Pledging Conference

Copenhagen, Denmark, 8 November 2011

Statement from UNESCO

Delivered by Irina Bokova, Director General

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our pledges must translate into sustainable results.

I wish to highlight several lessons that UNESCO draws from its experience at country level.

First, the formulation of robust, evidence-based plans for the education sector is key for providing strategic guidance and adequate resources to reach EFA goals.

UNESCO has much experience to offer here. Since 2000, we have assisted a large number of countries, including Afghanistan, Viet Nam and Congo DRC in developing plans for their education sector.

We have in our Headquarters, Regional Bureaus and the International Institute for Educational Planning a unique pool of expertise to support the development of education sector plans that can be endorsed by the *Global Partnership for Education*.

Formulation of plans is not enough – we must build capacities for sustainability and development. This is a second point.

In our experience, this requires work at a number of levels. We seek especially to build the capacities of civil servants in order to impact across Ministries of Education by influencing norms and practices for education sector management.

We have learned, however, that such initiatives work only when there is national leadership and ownership, and when international efforts match national priorities and strategies.

A third lesson, therefore, is the need for wide dialogue.
This helps ensure the alignment between national partners and donors.
Experience underlines the importance of providing the delicate, sometimes difficult, coordination required for such a dialogue.

I am currently reforming the UNESCO presence in the field with the aim to strengthen our role in facilitating this interface between domestic policy dialogue and external aid.
Another lesson concerns the time frame.

Education reform requires sustained engagement. UNESCO's participation in sector dialogue, plan formulation and capacity building is a long-term undertaking. We see ourselves as a permanent partner. This is important for our Member States, especially *Global Partnership in Education* beneficiaries.

After decades of expansion, quality is the major challenge today.
Teachers are the key factor for quality education. UNESCO's expertise in supporting teacher training and teaching quality can contribute greatly to the success of country support by the *Global Partnership in Education*.

Another lesson concerns the importance of monitoring and evaluation.
Our experience shows that this should not consist of one-off events but a monitoring and evaluation culture, to guide national and international efforts.

Assessing impact and progress calls also for good data and information.
In our Global Monitoring Reports and through the Institute of Statistics, UNESCO contributes to strengthening better, more effective policy.

One last point concerns the importance of partnerships, to provide targeted support to Government in their efforts to achieve the Education for All objectives. The experience of the new *Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education* is relevant here.