Ethiopia’s progress towards achieving Millennium Development Goal 2: Achieving universal primary education by 2015

Key points
- Ethiopia is well on track to achieve universal primary education.
- Ethiopia is the 3rd most improved country in the world for primary enrolment rates since 2000. (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, September 2011)
- There has been a steady improvement in the participation of girls at primary level.
- The overall increase in enrolment has come at the expense of educational quality.
- Malnutrition has a negative impact on children’s educational achievement.

The Government of Ethiopia has made achieving universal primary education a priority. Public spending on education has increased. In 2004/05 19.8% of the national budget was spent on education, increasing to 22.8% in 2009/10.

The number of primary schools increased from 16,000 in 2004/05, to over 25,000 in 2008/09. More than 80% of the new schools have been built in rural areas where school attendance has traditionally been low.

The government is also working to improve the quality of education, to keep children in school and reduce drop out rates. In 2009 a General Education Quality Improvement Programme was started, including increasing the number of teachers and improving the quality of teaching through on the job and summer training, as well as increasing the teacher to pupil and pupil to textbook ratios.

Climate variability in Ethiopia has increasingly caused droughts and floods. Impacts of climate change could limit educational progress in the future.
