

PRESS RELEASE



Basic education gets sidelined in EU development cooperation

Brussels, 5 October 2006: The EU is failing to deliver on its commitments to support education in developing countries. That is the main finding of a new report launched by Alliance2015, a strategic partnership of European non-governmental development organisations, on the occasion of World Teachers' Day.

The report, *The EU's contribution to the Millennium Development Goals – Special focus: Education*, highlights a number of major weaknesses in the EU's development policy with regard to supporting basic education, particularly in terms of funding and country programmes.

"Basic education is key to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals", said Jaap Dijkstra, President of Alliance2015. "Despite strong political commitments and an improved policy framework, the EU is simply not translating its rhetorical support for basic education into real implementation on the ground".

The new report is the third in Alliance2015's series of reports which measure donors' contributions to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It assesses the EU's performance in orienting its development policy to these goals. It also includes the alarming results of Alliance2015's first specific analysis of the quality of the EU's policy to support basic education.

Despite a benchmark in the EU budget for a 20% allocation to basic education and health since 2000, the proportion of EU aid allocated to basic education has decreased from 6.38% in 2000 to just 1.53% in 2004. Furthermore, support for basic education is largely absent from the EU's country programmes.

Alliance2015's report is being launched in the wake of last month's agreement on the EU's aid regulation. A major component of this new legally-binding piece of legislation will be a 20% benchmark for allocating EU aid to basic health, basic education and secondary education.

"This report shows just how much the EU needs to step up its efforts to support the achievement of education for all", said Dijkstra. "The ongoing revision of the EU's country programmes provides an excellent opportunity for it to translate its commitments into reality. Alliance2015 will continue to closely monitor the European Commission in order to ensure that it does so".

2015-Watch

The EU's contribution to the Millennium Development Goals – Special focus: Education

Publisher:
Alliance2015
www.alliance2015.org

c/o Deutsche Welthungerhilfe
Friedrich-Ebert-Straße 1
53173 Bonn
Tel: +49 228 22 88 0
Fax: +49 228 22 88 333

Editor:
Mirjam van Reisen

Production:
Europe External Policy Advisors

There will be a **press conference** to mark the launch of the new 2015-Watch report at **11.00 on Thursday 5 October 2006**

Venue:
Passage Room
International Press Center
Residence Palace
Rue de la Loi 155
Brussels

Alliance2015 Representatives:
Jaap Dijkstra (HIVOS)
Vagn Berthelsen (IBIS)
Birgit Dederichs-Bain (DWHH)

Alliance2015 Spokesperson:
Birgit Dederichs-Bain (DWHH)

To arrange **interviews** please contact:

Ben Moore (EEPA)
Tel: +32 (0)2 230 07 32
Fax: +32 (0)2 230 37 80
Mobile: +32 (0)479 644 263
E-mail: bmoores@eepea.be
Internet: www.eepa.be

From 11.00 CET on Thursday 5 October 2006, it will be possible to **download** the new 2015-Watch report at:
www.alliance2015.org
and
www.eepa.be



Background notes

Alliance2015

Alliance2015 is a strategic partnership of six major European non-government organisations working in the field of development cooperation. The Alliance members are Cesvi from Italy, Concern from Ireland, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe from Germany, Hivos from the Netherlands, Ibis from Denmark and People in Need from the Czech Republic.

Alliance2015 seeks the complete achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

In 2005, Alliance2015 realised a project turnover of €416 million, of which 57% was spent towards the MDGs.