) in a global development context. The scope,</p>

depth and reach of the reports are impressive. Arguably, these reports are compiled by the best possible organization and teams, using the best available information. They offer cogent analysis of data, clarity of presentation, and an astute focus on crucial issues. They are compiled and released in a spirit of consultation, and discussion and debate are encouraged.” (Schweisfurth, 2010, p. 59).

“The GMR are an invaluable series of well-researched documents on progress towards the goals articulated at Dakar in 2000.” (Daniel, 2010, p. 41).