



Statement from the Government of Mauritania

Delivered by Ahmed Ould Bahiya, Minister of Education, Superior Education, and Scientific Research

Ministers,
Distinguished Guests,

First of all, on behalf of the Government of Mauritania, I must express our sincere gratitude to the Global Partnership for Education for its interventions in Mauritania, which contributed significantly to the development of our education system. I would also like to thank Denmark for hosting this very important meeting and congratulate the organizers for the quality of its preparation.

Owing to the commitment of public authorities to the issue of education for all and the relevance and coherence of the National Education Sector Development Program (PNDSE), which was implemented in Mauritania in 2002, Mauritania was one of the first countries to receive resources from the initiative in 2004. Two operations, commonly known as Fast-Track 1 and 2, were financed in Mauritania for US\$9 billion and US\$14 billion respectively.

These interventions had a considerable impact on the development and improvement of the performance of the education system, particularly with respect to basic education. It is in this context that refresher training was made possible for 12,735 teachers and training was provided for 2,222 teachers, 175 school directors, and 794 inspectors. Over 3.5 million textbooks and teaching guides were acquired, 1,000 classrooms were built and equipped, and 30,000 tables and benches were obtained. Financing of agreements with the World Food Programme to execute the "School Cafeteria" component provided rations and supplies to

benefit students, and 22 all-terrain vehicles were acquired for education department inspections to ensure better supervision and monitoring of teachers across the country. The positive effects of this two-pronged intervention on primary education in general, the education of girls in particular, and the overall performance of the system were evident. There was an improvement in the primary completion rate (PCR), which reached 74.2 percent in the 2010/11 school year, a significant increase in access, the gross admission rate (GAR), and the retention rate at the end of the first cycle. Analysis by gender indicates that the gross admission rate for girls, at the basic level, is greater than that for boys. With respect to retention, gender analysis indicates a slight difference in favor of girls at the national level.

To better anchor the results obtained and improve the chances of achieving education for all, in January 2010, Mauritania began a process of drafting a new sectoral policy covering 2011–2020. The Government ensured that the process of formulating the new sectoral policy closely followed the approach recommended by the Global Partnership.

In the context of this new policy, background papers were produced, such as the 2010 Status Report on the National Education System [*RESEN 2010*], approach papers, the National Education Sector Development Program II [*PNDSE II*], and a letter of sectoral policy. A three-year PNDSE II implementation action plan (2012–2014) was also drafted.

The resources needed to achieve the education component of this three-year action plan amount to UM 103.005 billion (US\$388.7 million), of which US\$287.9 million is allocated to current expenditure and US\$100.8 million to capital expenditure.

National resources to be mobilized for this subsector for the same period stand at US\$353.4 million, or 70 percent of national resources allocated to education. This level of resources represents a gross shortfall of US\$64.7 million. After deducting the resources already mobilized by a number of technical and financial partners, there is a net deficit of US\$34.1 million.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The commitment of the Mauritanian authorities to achieving education for all, the efforts they have made to significantly increase the resources allocated to education in order to achieve qualitatively satisfactory universal education, in addition to the coherence of the three-year action plan and the realism and relevance of the goals targeted, convince us that our partners, whose support has helped secure the above-mentioned achievements, will support us with the execution of this action plan by striving for mobilization of its GAP.

Thank you.