

Education for All Strategy

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Glossary

“The needs of Education for All... include both the necessary volume of knowledge and skills... and the fundamental contents of education..., that are necessary to the people in order to survive, develop all their capabilities, exist and work respecting human dignity, participate multilaterally in the development and improvement of the quality of their lives, make balanced decisions and continue their studies”

(World Declaration of Education for All, section 1, article 1)

I. Introduction

It is common knowledge that the economic successes of nations are directly determined by the quality of educational systems and that human capital is the most efficient production factor expressed in knowledge, competences, creative skills and moral qualities of society members, who, to a great extent, are produced by the educational system.

Specialists consider in this regard that in the 21st century economy, the educational system will become a priority branch of production, being looked at as an occupational area and an area for advantageous investments. This conception about the purpose of education will dominate the public agenda of educational policies in most countries of the world.

Since the proclamation of its independence, Moldova has initiated radical political, economic and social changes, aimed at creating a market economy based on private and public property, free initiative and competition. In 1994, the Parliament adopted the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, confirming the right of all citizens to education, with no limitation or discrimination, and compulsory education was declared secular and free of charge in all state institutions.

The transition from the centrally planned economy to the market economy called for changes in the educational policies of the newly formed independent state. The main task was set to build a modern and democratic national educational system, based on both national and universal values. The educational system entered the phase of democratic reforms, based on new educational principles formulated in the Law on Education adopted by the Parliament in 1995.

The implementation strategy of the Law on Education is reflected in the State Programme of Educational Development, as well as other legal and normative acts. The stages of the reform of the educational system of Moldova are determined by the need to adapt it to the immediate and future requirements of the society: depolitize and departy education, eliminate political indoctrination, the excessive centralism and paramilitary training, connect the education to the requirements of a modern world in permanent change. The implementation of social and economic reforms in the Republic, synchronized with the European tendencies, calls for the promotion of a systemic, overall reform in the educational system, changing the paradigm and logic of its organization. We refer to the key factors of the education system: the state's role in education, the relations of the education system with the labour market, the organization of the financing system, control of the effectiveness of the educational system as a whole. A series of actions have been taken with a view to promoting the education reform, focused on solving the problems in the priority areas of education: educational management, education financing, curriculum, textbooks and didactic technologies, evaluation and control.

II. Legal frameworks and education reform processes

The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, ratified by the Republic of Moldova, constitutes together with other approximately 20 laws of the country, the legal framework for providing social assistance and social protection to the family, mother and child, declared by the Constitution of Moldova. Starting with 1994, the *Law on the Rights of the Child* provides for the physical and spiritual health of children, with a special emphasis on social protection measures for children who lack a family temporarily or permanently, or live in difficult conditions. In 1998, the Government set up a National Council for the Protection of Children's Rights, and on January 10, 2002, a governmental decision approved *the National Conception of Child and Family Protection*.

The Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (i-PRSP), approved by the Government on April 21, 2002, puts forth the three pillars of the "government's poverty reduction strategy: (i) sustainable and inclusive economic growth that will provide the population with productive employment; (ii) human development policies emphasizing increased access to basic services (especially primary medical services and primary education); and (iii) social protection policies targeting those most in need". Therefore, the education, along the economic growth and protection of those in need, is considered as one of main factors ensuring the sustainable development of the country.

In order to promote the educational reform, a number of actions have been undertaken to solve the problems in the priority educational areas: educational management, financing of education, curriculum development and implementation, textbook development and improvement of teaching-learning methodologies, monitoring, evaluation and control of the education system. The structure of the educational system has been modernized with the creation of gymnasiums, lyceums, polyvalent vocational schools, colleges, new levels of graduate education, and with the establishment of mandatory endings at the end of each training level.

In the context of the general secondary education reform, important achievements have been registered in the development and implementation of new contents based on formative education, on national and universal values: development of modern textbooks for the primary and lower secondary education, implementation of a textbook rental scheme, involvement of the majority of the teaching staff in the implementation of the new contents and teaching-learning methodologies, creation and development of a national learning evaluation system. In 1998-99, 10,840 primary teachers were trained in the context of implementation of the new curriculum, and in a year, in 2001, 34 central trainers, 482 local trainers and over 10,000 teachers were retrained. Also, in the summer of 2000 there were trained 141 central trainers, 1,900 local trainers and over 24,000 lower secondary teachers.

In the context of the territorial-administrative reform, the decentralization of the education system continues, with the establishment of specific competencies and responsibilities for each level of educational management. New mechanisms of certification of teaching staff and school managers are also being implemented.

As concerns the children in difficult development conditions and complicated social circumstances, the Government of the Republic of Moldova has made as considerable efforts as possible to improve the situation of persons with disabilities. Besides, various international organizations, private individuals from various countries have provided humanitarian aid to institutions educating children with disabilities, orphans or children left without parent care. In this period, there have been set up NGOs working with people with disabilities and their families. New projects have been launched proposing certain alternatives to state institutions. Since then, several attempts have been made to integrate and include children with special educational needs (rehabilitation classes,

logopedics centers, psycho-pedagogic services, inclusion of children with minor disabilities in the general school, organization of family-type houses for children, day-care centers etc).

The educational practices in the Republic of Moldova show valuable examples of collaboration between the formal and non-formal educational factors. Thus, in the past ten years, on the initiative of a number of national and international organizations (SOROS Foundation, UNICEF, UNESCO, Council of Europe, Center for Information and Documentation on Children's Rights, National Council of Youth, National League for Pre-university Disputes, UNESCO associated schools etc.), there have been implemented a series of educational programs destined for children of certain ages and for specific population groups. Based on the educational values of these programs, new school subjects have been developed, for example "Education for Health", "Family and Life Education", "Debates", "We and the Law" etc. At the same time, NGOs have a relatively high, yet not fully used, potential in the field of education. In this connection, it is necessary to mention that at the end of 2001, in Moldova there were registered around 2,500 NGOs, 65% of them with national status and 35% with local status. In accordance with the provisions of the Dakar Framework for Action, experience accumulated by these organizations, must be evaluated, deepened, and implemented at national level.

As a follow-up to the *Dakar World Education Forum (2000)*, the National Conference "Education for All" took place in Chisinau on December 3-5, 2001. The Conference participants established the EFA priorities for the Republic of Moldova, created the *National Council*, and set the time limits for the development of the *EFA Strategy* and *National Action Plan*.

III. Brief description of the current situation

During the period of transition, the educational sector has considerably deteriorated, which brought about a series of obstacles in the achievement of educational objectives.

Early Childhood Care and Education: Due to the lack of material and financial resources from the budget, poverty among population, and the lack of a viable educational policy regarding the category of children aged 0-7, the deterioration of preschool institutions continues. In the past six years, the number of preschool units has dropped by 36%, and namely, from 1,774 in 1994/1995 school year to 1,135 in 1999/2000 school year. As compared with the school year 1992/1993, the participation ratio of children in early childhood development programs has decreased by 57.3%, and the number of educational staff has reduced by around 70%. The process of closing and liquidation of kindergartens has significantly reduced the access to early childhood education for children of 1-5 years of age. Overall, it is estimated that about 80 % of all children of 1-5 years of age, the absolute majority of them being from rural areas, do not attend any early childhood education programs, and the mandatory preschool training is done only for about 60% of all children of 5-6 years of age.

Unfortunately, village-city disparities continue to deepen. The likelihood that a village child will attend an early childhood education program is three times lower than in the case of a city child. Social inequalities also continue to deepen. While about 60% of children from relatively well-to-do families have access to early education programs, in case of needy families, this indicator is only 7%.

On the whole, educational alternatives are missing both at central and community level. Paying tribute to some old-fashioned traditions and in the absence of social models worth following, the absolute majority of parents is not ready to organize individually or in association the early education for their own children at the level of modern requirements.

Mandatory education: The ratio of schooling in the mandatory education is declining steadily: in the school year 2000/2001, about 7000 children were not schooled, which represents 28% more than in the previous year. In the school year 2001-2002 (October 1st), about 3980 children were not schooled (0,73%). The most difficult situation is in rural areas, where poor families cannot even cover all the expenses needed for clothes, footwear, food, school supplies and textbooks. Such localities lack or have very expensive school transportation, many schools are not heated in the cold period of the year, and some of them are closed down.

There is a continuous decrease in the participation ratio of children from poor families in the post-mandatory education – upper secondary, vocational secondary, higher – because of insufficient budget funding, lack of the respective educational institutions in many localities, extremely high prices for contract-based education.

Annually, after finishing mandatory education (9 grades, age 15-16), around 12-16 thousand youth leave the educational system without any professional qualification. There is a continuous decline in enrolments in the vocational secondary education, prices go up and the funding of institutions destined for children coming from socially vulnerable families decreases.

The human potential of the educational system continues to deteriorate, especially at the level of mandatory and general secondary education. In the past years, there has been registered an inadmissible aging of the teaching staff, about 7% of all teaching staff have already passed the retirement age, 53% of the teaching staff have a length of service exceeding 18 years. According to the situation as of October 1, 2001, 1,357 of teaching staff have left only 1-3 years until the retirement age, but the number of young specialists employed by schools is insignificant. In 1998-2000, about 4,200 teaching staff left school, and in 2001 – 2,497 teachers. As a result, the teachers that remained in school have to teach an exaggerated number of hours, on the average 1.5-2 norms per teacher. In many schools, the subjects with missing teachers are not taught at all, which impedes the children's access to basic quality studies. Due to the low salaries and the lack of teachers, many employees of the educational system do not have required professional training, are not acquainted with the new educational technologies, do not correlate the teaching-learning methodologies with the individual features of each child, which has a negative impact on the quality of education. A discrepancy forms between the logistic insurance and the proposed financial solutions, between the modern curriculum requirements and the availability of competitive teaching staff. The sharp lack of competitive teachers, of the necessary equipment for the supply of laboratories and of intuitive didactic materials questions the success itself of the education reform process.

The technical-material basis of education continues to deteriorate, and the annual capital investments of only 5% of all costs for education are absolutely insufficient. The lack of financial resources even for current repairs causes serious damages to school buildings, electricity and heat systems. During winter time, in many schools there is registered an acute lack of fuel, frequent disconnections, inadequate sanitary-hygienic conditions, no free meals for preschool children and primary students are ensured. It should be mentioned that only 47% of all primary students (2001-2002 school year) benefited from free meals at school.

During the past years, actions have been taken aiming at integrating and including children with special educational needs in the common educational system; there have been created rehabilitation classes, logopedics centers, psycho-pedagogic services, family-type houses for children, day-care centers, it has been attempted to include children with minor disabilities in the general school. But these actions have had a minor effect and have not found an adequate support on behalf of decision-

making factors, parents and teachers, which does not correspond to the spirit of the Dakar Framework of Actions.

The most disadvantaged from the point of view of access to qualitative educational services are the children in especially difficult conditions: from poor families, families with many children, single-parent families, the children with special educational needs (SEN), street children, children infected with HIV/AIDS, as well as children from the rural area. In general, the situation of children with special educational needs, of those with physical or mental disabilities, is very difficult, and the high costs of their subsistence and education cannot anymore be integrally paid from the state budget.

Non-formal education and learning opportunities: The non-formal education represents the totality of pedagogical actions projected and realized in an extra-didactic and/or extra-curricular institutionalized framework, or through optional or facultative activities. The non-formal education is realized outside the mandatory syllabus and aims at the formation of vocational abilities, not certified officially, but with an important personal and social value, offering the possibility to extend and make more thorough the knowledge acquired during classes and the information accumulated informally. In the Republic of Moldova, the non-formal education is carried out by state institutions, by private institutions and by non-governmental organizations, constituting a possibility for the creation of a pedagogical partnership based on the effective cooperation of various educational agents. The documents of the Council of Europe on the education for a democratic citizenship qualifies non-formal education, the activities outside the school or the classroom organized by educational institutions as a completion of the formal curriculum.

At present, in the country (except the institutions of this type on the left bank of Nistru river) there operate 126 extra-school institutions entailing an overall number of over 60,553 participants that account for 10% of the total number of children in pre-university education institutions. These institutions are grouped as follows: 45 children creation centers (30,043 students), 10 centers of technical-scientific creation for students (7,432 students), 6 young naturalist centers (1,610 students), 7 young tourist centers (1,992 students), 57 sports schools (17,957 students), 1 swimming pool (850 students). Due to the limited funding, the number of extra-school institutions has decreased, as compared with 1992, by 65 units: technical creation centers – by 22 units (69%), young naturalist centers – by 13 units (68.4%), young tourist centers – by 18 units (72%), the number of children involved in the respective activities decreasing in the same proportion.

The insufficient funding, salary arrears, space alienation, lack of heat and electricity are only some of the serious problems impeding extra-school institutions to realize the planned educational objectives at the level of their maximum potential and to ensure the access of all children to quality non-formal education. One of the major related problems is the fact that practically all extra-school institutions are located in judet centers or in the former district centers, which reduces the chances of children from rural areas to benefit from the respective educational services.

IV. The EFA Goals in the context of Moldova

In accordance with the Jomtien Declaration, *Education for All* should be approached not only from the perspective of the compulsoriness of spending a certain period of time at school, but also from the perspective of the level of knowledge, attitudes and skills which must be achieved at its end. Education for All should contribute to the development of the personality, intellectual independence, integration of the individuals in the professional life and their participation in the development of the society in the conditions of democracy.

In order to achieve these objectives, EFA should contribute to the acquisition of the following qualities:

- Key skills, used as instruments, that ensure the development of the person's personality, and subsequently serve as a basis for education in the course of life;
- The initial professional orientation;
- Knowledge, value notions and abilities necessary for the development of a personality, and for educating the citizen feeling, in the conditions of democracy, when people begin to understand that it is necessary for them to participate actively in the life of the society and to have citizen responsibilities.

In this respect the findings, conclusions and recommendations formulated in the *World Declaration on Education for All* (Jomtien 1990) and in the *Dakar Framework for Action* (2000) are relevant to our educational system and extremely actual for all the factors involved in the educational development in the Republic of Moldova. The *Dakar Framework for Action* set out the following six EFA Goals:

1. Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and are able to complete education that is free, compulsory and of good quality.
3. Ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skill programs.
4. Achieve a 50 % improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girl's full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The National Conference "Education for All", held in December 2001 in Chisinau, examined the EFA International Goals in the light of the country's context, established the EFA priorities for the Republic of Moldova (RM), created the National Forum "Education for All" and set the time limits for the development of the strategy and the National Action Plan. In the conditions of the Republic of Moldova, the following are the national goals of the EFA Strategy deriving from the above six EFA Goals:

1. To increase the coverage with early childhood programmes up to 75 percent for 3-5 year children, and up to 100 percent for 6-7 year children by the year 2007 while reducing during the same period disparities between the rural and urban areas to less than 5 percent as well as between children from disadvantaged groups vs general population.
2. To achieve the universal access to and the quality of basic education, by ensuring that recognized and measurable outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills, including health education, vocational training, etc. by the year 2015.
3. To ensure that by 2007 all children, especially children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and are able to complete education that is free, compulsory and of good quality

4. To promote a comprehensive inclusive education which addresses the needs of the pupils with special education needs (SEN) and provides support and guidance to schools, particularly with regard to pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD)
5. To increase or at least to maintain the current level of adult literacy (95 percent) by 2007 and to provide access to all families to family education programmes that would allow them to develop better parental skills and communication with their children, leading to the fulfilment of children's rights
6. To ensure the development of skilled human resources for a democratic social and economic life through the provision of appropriate learning opportunities, especially for youth and adult in difficult circumstances.

The key goal of the EFA Strategy in the Republic of Moldova is to provide access to high quality early and basic education to all children, especially, children in very difficult circumstances: orphans, children lacking parental care, children with physical or mental disabilities, street children, children from socially vulnerable families, refugee children, children in conflict with the law, neglected and abused children, etc.

Taking into account the main educational objectives and the actual state of the educational system, **three major priority areas** of the EFA Programme have been determined as follows:

- Quality early childhood care and education
- Access to quality formal basic education, with focus on children in very difficult circumstances
- Appropriate non-formal education and learning opportunities

The actions and measures undertaken within each area will be addressed from the perspective of the following three-pronged interventions.

- legislative and normative framework;
- institutional framework;
- human resources;
- financial and material resources;
- informational-didactic resources;
- community services.

V. The underlying principles of the National EFA strategy

The following principles will be respected in the implementation of the EFA Strategy:

1. The principle of "The child's supreme interest" and maximum development of each child's potential
2. The principle of equal right to quality education for all children regardless of living place (urban or rural), family income, gender, ethnic origin, physical and mental disabilities, etc.
3. The principle of holistic/integrated approach to childhood: care, nutrition, education, recuperation, health, cognitive and psycho-social development
4. The principle of social partnership, multi-sector, inter-disciplinary and early intervention in the development of the child

5. The principle of flexibility of educational programmes, their updating according to the actual needs, the available budget resources, cognitive possibilities, etc.
6. The principle of educational services decentralization
7. The principle of regional integration and a modern Moldovan education system in line with European tendencies

VI. The basic components of EFA strategy in the RM:

A. Early childhood care and education (ECCE)

A.1 Goal

To increase the coverage with early childhood programmes up to 75 percent for 3-5 year children, and up to 100 percent for 6-7 year children by the year 2007 while reducing during the same period disparities between the rural and urban areas to less than 5 percent as well as between children from disadvantaged groups vs general population.

A.2 Objectives

- Develop a national policy for early childhood care and education as an indispensable part of national EFA programs;
- Extend and improve comprehensive measures for the improvement of early childhood care and education, especially for children aged 0-3 and 3-5;
- Reduce access inequality and remove in-proportions from the system (the disadvantaged groups in terms of access to services: the poor, rural population, children with special educational needs (SEN), institutionalized children);
- Improve the quality of early care and education approaching it as preparation for life in order to ensure a good schooling and social integration for all children;
- Promote the participation of families/parents, civil society in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs of development of early childhood education.

A.3 Intervention areas

Legislative-normative framework

- Develop and promote – at a national, local, institutional and family level – viable strategies and alternative/cost-effective educational services (without eliminating the existing models) for implementation of *Early Childhood Development for All* and equitable access to qualitative services;
- Bring the national legislation, instructions and regulations on Early Childhood Education of children aged 0-7 in line with the international legislation;
- Develop and strengthen social partnership to the supreme interest of the child through a multi-sector and multi-disciplinary approach;
- Carry out awareness-raising campaigns among the population on the importance of early age and early stimulation of child's development;
- Carry out advocacy campaigns for the observance of rights of small children and their families through mass media, conferences, seminars, round tables, etc.
- Raise the status, spirit (motivation) and professionalism of educators and medical assistants that work with small children; develop a viable and efficient system of social protection of educators;

- Develop and improve standards of care services, education, medical assistance and rehabilitation in institutions and for the alternative forms.

Institutional framework

- Implement the institutional reform by creating educational alternatives, develop an adequate institutional framework by ensuring access for all children to quality education starting from concrete local conditions, the child's and its family's needs, depending on the real possibilities;
- Create viable and cost-effective educational services without destroying the existent structures, widen the offer of high-quality educational services.

Human resources

- Develop managerial and professional skills with a view to improving the services related to early childhood education and development;
- Develop the skills and knowledge of families and other persons, taking care of children, to improve child care and education practices;
- Improve the initial training and in-service training of educators and medical assistants.

Financial and material resources

- Evaluate the existent institutional capabilities involved in early childhood education and development;
- Develop a flexible and cost-effective financial mechanism focused on needs and target groups;
- Develop and implement complex social program to assist disadvantaged children in order to ensure for them access to quality education;
- Improve the material and didactic basis of the educational process;
- Stimulate the involvement of the private sector in the funding of the area.

Informational-didactic resources

- Improve and implement the educational curriculum and strategy in accordance with the recommendations of international organizations and existing positive experiences in the field;
- Implement in the educational process modern child-centred methodologies;
- Develop and implement comprehensive care and education programmes for children aged 0-7, focused on meeting all the needs of the child in terms of health, nutrition, hygiene, as well as cognitive and psycho-social development;
- Develop and implement a system of evaluation and monitoring of successes registered in the area;
- Cover the informational vacuum in matters of health, care, education and development of younger children;
- Strengthen international collaboration in order to disseminate and generalize good practices and positive experience in the area (policies, experience, educational practices/methodologies etc.).

Community services

- Involve families and the community in children's education and development;
- Create educational community alternatives (first of all for the children in difficult circumstances, for those from disadvantaged families etc.)
- Create services of social, psycho-pedagogic assistance for families with younger children aimed at information, documentation, counseling, consulting.

A.4 Monitoring and evaluation (M & E) indicators

The evaluation and monitoring will be conducted based on the following indicators:

- Overall participation ratio of children aged 0-7 in early childhood education programmes;
- Overall participation ratio of children aged 5-7 in compulsory preschool ;
- The percentage of those who attended early childhood education programmes in Grade 1 of the primary education;
- Percentage of rural/urban population, involved in preschool education programmes;
- Number of preschool institutions;
- Number of alternative educational services for children aged 0-7
- Number of services for social, psycho-pedagogic assistance of the families with younger children.

B. Access to high quality basic education

B.1 Goals

1. To achieve the universal access to and the quality of basic education, by ensuring that recognized and measurable outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills, including health education, vocational training, etc. by the year 2007.
2. To ensure that by 2015 all children, especially children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and are able to complete education that is free, compulsory and of good quality
3. To promote a comprehensive inclusive education which addresses the needs of the pupils with special education needs (SEN) and provides support and guidance to schools, particularly with regard to pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD)
4. To increase or at least to maintain the current level of adult literacy (95 percent) by 2007 and to provide access to all families to family education programmes that would allow them to develop better parental skills and communication with their children, leading to the fulfilment of children's rights

B.2 Objectives

- Improve the legislative and normative framework with regards to the access for all children to quality basic education;
- Ensure equal opportunities, rights and obligations for all children in general and for the children in difficult circumstances in particular (orphans, street children, refugee children, etc.) by improving the didactic, technical materials and sanitary-hygienic basis of the educational institutions;
- Delimitate the competencies and responsibilities of state bodies of central, judet, local, institution level;
- Develop mechanisms that would avoid the inequitable distribution of funds, as a result of the decentralization process;
- Support preparation for school by organizing primary education in each location;

- Create favorable conditions for the attendance of mandatory education for children from rural areas, create a school transportation system;
- Social integration of children in very difficult circumstances, create adequate conditions for their psycho-social development, material support of children from vulnerable families;
- Develop and implement life skills education, especially health care and education in the educational system (sanitary behaviour in personal hygiene problems, prophylaxis of infectious diseases and sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, early pregnancy, forming a health aware behaviour, etc.);
- Expand and diversify educational and medical facilities for pupils;
- Improve the quality of education from the perspective of treating thereof as a preparation for life, orient the educational system towards the social integration of graduates;
- Elaborate and implement unified, modern and flexible curricula for all education levels and ensure it with the necessary materials bringing it in accordance with the actual and perspective requirements of the society;
- Develop and implement an independent system of evaluation and monitoring of the educational system and of schools achievements;
- Support the competitive teaching staff by remunerating them in accordance with the results of the evaluation, bring the teacher certification system in line with the needs of the modern school;
- Ensure social and professional protection of teachers, especially of those activating in the rural area;
- Implement new educational methods based on informational and communication technologies;
- Provide each pupil with textbooks by continuously developing the Textbook Rental Scheme, as well as provide free textbooks to children from socially vulnerable families (up to 25% from the real number of children); update and re-publish school textbooks.

B.3 Intervention areas

Legislative and normative framework:

- Adjust the legal and normative framework related to access and quality of education to the existing strategies and programmes, including the National Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper;
- Harmonize national legislation with the existing international documents, including Dakar Framework for Action (2000), UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, the World Programme of Action for disabled persons (1983); the Standard Regulations to equalize the chances of disabled persons (1993) etc;
- Establish clearer competencies and responsibilities of the state bodies of different levels (central, judets, local/institutional) in ensuring equal opportunities to education;
- Make aware and increase the level of awareness of the society as a whole, and of each citizen, in part with regards to problems related with the education of children with special needs;
- Improve the legal and normative framework regarding setting up community enrolment funds (mainly for the children from poor families, orphans, street children, children with special needs, refugees);

Institutional framework

- Update the school mapping and create a national data base of the educational institutions, which will serve as a support for the optimization of the educational management;
- Constitute a optimal network of school units that would offer to each child equal opportunities to studies by passing to the only standard of the general secondary education – lyceum education;
- Adapt the network of educational institutions to the demographic tendencies in the Republic of Moldova;
- Create new possibilities for gymnasium leavers to continue education (lyceums with technical, technological, agricultural, economic, etc. streams).

Human resources

- Develop human resources in order to implement participating-formative techniques in education, raise the status, moral spirit and professionalism of teachers and medical assistants, of the technical staff activating in the educational system;
- Implement a new model of training and retraining of teachers in the context of the new requirements: organization of simultaneous training, teaching of foreign languages, activity in the conditions of localities with a reduced number of pupils etc;
- Develop managerial and professional skills in view of improving educational services for children in very difficult circumstances at all levels of the educational system;
- Connect the typical staff of the educational institutions to the needs of the community, update norms of the didactic load in accordance with the international experience;
- Consolidate and develop family capabilities for the promotion of EFA;
- Improve and train leading staff at a national, judets and local level in order to ensure adequate educational management to meet the educational reform requirements;
- Change the mentality of central and local level decision-making factors and the community as a whole in order to form active agents of change.

Financial and material resources

- Re-allocate and re-orient financial means within the system in accordance with EFA priorities established at a national level in order to increase the weight of educational expenses compared to the total expenses;
- Create a viable financing mechanism for the educational system in order to implement financing methods based on the cost/efficiency analysis;
- Implement measures of efficient use of financial resources; financing based on programmes and on pupil/child;
- Develop and implement complex social and educational programs for children in very difficult circumstances and ensure their access to quality education;
- Expand financial autonomy of education institutions at the same time with responsibilities;
- Diversify financial resources for education and expand extra-budgetary funds to support education;

Informational-didactic resources

- Design comprehensive monitoring and evaluation indicators of the educational system and performance at a national, judets and school level;

- Elaborate and implement unified, modern and flexible curricula for all education levels and ensure it with the necessary materials bringing it in accordance with the actual and perspective requirements of the society;
- Develop textbooks and didactic materials in conformity with the requirements of the new curriculum;
- Develop and implement programmes promoting health care and education;
- Develop complex and flexible programs of education of children in very difficult circumstances to be oriented towards satisfaction of needs and recovery of physical, cognitive and social development;
- Implement new educational methods based on new information and communication technologies in the teaching, learning, monitoring and management for all training levels and steps;
- Create an informational system to integrate both local education networks and the networks of local and central bodies;
- Create a national database that would include the legislative and normative framework of the functioning of the educational system, evaluation indicators at central and local levels.

Community services

- Create mechanisms for the involvement of family and community in the realization of EFA objectives;
- Create educational community alternatives especially for the children in difficult circumstances;
- Create services of social, psycho-pedagogical assistance for families with children in very difficult circumstances aimed at information, documentation, counseling, support etc.

B.4 Monitoring and evaluation indicators

The evaluation and monitoring will be conducted based on the following indicators:

1. Gross and net enrolment ratios in the compulsory preschool education
2. Gross and net enrolment ratios in the primary education
3. Gross and net enrolment ratios at the lower secondary level (gymnasium education)
4. Gross enrolment ratios at the upper secondary level (lyceum education)
8. Percentage of primary school teachers with the required academic qualification
9. Percentage of gymnasium teachers with the required academic qualification
10. Pupil/teacher ratios by level: primary, gymnasium, lyceum
11. Repetition rate by grade and by level
12. Survival rate in grades 1-5, 5-10 and 10-12 (or in grades 1-4, 5-9 and 10-12)
13. The coefficient of efficiency (expressed as a percentage of the number of pupil-years actually spent by the cohort)
14. Literacy rate of the population aged 15-24
15. Percentage of pupils having reached the national standard established for the end of grade 4 and grade 9
16. Number of children enrolled in the health care and education promotion programmes
17. Indexes of pupils' health
18. Pupils' knowledge and skills related to health promotion to respect a healthy way of life
19. No. of boarding institutions
20. No. of children in boarding institutions
21. No. of children that benefited from services of prevention of drop out from institutionalization

22. No. of children reintegrated in their families
23. No. of children reintegrated in the general school
24. No. of children in the system of alternative education and care services
25. No. of un-enrolled children with SEN (out-of-school children with SEN)
26. Length of CDC stay in boarding institutions
27. No. of employees in boarding institutions
28. No. of staff who received professional training
29. Didactic and methodical provision of boarding institutions

C. Non-formal education

C.1 Goal

- 1. To ensure the development of skilled human resources for a democratic social and economic life through the provision of appropriate learning opportunities, especially for youth and adult in difficult circumstances***

C.2 Objectives

- Develop the Conception of Non-Formal Education as development of attitudes, mentality, behaviour and creativity in the society, school and family;
- Educate children in view of getting them rid of aggressive impulses and of hostile behaviour and raise their awareness to order, peace, balance, justice;
- Form the youth in the spirit of ideas of mutual understanding, cooperation, national and general-human values, being based on the culture of peace, tolerance, non-violence, human rights, constructive pluralism;
- Engage youth capabilities to define and delimitate their aspirations and needs for innovation, to obtain the capacity of self-financing and entrepreneurship, with a good integration in the social and economic life plan;
- Promote efficient partnership among the community, civil society and non-formal educational institutions;
- Develop and strengthen institutional capabilities;
- Develop and strengthen human resources;
- Ensure equal opportunities, access for all children to EFA;
- Involve families/parents in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of EFA;
- Develop and harmonize the legislative framework to ensure EFA (adapt the law on public associations, law on sponsorship);
- Develop a system of monitoring and evaluation of EFA efficiency, especially of the non-formal education;
- Set up an interdepartmental council for the coordination and monitoring of the activity of all educational agents;
- Restore the network of extra-school institutions with a diverse range of activities, especially for children and youth in rural localities, in order to raise the coverage ratio of pastime and further learning needs to the level of 1992 (12.3%), to begin with;
- Develop and approve state standards of funding of the activity of extra-school institutions regardless of their administrative subordination.

C.3 Intervention areas

Legislative and normative framework

- Expand the targets, content and scope of the non-formal education through adjustments to national legislations, including the Law on Education, especially in its part related to non-formal education and further learning opportunities in accordance of the international conventions (Convention on Children' Rights, Dakar Framework for Action, etc.);
- Adjust the Law on NGOs, the Law on sponsorship and charity to the needs of the non-formal educational process.

Institutional framework

- Create and develop educational alternatives;
- Create viable and cost-effective educational services (without destroying existing models).

Development of human resources

- Improve the system of initial and continuous training of non-formal education specialists;
- Develop managerial and professional skills in order to improve non-formal education and further learning services;
- Develop partnership with local communities, the civil society and business community;
- Raise the awareness level of the society regarding the appropriate learning opportunities in the context of EFA;
- Eliminate the gap related to salary/vacation of staff engaged in extra-school activities and adults and youth training centres.

Financial and material resources

- Conduct a study of the non-formal education system in view of evaluating the existing institutional and professional capabilities;
- Develop an efficient monitoring and evaluation mechanism of non-formal educational services (use of financial resources);
- Define quality criteria of non-formal educational services in order to efficiently use the allocated resources.

Informational-didactic resources

- Develop comprehensive and flexible educational programmes to correspond to the bio-psycho-social potential of the child and to the actual and perspective social requirements;

Community services:

- Develop alternative educational institutions/programs, especially in the rural area;
- Attract NGOs to the realization of non-formal educational actions (use of the human and financial potential).

C.4 Monitoring and evaluation indicators:

The evaluation and monitoring will be conducted based on the following indicators:

1. Percentage of children that attend extra-school institutions of all types
2. No. of non-formal educational institutions and their capacity
3. No. of NGOs with educational actions and children engaged in such programmes
4. No. of employees in extra-school institutions
5. Current budget expenditure allocated for extra-school institutions
6. Qualitative indicators of the non-formal education to be developed

D. Cross-cutting issues

D.1 The purpose of the strategy

To ensure the development and implementation of coherent and comprehensive sector development strategies within each priority area by promoting multidisciplinary and intersectoral approaches.

D.2 Objectives

- Promote the development of necessary institutional and curricular reform strategies conducive to the achievement of EFA objectives;
- Promote participatory approach in EFA planning and informed policy dialogue between all stakeholders;
- Promote participation of families/parents and the civil society in the process of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of related development programs

D.3 Intervention areas

Legislative-normative framework

- Revisit the Education Law and other legal acts in the light of the Dakar Framework for Action;
- Increase the level of involvement of the population in the achievement of objectives of the EFA Strategy;
- Promote at national and local levels the EFA policies and equitable access to qualitative educational services;
- Carry out an institutional analysis (audit) of the ministries promoting social policies in the context of realization of the EFA Strategy;
- Develop and implement public policies necessary for the realization of the national objectives of the EFA Strategy.

Development of human resources

- Take appropriate measures to raise the status, morale and professionalism of teachers and other educational personnel at all levels and types of education;
- Ensure a social and professional protection of the educational personnel, especially those working in rural areas;
- Develop staff development and career recognition strategies;
- Provide in-service and pre-service training of good quality to teachers and educational managers;
- Develop managerial and professional skills to improve educational services at central, district and local levels.

Informational-didactic resources

- Improve and implement the Educational Curriculum and EFA Strategy in accordance with the recommendations of international bodies and forums, and the existing positive experience in the area;
- Participate in OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and in order to benchmark the skill and knowledge performances of Moldovan students against those required in modern workplaces;
- Organize national discussions of the results of PISA assessment and develop a plan of actions to integrate the educational system of the Republic of Moldova in the international one.

Financial and material resources

- Carry out a study on the contributions of the families and the private sector to education;
- Define the quality criteria of the educational services for the efficient use of the allocated resources;
- Evaluate the practices of use of existing resources and their reallocation in view of improving the quality of teaching;
- Implement measures to save available resources by developing balanced budgets, rationalizing the school network, modernizing heating and electricity systems, developing flexible study plans;
- Strengthen the managerial capacity of the educational system, exclude political interventions.

Management information system

- Review the existing education information systems in the light of EFA and in accordance with the educational decentralization;
- Organize specific surveys in order to fine-tune the data collected and to generate qualitative information on educational services, especially on early childhood development, non-formal and adult education;
- Implement new information and communication technologies in the process of educational planning, monitoring and management.

D.4 Monitoring and evaluation indicators

1. Public expenditures (recurrent and capital) for education as percentage of GDP and of the total budget, per pupil/student as percentage of GDP per capita;
2. Public expenditures (recurrent and capital) for preschool education as percentage of GDP, per pupil as percentage of GDP per capita;
3. Public expenditures (recurrent and capital) for primary education as percentage of GDP, per pupil as percentage of GDP per capita;
4. Public expenditures (recurrent and capital) for secondary education (Gymnasium and lyceum) as percentage of GDP, per pupil as percentage of GDP per capita;
5. Public expenditures (recurrent and capital) for non-formal and adult education;
6. Number of years of schooling completed of the population.

VII. Implementation, monitoring and coordination mechanisms

EFA Councils (or forums)

In order to ensure steering and coordination in the achievement of the national EFA Goals and the implementation of EFA national plan, there will be created inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral EFA Councils at all territorial-administrative levels (at least, at national and district levels). The representatives of all major stakeholders (the public administration, the civil society, the business community, etc.) will be members of these councils. The EFA National Council will examine and approve the EFA National Plan of Action.

Under the EFA councils, there will be set up technical secretariats located at national level in the Department of Planning of the Ministry of Education and at district level in the general Divisions for Education, Youth and Sport. The EFA technical secretariats will follow up the implementation of the EFA plan, update annual financial requirements for EFA, report on the status of the EFA indicators and propose adjustments and remedial measures. They will also engage in consultations with extra-budgetary sources, including the donor community, in order to increase investment in education.

Roles and responsibilities

1. National Level

- Ministry of Education: to ensure the general coordination and coherence of the EFA in regard to the other programmes and strategies (State Programme on Education Development, Preliminary Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Strategy on Medium Term Expenditures, etc.);
- Ministry of Finance: to assure financial support to the EFA programmes, taking into account the priorities established at the national level;
- Ministry of Economy: to support the educational reform by regulating the process of teacher training; to adjust the legal and normative framework; to optimize the institutional network; to strengthen the material basis of the educational institutions in the context of the EFA National Plan of Action.
- Ministry of Health: to elaborate and implement programmes aimed at promoting health care;
- Ministry of Labour: to ensure the social protection of the employees of the educational system;
- EFA National Council: to examine and approve the EFA National Plan of Action.

2. Judet level

- Judet Departments of Education, Youth and Sport: to implement and monitor the EFA Programmes.

3. Local level

- Family (parents, parents' associations): to ensure child's enrolment in the system of mandatory education; to assure adequate conditions in the family for the integral development of the child; to contribute to the improvement of the quality and access to education; to ensure transparency in the management of school's funds, to cover partially the costs for the school transportation, meals, supplies, textbooks, etc.
- Civil society (NGOs): to promote non-formal education, to assure the openness of the educational system towards the labour market.

VIII. Beneficiaries of the EFA Strategy

The entire society will benefit from the EFA strategy and, first of all, the actors of the educational system: early childhood children, pupils, parents, teaching and managerial staff, medical and technical staff from the educational system. The EFA strategy presupposes the priority satisfaction of the needs of children in very difficult circumstances: orphans, children deprived of parental care, children with physical or mental disabilities, street children, children from socially vulnerable families, refugee children, children in conflict with the law, neglected or abused children etc. It is planned to set up a secure educational environment for the children coming from extremely poor families, families with alcoholic members, drug-addicts, with chronic diseases.