

**Partnership Declaration**  
**between the Government of Yemen and donors**  
**for the implementation of BEDS**

**A. Introduction**

1. The Government of Yemen (GoY) considers education to be fundamental to its development strategy, in particular to poverty reduction. Therefore, the Government has given high priority to the education sector. In 2002 the Ministry of Education (MOE) has completed its Basic Education Development Strategy (BEDS) 2003-2015.

2. Definitions:

A. Education for All (EFA) is the overall international frame of reference, specifying six goals to be reached by 2015. The six EFA goals cover a broad definition of basic education, including literacy and early childhood development.

B. Basic Education Development Strategy (BEDS) is the national translation of the EFA goals, but limited only to a narrow definition of basic education. In Yemen the term basic education is used for formal education for grades 1-9. I.e. BEDS does not cover literacy or non-formal education.

C. Fast Track Initiative (FTI) is an international instrument that is meant to support accelerated progress towards the MDG of universal primary completion by 2015 by offering an indicative framework based on best practices. The FTI is a translation of the commitment made by the international community in Dakar in 2000, that no country with a good EFA plan should fail to implement it because of shortage of resources. Using this indicative framework Yemen has translated BEDS into a three year plan, with more specific choices and a focus on the first six years of education. Together with BEDS this plan is guiding efforts towards achieving the overall goals.

When in this Declaration reference is made to the implementation of BEDS as the national strategy this refers to the long-term plan and its medium term translation (FTI).

3. The BEDS objectives for Yemen are as follows:

- Attain universal access and completion of grades 1 to 6 of basic education and 90% access for grades 1-9;
- Increase female enrolment, especially in rural areas;
- Substantially improve the quality of education results;
- Strengthen management and institutional capacity at the local and national levels;
- Enhance internal efficiency.

It is understood that in order to achieve these objectives both *reform* and *expansion* are essential.

4. In order to achieve the BEDS objectives, the support mechanism is structured into five programmes that will include complementary strategies to reduce current gaps that allow the completion of grade six by all boys and girls. These programmes will focus on access, internal efficiency, equity, quality, and capacity building.

5. This is a Declaration of Partnership between the Government of Yemen, involving in particular the Ministries of Education, Finance, Planning and International Cooperation, Civil Service and Local Administration, the Social Fund for Development and the Public Works Programme on the one hand and the Governments of Germany, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, France, the World Bank, UNICEF, WFP, ILO on the other.

## **B. Scope and objectives**

6. Through this Partnership Declaration the signatories seek to forge much closer co-ordination between all the efforts undertaken to achieve the objectives as laid down in the BEDS. The objective of this Declaration is to harmonise strategies and align and effectively use **all** resources programmed for basic education, i.e. government and donor resources, in pursuit of these objectives.
7. This Partnership Declaration will guide the **transition** from separate projects in the education sector to the ultimate goal of jointly supporting a common programme following the improved procedures of the Government of Yemen. Once this latter stage comes within reach, a subsequent agreement that governs funding and other arrangements will be drawn up. Signatories to this current Declaration reserve the right not to be party to such a subsequent agreement.
8. Whereas the focus of this Partnership Declaration is on the implementation of BEDS, the same principles of enhancing coherence and co-ordination are expected to apply also to the support of other EFA objectives (e.g. literacy, early childhood development) for which strategies are to be developed.
9. This Partnership Declaration reflects a clear desire by all signatories to enhance co-operation. However, any legally binding agreements entered between the Government of Yemen and individual donors or international organisations on a bilateral basis will be respected and the contents therein take precedence over this Partnership Declaration. Signatories will refrain, as far as possible, from setting conditions in the bilateral arrangements which contradict or diverge from (the spirit of) this Partnership Declaration.

## **C. Mechanisms for the implementation of BEDS**

10. It is planned that the implementation of BEDS will be overseen by an Inter-ministerial Steering Committee (ISC) and guided by a Technical Team (TT) that reports directly to the Minister of Education and the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee. The tasks, position and composition of the steering committee and technical team are described in Annex I. Regular co-ordination with the donor community is one of the tasks of the TT.
11. It is planned that the temporary Technical Team will guide the reform and expansion process but will not have implementation responsibilities. The actual activities in pursuit of the BEDS objectives will be the responsibility of the Ministry of Education where it concerns its core tasks and the responsibility of authorities and organisations at decentralised levels according to the delegation of authorities following Law 4 on Local Authority.
12. The definition of the appropriate mandates and responsibilities of different government entities both at central and decentralised levels will be the

subject of an institutional review. The outcomes of this review will provide an important input for the capacity building interventions in the framework of BEDS.

#### D. Roles and responsibilities of the partners

13. The GoY has the overall responsibility and accountability for the performance of the sub-sector, ensuring all activities in the basic education sub-sector are consistent with and contribute to the sector goals and priorities. Within this framework **all signatories** are prepared to:
- a) make available to other partners all information on all relevant interventions and work to ensure that there is no overlap between projects and activities;
  - b) make every effort to streamline intervention mechanisms under the various programme components;
  - c) contribute to the development and implementation of a *unified* system to monitor progress towards the BEDS and PRSP objectives (including indicators and means of verification);
  - d) use the above-mentioned information system as the main source of education information and reduce demands for additional data.
  - e) establish a joint annual review cycle to review overall progress and set targets for implementation. This joint annual review will take place in April of each year so as to allow for the outcomes of the review to be used in the planning for the following calendar year. Whereas the joint annual review can advise on the direction of individual activities to better meet the harmonisation<sup>1</sup> objective, the review has no formal authority to approve or disapprove project plans.
14. The **Government of Yemen** will facilitate the successful implementation of the BEDS and to that end is prepared to:
- f) draw up annual education plans and budgets at the district, governorate and national levels in accordance with and in clear support of the BEDS objectives and make them available to all partners;
  - g) show how activities funded under the GoY annual education budget and donors' investments mutually reinforcement the achievement of BEDS goals;
  - h) share with donors the approved education budget and provide any clarification needed;
  - i) disburse the full amount of funds approved by parliament for the annual education budget and provide semi-annual progress reports on budget execution in the education sector, linking budgets with performance;
  - j) provide schools with workable budgets;
  - k) provide in advance of the joint annual review a report on the progress made in the previous year set against the original targets. This report should include and reflect the results of all interventions in support of BEDS objectives;

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<sup>1</sup> Donor harmonisation is defined as the alignment of operational procedures between donors and recipient governments as well as between donors so as to reduce transaction costs and make ODA delivery and disbursements more flexible, taking into account national development needs and objectives under the ownership of the recipient country. This definition has been taken from para 43 of the Monterrey Consensus (March 2002).

- l) take the lead and participate at the appropriate level in the joint annual reviews.
15. **Donor partners** on their part are prepared to:
- m) commit themselves to aligning their project activities within sector goals and priorities;
  - n) inform the GoY and other donors on the purpose and level of their funding as far as their own planning and budgeting cycles allow during the annual programme review. Donors will strive to make available general three year funding goals and more precise annual forecasts by activity and geographic area.
  - o) work towards harmonisation in terms of content of activities, procedures and funding channels. Where possible donors will pool their funding or co-finance activities so as to reduce transaction costs for the GoY;
  - p) report annually to the GoY on the steps taken and results achieved on their part in terms of the harmonisation of procedures;
  - q) make efforts to raise additional resources to accelerate BEDS implementation, provided this need is clearly identified in credible plans, with due attention to efficiency of expenditure, absorption capacity, mobilisation of domestic resources and longer term budgetary considerations;
  - r) ensure that the results of the interventions under their supervision will be communicated in time to the GoY as an input for the annual monitoring report;
  - s) co-ordinate the timing and content of incoming missions and where possible reduce the number of (review) missions, in favour of the joint annual review;
  - t) co-ordinate on the composition of the joint annual review team so that all required expertise is included while keeping the size of the review team down to a workable number;
  - u) promote the optimal use of technical advisory services, whether in a project or programme context, by ensuring that such services benefit overall sector development and that duplication is avoided. This can be achieved by sharing the Terms of Reference prior to the deployment of technical advisors and by creating opportunities for other partners to be briefed and debriefed. The Technical Team shall function as the focal point for such technical advisory services.

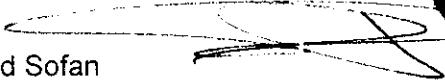
#### **E. Final provisions**

- 16. This Partnership Declaration will be valid as from the date of the last signature by the parties listed hereunder. It is in principle valid for a period of two years and the Signatories will review annually the implementation, application and effectiveness of the procedures outlined in this Declaration.
- 17. Any modification of the terms and provisions of this Declaration will only be effective if agreed in writing by all Signatories.
- 18. Upon a new donor's written request and written acceptance of the terms and conditions of this Declaration, the Ministry of Education may authorise in writing as an annex to this Declaration, a donor to become a Signatory. The Ministry will promptly inform the other Signatories and furnish them with a copy of the letter of acceptance.

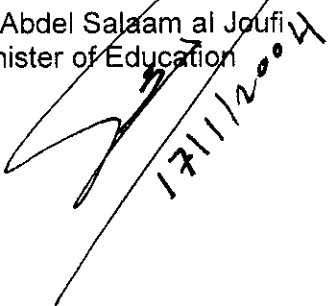
19. Each Signatory reserves the right to withdraw from this Declaration by giving the Ministry of Education three months' written notice. The Ministry will promptly inform the other Signatories and furnish them with a copy of the letter of withdrawal. In case a Signatory intends to withdraw, this Signatory will call for a meeting to inform the other Signatories on this decision and to consult on the consequences for the National Program.

Signed in Sana'a on 17 January 2004


*For the Government of Yemen*

  
Ahmed Sofan  
Vice Prime Minister  
and Minister for Planning and International Co-operation



  
Dr Abdel Salaam al Joufi  
Minister of Education

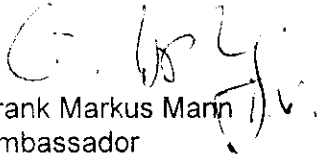
*For the Social Fund of Development*

  
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Managing Director

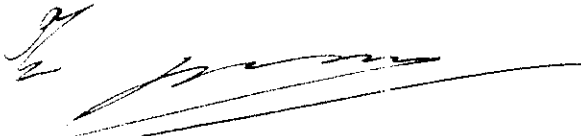
*For the Public Works Project*

  
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*For the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany*

  
Frank Markus Mann  
Ambassador


*For the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands*

  
Bert J. Ronhaar  
Ambassador

*For the United Kingdom, Department for International Development*

  
Dominic O'Neill  
Country Representative

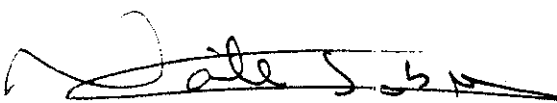
*For UNICEF*

  
Ramesh Shrestha  
Representative

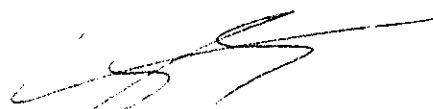
*For the World Bank*

  
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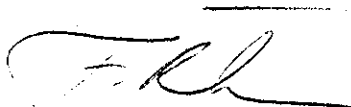
*For the Government of the Republic of France*



Alain Joly  
Counsellor of Co-operation

Geneva, 26/01/2004

*For the International Labour Organisation*



Frans Roselaers  
Director IPEC

## IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM BEDS

This Annex to the Partnership Declaration describes the formation of the Inter-ministerial Steering Committee and the Technical Team for the Implementation of the Basic Education Development Strategy.

1. An Inter-ministerial Steering Committee (ISC) will be established to oversee the implementation of the National Basic Education Development Strategy and all the projects that support the achievement of its objectives. It will be chaired by the Minister of Education and will furthermore consist of the Vice-Minister of Education, the Deputy Ministers of Education, the Head of the Technical Office of the Ministry of Education, the Head of the BEDS Technical Team (during the initial stages of BEDS implementation), the Director of the Educational Research and Development Centre, the Director of the Literacy and Adult Education Organisation, permanent representatives of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and International Co-operation, the Ministry of Civil Service and Insurance, the Ministry of Local Administration, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the National Women's Committee, the Social Fund for Development, the Public Works Programme, a donor representative (on rotating basis) and three civil society representatives (teachers' representatives, Sha'biya Al Kheirya, Islah Charitable Society).
2. The tasks of the ISC as a supportive and guiding committee are as follows:
  - Monitor the implementation of BEDS at both national and local levels to detect any bottlenecks early and suggest swift remedial action;
  - Ensure the effective use of all available resources in support of BEDS goals;
  - Ensure a coherent approach to the implementation of BEDS by:
    - i. the sectors of Ministry of Education
    - ii. MoE and other related Ministries
    - iii. all donor agencies supporting the basic education sector.
  - Discuss and endorse annual progress reports and annual work programmes for BEDS
3. The ISC shall meet quarterly.
4. A Technical Team shall be established within the Ministry of Education to enhance co-ordination during the initial stages of BEDS implementation. The small team shall report directly to the Minister and shall consist of full-time professionals, the number of which is to be determined on the basis of the tasks that need to be accomplished.
5. The mandate of the Technical Team is to assist Ministry of Education Departments, other mandated organisations and donors in planning and managing the implementation process of BEDS at national and decentralised levels. The Technical Team has a technical advisory and facilitating role and will not perform any implementation, administrative or supervisory tasks that are the responsibility of the sectors of the Ministry. It will also not develop into a parallel structure for project implementation.
6. More specifically, the Technical Team shall assume the following tasks:

- a. Assist the Planning Department of the Ministry of Education in ensuring that the annual plans of central, governorate and district level departments are compliant with the BEDS objectives and that they are properly costed;
  - b. Assist the Planning Department of the Ministry of Education in preparing for the ISC a costed annual strategic plan, including clear targets, for the implementation of BEDS based on these plans;
  - c. Ensure optimal co-ordination between the sectors of the Ministry of Education and between Ministry of Education, the donors and civil society to implement the BEDS. To this end the Technical Team will:
    - Hold regular (bi-weekly) meetings with the MoE leadership (Minister, Vice-Minister and Deputy Ministers) to discuss progress in BEDS implementation;
    - Provide regular feedback to the PRSP Technical Committee through the MoE representative in this committee (after quarterly ISC meetings);
    - Hold regular (monthly) government-led meetings with the donor community;
    - Organise harmonisation meetings on strategies within the BEDS (see also point h);
  - d. Ensure close co-ordination with the relevant departments of the Ministries of Finance, Civil Service, Local Administration, Higher Education as well as SFD and PWP and any project which is not under the direct responsibility of the Ministry in support of implementation of BEDS;
  - e. Co-ordinate, facilitate and assist the Steering Committee and Departments of the Ministry to monitor the technical support to capacity building of the MoE as well as the education offices in the governorates and districts in the field of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in line with the educational needs in the various areas;
  - f. Prepare a practical handbook/manual containing the methods for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in the governorates and districts;
  - g. Assist the Planning Department with the establishment and adoption of a comprehensive Education Management Information System so that at all levels education planners have accurate data to guide their decisions;
  - h. Organise task forces comprising those working in similar or related areas of BEDS at national or governorate/district levels to explore possibilities for improved harmonisation of interventions, including joint activities and the formulation of national standards;
  - i. Prepare an overview of central and Governorate/District level budgeting cycles and the link between them be prepared by the MoE and MoF
  - j. Develop an effective communication system within the governorates and between the governorates and the Ministry;
  - k. Assist the Planning Department of the Ministry of Education with the preparation of annual progress reports and annual work programmes in preparation for the joint annual review. The progress reports should reflect on the progress made vis-à-vis the annual plans;
  - l. Participate in the joint annual review with the donor community;
  - m. Prepare the agenda for and minutes of the meetings of the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee, including any briefings on progress that may be required, and assist Ministry Managers in taking prompt actions on the decisions reached in the meetings.
7. The team members should all be available full-time, be result-oriented and good teamworkers. The team will be led by a head who has a proven ability to

guide complex processes with multiple stakeholders and foster a spirit of co-operation among actors who have diverse mandates. The following qualities and skills should be available within the team:

- Knowledge of and practical experience with project and programme planning;
- Knowledge of and practical experience with institutional development issues, including civil service reform;
- Knowledge of and practical experience with decentralisation processes;
- Experience with human resources development;
- Knowledge of and experience with educational policy analysis and strategic planning at different levels;
- Knowledge of and experience with promoting gender equality in education;
- Knowledge of and experience with educational statistics, including EMIS;
- Knowledge of and experience with budgeting and financial management;
- Documentation and information dissemination skills.

8. The team will be a temporary structure to accelerate BEDS implementation. Its operations will be funded by a consortium of donors and the MoE. Their performance, the need for their continuity and, if so, the composition of the team will be reviewed annually. Contracts will be issued for TT members for one year at a time.
9. Donors will hold monthly co-ordination meetings among themselves in advance of the government-led co-ordination meetings. These meetings will be called and chaired by a chairperson who will fulfil that role on a rotating basis (annually).