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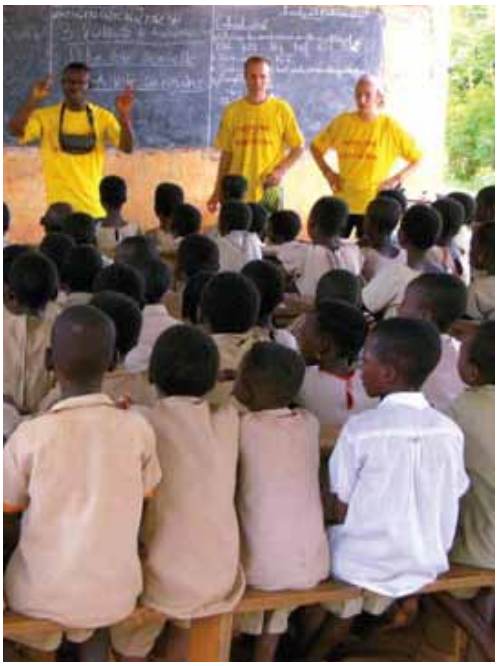

Introduction

Article 26 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserted in 1948 that a minimum level of education is a basic right of every individual.[1] Both signaling and sparking education awareness and effort globally, the assertion contributed to the acceleration of a long and ongoing global transition in access to and attainment of formal education. The magnitude of that transition is quite remarkable. In 1950, the global primary gross enrollment rate was 58 percent; at the secondary level, it was 12.7 percent and at the tertiary level 1.4 percent.[2] By 2005, a relatively short fifty-five years later, global gross enrollment rates had moved strikingly higher: to 101 percent at the primary level,[3] to 70 percent at the secondary level, and to 31 percent at the tertiary level.

This volume attempts to extend understanding of the ongoing global education transition by addressing three central questions:

- How has the transition been unfolding, and where will we be in 2060 if the current expansion paths continue to unfold? We provide historical analysis since 1960 and a base case forecast to 2060, together framing a look at a very critical 100 years in the global transition.
- Can the education transition be further accelerated and, if so, by how much? We build a normative scenario that explores the possibility of such acceleration.
- What human development outcomes are associated with the education transition represented in the base case and in the normative scenario, and what benefits, in terms of economic returns and in progress in other dimensions of human development, are associated with faster rather than slower progress? Given that public policy always requires trade-offs for attention and resources, we explore the broader implications for human development of both the base case and the normative scenario.

Understanding the ongoing global education transition may help us accelerate it.

Despite remarkable global gains in education participation since 1950, serious shortfalls and disparities remain.

Where Are We Now in the Global Transition?

Despite significant progress, the education attainment of peoples falls short of desired levels almost everywhere and especially across the developing world. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, in 2005, 89 percent of the world's primary school "of-age" children were enrolled, yet in middle Africa, only 47 percent were. In the same year, whereas 70 percent of of-age children and youth were enrolled in secondary education globally, the portion in eastern Africa was just 26 percent. At the tertiary level, the gross enrollment rate was 31 percent globally, but it was at or below 2 percent in Afghanistan, Djibouti, Haiti, Papua New Guinea, and many sub-Saharan African countries. And the gap between education for women and men remains in some countries and regions—in South Asia, for example, 56 percent of of-age males were enrolled in secondary education, compared with 46 percent of females.

Worldwide in 2000, the average years of education attained by those twenty-five years of age and older reached only 6.9 years for men and 5.3 years for women. Although these numbers have increased, since 1960, by 2.5 years for men and just under 2 years for women, it is appalling that the average education of adults globally remains essentially at the level of primary completion and that it is so unequally distributed.

Table 1.1 shows both the remarkable global gains since 1950 in education participation and the shortfalls and disparities that persist. The relatively small difference in primary net enrollment rates across country income groupings reflects enormous progress toward universal primary enrollment over the past several decades. However, primary net enrollment rates in all country groupings are still below the goal of enrolling all children, and particularly so in the low-income grouping. Even more striking, the net enrollment rate at the secondary level in high-income countries is nearly three times that of low-income countries—a reality that places the low-income countries and their populations at ever-greater disadvantage in today's globalized world.

Differentials in education participation rates exist not just by the income level of countries but also by other social and individual characteristics. Throughout the world, enrollment rates of girls and young women have typically been lower than those of boys and young men before—and often after—the transition to large-scale participation, or "mass education," is under way. To be female in a low-income country is still to experience the lowest enrollment rate across all educational levels and country groupings, even though the disparities in female/male enrollment rates have narrowed markedly. For the other country income groupings, females and males now enroll at essentially the same rates at primary and secondary levels, and at the tertiary level, women enroll at higher rates than men—most notably in high-income countries but also in upper middle-income ones.

Where Might We Be Going? Global Education Goals

Around the world, regardless of income levels in societies, individuals with less education suffer disadvantages and deprivation relative to those with more. And countries with lower levels of education similarly find themselves at

Table 1.1 Enrollment rates by country income, level of education, and sex (2005)

	Primary		Secondary		Tertiary	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Low-income countries	67.5	75.8	31.2	36.1	4.7	7.3
Lower middle-income countries	89.0	91.4	63.2	63.1	16.4	18.1
Upper middle-income countries	93.8	94.0	73.7	75.0	50.6	41.3
High-income countries	95.9	95.5	90.9	89.1	75.0	61.7

Note: Primary and secondary enrollment rates are net, and tertiary is gross.

Source: IFs Version 6.12 using UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) data (henceforth referred to as UIS data) organized by World Bank country economy classifications.

a disadvantage relative to those with more. It is thus no surprise that both individual countries and the global community set and pursue goals for educational advance. In part because goals may outstrip our ability to accomplish them, and in part because the pace of the required advance to meet specific goals by specific dates—and our ability to increase the pace—may not have been well understood, the educational goals have often not been realized.

The primacy of universal primary education

When Article 26 of the Declaration of Human Rights first formally proclaimed universal primary education (UPE) as a global goal in 1948, it did not specify a target date for meeting that goal. Since then, target dates have been set three different times, for three successively later dates.

The first target dates were set when the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) convened regional education conferences during the 1960s (Asia in 1960, Africa in 1961, Latin America and the Caribbean in 1962, and the Arab States in 1966). Following these conferences, each region promulgated its own plan—with differently defined markers of progress—for achieving universal primary education by 1980.[4] An analysis based on 1977 data showed "spectacular enrolment growth" in all regions (Fredriksen 1980: 1), yet none of the four regions was on a trajectory to reach universal primary education by 1980. The main reason was growth in the number of school-age children beyond—and sometimes far beyond—the numbers that the planning processes had estimated. Africa was the extreme example, with approximately 53.5 million children between six and eleven years of age in 1980, compared to the 32.8 million that the planning process had anticipated twenty years earlier (Fredriksen 1980: 9). The result was that even though Africa met or exceeded its 1980 headcount targets, its primary gross enrollment rate reached approximately 81 percent rather than the 100 percent target.[5]

Ten years after the target date set by the regional conferences, the first World Conference on Education for All took place in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990. In the Jomtien Declaration, delegates from 155 countries framed and affirmed global education goals with respect to "basic education" (a concept we will return to in a later section), one of which was universal primary education "before the end of the decade."[6]

Developing countries, as a whole, further increased their primary participation rates during the 1990s, but assessments prepared for a second global education meeting in 2000 (the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal) identified regions and countries that were still short of achieving universal primary education. The Dakar Framework for Action reaffirmed the goal, this time setting a target date of 2015 in a statement that clarified what UPE might encompass: "ensuring that … all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality" (UNESCO 2000: 8).[7]

Later that same year (2000), the United Nations Millennium Summit was held in New York. The resulting Millennium Declaration, reflecting a commitment to "human dignity, equality, and equity," included eight specific global Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The second of the eight goals is "to ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that girls and boys will have equal access to all levels of education."[8]

By virtue of its inclusion on the "short list" of eight MDG goals, universal primary education attained a position of global prominence. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) further assures focused global attention through its mandated annual monitoring and reporting on progress, processes that have the important secondary consequence of improving data definition, collection, and dissemination.

This positive attention to universal primary education, however, is not free from complications. One set of complications stems from the dubious wisdom of establishing a single and relatively short time frame for all countries to achieve UPE, regardless of vast initial differences in their primary education enrollment rates, resources, and other circumstances. For some of the countries with the lowest primary enrollment rates in 2000, the annual growth rates required to attain universal

Successive rounds of global goal-setting have focused on universal primary education (UPE).

Vast initial country-level differences in enrollment rates have worked against reaching UPE in a single and relatively short time frame.

Box 1.1 Institutionalization of poor quality: A perspective from the field

The setting of common targets across countries in complete disregard of socio-cultural, political, and economic contexts often contributes to the mechanical chasing of targets. With international and national pressures to achieve high enrolment and literacy rates in short periods of time, governments too often rely heavily on "economically viable" but "suboptimal" options, thus compromising quality. For example, alternative learning programmes often resort to short-term measures such as "condensed" capsules for primary education and under-qualified teachers.

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primary education by 2015—particularly if the country is still experiencing growth in the size of the primary school population—are almost certainly untenable, no matter how much "political will" exists and regardless of possible ongoing expansion at "blistering speed" in comparison with countries that completed the transition to universal primary education in earlier periods.[9] In addition, the setting of untenable temporal goals can contribute to perverse results in education quality (see Box 1.1). We believe that progress is better served in these countries if ambitious but context-specific targets for rates of change in primary school entry, persistence, and completion rates are set and monitored.

Levels of education beyond primary also require attention.

In addition, even while acknowledging the centrality of the goal of universal primary education, one might also question whether so much emphasis on this one goal has detracted from the important job of setting goals for, and preparing for changes in, other levels of formal education—or even from exploring what a "balanced" approach might look like under different country circumstances. One outcome from too great or too exclusive a focus on primary education could be secondary education systems not prepared to serve increased numbers of primary graduates who, as more and more people attain a primary education, see a need for further education to advance economically. In fact, a lack of perceived opportunities to pursue secondary education can in itself discourage families from making what may be necessary sacrifices in order to send their children to school. Further, regardless of the extent of participation in primary education, certain social as well as individual benefits of education are associated with at least some proportion of a population participating at secondary and tertiary levels.

The MDG goal of gender parity focuses on enrollment rates and levels of education attainment between girls and boys and between women and men.

Whatever one's perspective on the question of balance may be, it is clear that different countries have selected different paths in their pursuit of educational advancement. As a recent RAND Corporation study reported, China and India are a case in point (Goldman, Kumar, and Liu 2008: xi):

> The two countries started building their national education systems under comparable conditions in the late 1940s. However, different policies, strategies, and historical circumstances have led them through different routes. China has outperformed India in primary and secondary education along a broad spectrum of access, quality, and delivery indicators. India, on the other hand, enjoys a competitive edge over China in higher education. Recently, India has begun catching up with China in K–12 education, while China has already overtaken India in terms of the college enrollment and number of graduates.

Our cautions about a single time frame and a single sequential pathway for advancing education participation and coverage are not criticisms of the goal of universal primary education. The selection of UPE as the starting point for addressing the education commitment articulated in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights is easily understood. It reflects, first of all, a commitment to provide, despite resource constraints, some level of education to all children. Further, not only is primary education typically seen as the avenue to universal basic literacy and numeracy—and therefore key to personal empowerment—it is also the prerequisite for other levels of formal education. Our argument is simply that a serious effort to advance participation in formal education needs to take individual country differences into account and to look more broadly across all levels of education systems during the education transition.

Other global goals for expansion of education

Gender parity

Education is explicitly central to another MDG goal—the goal of promoting gender equality and empowering women. The MDG target statement for this goal calls for the elimination

of gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005 (five years after the MDGs were adopted), and in all levels of education no later than 2015 (United Nations 2000: Item III.20).

Historically, in low-enrollment and transitional environments, boys and men have enrolled in higher—and often far higher—proportions than girls and women, and the concept of gender parity has been associated with equalizing opportunities for girls and women. However, as Table 1.1 showed, only in low-income countries as a group were girls and women still enrolled in disproportionately low numbers in 2005,[10] and in fact, in upper middle-income and high-income countries, women were pursuing tertiary education in substantially higher proportions than men. Thus, the question of gender parity in education has become more complicated than was perhaps recognized or anticipated when parity in enrollment rates was selected as the MDG target for promoting gender equality and empowering women.

Basic education

So far, we have limited our discussion of goals to those included within the Millennium Development Goal framework. However, both the Jomtien and Dakar documents articulate a broader framework—that of basic education more generally. In particular, although it does not set goals for postprimary formal education, the Dakar Framework includes a sentence that invites consideration of secondary education and its relationship to basic education: "No country can be expected to develop into a modern and open economy without a certain proportion of its work force having completed secondary education. In most countries this requires an expansion of the secondary system" (UNESCO 2000: 16).

This statement specifically introduced secondary education to the dialogue, yet it offered little specific guidance. Instead, the Dakar Framework's greatest significance may be the breadth of the vision with which it defined and considered basic education. As the term has come to be used, there is now a general consensus that the early years of secondary education (lower secondary) are the culminating years of basic education, whereas the latter years (upper secondary) provide more advanced and specialized preparation for work or for tertiary education. In fact, interestingly, it has been noted that many who attended the World Forum and endorsed the Dakar Framework believed the term *primary education* was a proxy for *basic education,* encompassing (generally) eight years of schooling, a period corresponding more often to primary and lower secondary together than to primary alone (Sperling 2006: xii).

Current status of postprimary goals

Although there is substantial consensus that universal lower secondary education should be a global goal, there is less thrust toward compulsory or universally available upper secondary education. Even the recent Universal Basic and Secondary Education (UBASE) project of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (see Cohen, Bloom, and Malin 2006) was committed to universal basic and secondary education for all children ages six to sixteen rather than to age eighteen, the age constituting the full course of secondary education in most countries, including those throughout developing regions.

Human development and preparation for informed citizenship are the rationales for public support of universal basic education. The rationales for upper secondary education, and in particular for public support of broadly available upper secondary education, are more complicated and are receiving new and much-needed attention. Historically, upper secondary education—with its emphasis on preparation for work or advanced study—has often been viewed, at least economically, as providing more personal benefit than social or public benefit, and hence, it has not had the same public rationale. Given the knowledge and skill requirements for country as well as individual success in today's global environment, this becomes an increasingly dubious perspective. Nonetheless, it seems clear that the pace and extent of expansion can only occur within the context of region- and country-specific economic circumstances and opportunities.

The same things are true with respect to tertiary education, with added complications. One is that tertiary education is typically very expensive, both publicly and privately, and especially so in countries that have lower tertiary participation rates. Another is the migration of highly educated individuals from lower-income countries to countries that are

The concept of basic education generally includes the lower secondary level in addition to the primary level.

Rationales for and issues associated with expanding participation at upper secondary and tertiary levels are receiving renewed attention.

able to offer more opportunities for personal advancement. In addition, at both levels (upper secondary and tertiary), the barriers to participation of individuals from low-income families are exacerbated by higher per-student costs and a less historically clear public rationale for extensive participation than at the primary and lower secondary levels.

We believe that a single global goal for either upper secondary or tertiary education is neither desirable nor a reasonable expectation. However, recent developments that encourage country- and region-specific analyses and planning processes may lay a foundation for more geographically specific goals. At the secondary level, one example is the Secondary Education in Africa (SEIA) project that the World Bank initiated in 2003 in conjunction with African countries and donor agencies. At the tertiary level, examples include the projects and publications of the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI), with regional networks of participants from Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as projects hosted by the Boston College Center for International Higher Education (such as the International Network for Higher Education in Africa). On an operational level, applications for World Bank funds now require Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers that provide country-level analyses, goals, and plans spanning the primary, secondary, and tertiary education levels.[11]

Whatever happens in terms of future goal-setting for education at country, regional, or global levels, it is clear that attention—including in low-income countries—is substantially shifting from primary education alone to a broader range of outcomes. Accordingly, our analysis of where the world is and where it may go in the global education transition looks across all levels of formal education.[12]

Our analysis includes primary, secondary, and tertiary education over an extended historical and forecast period (100 years).

How Can We Explore the Possible Futures of the Transition?

The agenda of this volume—the exploration of possible alternative futures for the global transition to widespread education participation and attainment—is obviously quite ambitious. Our approach is based on quantitative analysis both of the history of the global education transition to date and of its future prospects. The major tool for our exploration is the International Futures (IFs) modeling system. Before considering the character of this system and how it can help us address the questions posed throughout the volume, we suggest some of the desirable characteristics of such an analytic tool.

Analysis of the global education transition

As suggested by the preceding discussions, extensive analysis of the global educational transition has several requirements:

- The need for analysis and exploration over a long time horizon
- The need for global and regional analysis in combination with the ability to flexibly explore a wide variety of country groupings and individual countries
- The need for analysis and exploration of all levels of formal education
- The need to explore education within a broader human development framework

We have chosen a 100-year horizon for most of the analysis, beginning in 1960, the point by which most African and Asian countries had achieved independence from colonial rule and the education transition truly became global. Moreover and not coincidentally, extensive data series began to emerge at that time. We extend the analysis to 2060: by that time, the transition to universal primary education should be complete except for pockets of the world subject to significant domestic conflict and/or discrimination against specific subpopulations, and the transition to universal lower secondary education should be very far along. In fact, given the dramatic expansion of global education since the original UN declaration, we would expect the landscape of attainment patterns to look very different from those today across all levels of formal education. Our time horizon also reflects the particular nature of education, whereby schooling itself extends (hopefully) over many years and many more years pass before changes in school participation rates reshape the education attainment patterns of the adult population.

Individual countries, given varying contexts and circumstances even within single geographic regions, are appropriate building

blocks for the analysis.[13] Country-level analyses and explorations allow the subsequent grouping of countries not only globally and by standard geographic regions but also by targeted groupings, such as income level or participation in special programs like the Fast Track Initiative (FTI)[14] or the World Education Indicators (WEI) project.[15]

As we have already emphasized, it is important for analysis of the global education transition to include all levels of formal education (primary, secondary, and tertiary) and the connections and patterns among them, including the separate representation of lower secondary and upper secondary levels. Further, it is impossible to seriously explore the future of education without recognizing the power of financial constraints and therefore thinking about the individual and collective costs of educating students at various levels of education, as well as the ability of governments and societies to mobilize resources to cover those costs.

Education systems and processes are complex within themselves, and beyond that, they are components of richly complex, broader social and human development systems. Given the juxtaposition of global educational trends and goals, on the one hand, and enormous differences in country and regional circumstances, on the other, the challenges are great for those who seek to understand, support, and further encourage global participation in education. We need tools that contribute to our understanding of patterns in education participation and expansion—past and current—and that also provide a platform for exploring possible future patterns and outcomes that link education to its broader human development context.

The International Futures global modeling system

International Futures is a computer software tool whose central purpose is to facilitate exploration of possible global futures through the creation and analysis of alternative scenarios. Developed since the mid-1970s, the IFs modeling system includes extensive databases going back to 1960, as well as dynamic forecasting capabilities through the integration of demographic, economic, agricultural, sociopolitical, environmental, and energy models. This book builds upon the recent development and addition of an education model that represents the national education systems of the 183 countries included in IFs. Within the education model, historical data and forecasting capabilities encompass participation rates; attainment levels; government support; and per-student and aggregate costs for primary, secondary, and tertiary education.

IFs represents dynamic connections among all of its various subsystems or domains. Changes in economic, demographic, and sociopolitical trends and patterns drive rates and levels of education participation and attainment. In turn, the changes in education participation and attainment affect economic, demographic, and sociopolitical systems. Consequently, the forecasts IFs produces, though they are grounded in historical data, are not extrapolations but rather represent the results of a dynamic interplay among variables in multiple domains of the human development system. In addition, the IFs user interface allows the exploration of impacts of policy orientations and of key uncertainties (such as economic growth rates) on the future of the education transition.

The particular strengths of IFs—and in fact its unique features with respect to education modeling and forecasting—derive in combination from its extended time frame, its extensive geographic coverage and capability for flexible groupings of countries for analysis and display, and its dynamic nature across multiple human systems. In addition, it is the only global education model we know of that encompasses all three levels of formal education (primary, secondary, and tertiary) in student flows or cohorts with a separate representation of lower secondary and upper secondary education—an important separation given their differing purposes, cost structures, and participation rates.

There are, of course, limitations as well as caveats and cautions about the use of IFs. A significant structural limitation is that IFs cannot yet forecast differential education participation and attainment rates for geographic regions or demographic groupings (other than by sex) below the country level (e.g., for specific ethnic groups and indigenous populations within the broader population, for the poorer or poorest citizens of a country,

Education systems and processes are components of complex and larger social and human development systems.

Possible global futures can be explored through the creation and analysis of alternative scenarios with the IFs modeling system.

The IFs system has unique strengths, but it—and indeed all modeling—has limitations too.

or for residents of rural areas, all of whom are known to be at an educational disadvantage). A second limitation, arising in large part from insufficient data, is the absence of forecasts of the extent of private education and private funding, even though private education and funding are prevalent in many developing countries; however, sufficient data exist for us to at least include some discussion of these topics. And third, given the importance of education quality as well as quantity, perhaps the most important limitation is the model's inability at this time to deal directly with questions of quality. Chapter 6 includes some analysis of correlates of education quality as measured by international learning assessments; however, a database allowing direct assessment of quality in a global modeling system does not exist. Neither do we currently include specific quality-related inputs in our model (most important, teachers and their training), but rely instead on student persistence and targeted public funding measures as proxies—albeit admittedly crude ones—for quality indicators.

In summary, we consider IFs to be a thinking tool, not a predicting tool. We present our results with the request that readers view them as descriptions of what might plausibly occur under alternative specifications of circumstances or policy interventions. Our hope is that by providing a structure and context for analysis and debate about possible futures, IFs will contribute to enhanced understanding and to the quality of choices made in policy arenas.

Conclusion and Road Map for This Volume

The benefits of education are large, and investments in education are warranted.

The three questions posed at the beginning of this chapter frame the volume. Rephrased slightly, the key questions are: (1) What is the history and future of the global education transition given its current path? (2) How much might the transition be accelerated? and (3) What are the implications for broader human development of such acceleration relative to the current path?

As background for the analysis, Chapter 2 provides a conceptual foundation for understanding education systems and especially their connections to the larger human development system. Chapter 3 then considers historical patterns, focusing on the years from 1960 through 2005, in order to build an understanding of the historical context for our use in thinking about alternative futures of the education transition.

Chapter 4 turns our attention to the future. It suggests various approaches to modeling the education transition and includes elaboration of IFs and its education model. Chapter 5 then uses IFs to continue addressing the volume's first question by initially exploring the base case forecast, which suggests where the education transition appears to be taking us through 2060. The chapter also considers some of the major uncertainties that could frame alternative futures as a way to begin helping us understand the likely range of alternative educational futures.

Chapter 6 develops a normative scenario that addresses the question of whether the global education transition, already progressing more rapidly than in previous periods, might, with even more significant attention, accelerate even faster. If so, how great might such acceleration be? Chapter 7 continues the analysis of the normative scenario of Chapter 6 by drilling down into its requirements and implications.

Finally, Chapter 8 investigates the broader economic and sociopolitical consequences of educational advancement in the base case and in the normative scenario, in part to consider the costs and benefits of pursuing the more aggressive normative scenario. It will help us understand the degree to which incremental investments in education may provide human development benefits (both economic and broader sociopolitical benefits) for those societies undertaking them, as well as the time frame over which such benefits might materialize.

Overall, the conclusion of our volume is a strong one. Given the lasting benefits education offers, societies tend significantly to underinvest in it. A long-term and integrated analysis shows that it may require a generation or more to repay through economic growth the financial costs of an investment in accelerating the advance of education, but the benefit stream continues to grow rapidly beyond that repayment horizon. Moreover, although the ultimate repayment of investment costs is important, accelerating the advance of education quite quickly confers other human and social developmental benefits that we cannot easily measure but that we know to have tremendous value.

1 The first part of Article 26 states: "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit." See http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html:4.

2 See Meyer et al. (1977: 244). There are significant methodological differences, which complicate comparison across time. The 1977 study had data from 1950 for fewer countries than recent studies cover, and it used simple country averages rather than population-weighted averages. However, these differences do not significantly change the overall conclusion regarding the dramatic growth in education.

3 See UNESCO (2007b: 291, 315, 322). Gross enrollment rates refer to the total enrollment of students as a percent of the number of persons in the age group defined by an education system as "of-age" or "on time" for that level of education. The rate can exceed 100 percent because some enrolled students are younger or older than the defined age range for the educational level.

4 The plan for Latin America and the Caribbean set a target date of 1970.

5 The 1980 enrollment estimate is from IFs version 6.12 and UNESCO data. African countries were just emerging from colonial status as the UNESCO African regional education conference and planning took place. Birger Fredriksen (1980: 15) pointed out that a complete population census had never been conducted in many of these countries, and hence, the actual size of their school-age populations was difficult to estimate and foresee.

6 See http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/background.

7 The Dakar Framework includes six education goals that encompass learners of all ages in both formal and nonformal education settings. Two are central to the purposes of this volume: (1) universal free and compulsory primary education, and (2) gender equality in access to primary and secondary education, with a focus on ensuring girls access and achievement. The other goals speak to the importance of early childhood care and education, learning and life skills programs for young people and adults, improvements in adult literacy, and improvements in education quality to assure that students achieve "literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills." The Dakar Framework is available at http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/framework.shtml.

8 The other goals are eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development. See http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals.

9 *Blistering speed* has become a widely used term to describe the pace of the education transition in today's developing countries. Clemens (2004: 22) first used it in a background paper authored for the UN Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality.

10 There are still individual countries in every income group in which the educational participation of girls and women remains substantially below that of boys and men. Our presentation of aggregate data and of instances of "reverse" gender imbalances are not meant to suggest such disparities are unimportant. Country-specific data and forecast tables at the back of this volume include measures of gender parity.

11 For recent discussion of issues and approaches to expanding secondary education, see Alvarez, Gillies, and Bradsher 2003; Cuadra and Moreno 2005; and Holsinger and Cowell 2000. At the tertiary level, see *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise,* the 2000 report of the Task Force on Higher Education and Society, convened by the World Bank and UNESCO.

12 IFs does not include nonformal education because global nonformal education statistics are not readily available. An Education Policy and Data Center (EPDC) background paper for the 2008 Global Monitoring Report included an important initial effort to describe and quantify the role and extent of nonformal education in developing countries (EPDC 2007b: 35–42). Using UNESCO household Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) data from twenty-eight countries as its source, the report noted: "Nonformal programs are an umbrella designation for a wide array of activities, including alternative primary schools, youth training, literacy programs, and professional education" (EPDC 2007b: 35).

13 In fact, it would be desirable to analyze at subnational levels, but numerous data issues greatly complicate that effort.

14 The FTI was launched in 2002 by the World Bank as a project between donor and developing countries to focus domestic and international attention and resources on accelerating progress toward UPE. Participating countries are required to have "education sector plans" that encompass all levels of formal education. As of November 2008, there were thirty-six countries with endorsed education sector plans (World Bank 2008: 32).

15 The WEI project is a joint program involving UNESCO, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and nineteen middle-income countries (twelve when the project was initiated in 1997). The program focuses on the development of policy-relevant education indicators, and it includes data collection and reporting. A recent project report, *Education Counts: Benchmarking Progress in 19 WEI Countries*, provided comparative education outcomes for the WEI participants and OECD member countries (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2006).