

Introduction to Education for All

“Education implies a child’s learning how to put his mind and all his senses to good use”

Mahatma Ghandi, 2nd June, 1929

Why Education for All?

Around the world almost a billion people are illiterate. Two thirds of these are women, 77 million are children. Wars and natural disasters aside, virtually all of these people reside in the world’s poorest countries. The link between education and poverty is proven. Educated lives are progressive ones, able to change course and adapt. Non-educated lives cannot. So how can poor countries compete?

Today’s global economy is a knowledge based one with change happening at a terrifying pace. Queue the internet, information technology, health care and engineering. The gap between rich and poor nation continues to widen. Rich countries are educated, poor countries are not and yet if we could educate the world, what difference could it make to a poor man’s life?

A foundation, a start, a means to change that mud hut into that brick house; a way out of the field and into the office; a good job and a healthy family. The competitive world does not make concessions, it’s cruel, it’s capitalist, it’s dollar based. We talk about the poor and poverty; we talk about exploitation of the marginalized. Yet we need to give these people the ability to fight their own battles, control their own lives. The poor should no longer need to remain poor. They should be able at any point to change their environment and begin afresh.

Education for All (EFA) is a means to achieve this. A means to give a man a safe home for his family. A way to give a woman equal status to a man. A certainty that every child has the right to a bright future. EFA is a goal, it is a reality. One that almost every country in the world has agreed to accomplish by 2015. So read-on and learn, for no road is without its speed bumps and this one most certainly not.

Statistic:

It will take an additional \$7 Billion dollars per year from now until 2015 to achieve EFA. Compare that to \$900 Billion spent on arms worldwide each year. It is simply scary how little it takes and how little Governments are willing to go.