

# TEACHING AND LEARNING: *Achieving quality for all*

Education for All

Summary



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

TEACHING  
AND LEARNING:  
*Achieving quality for all*

**Summary**



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

UNESCO  
Publishing

This Report is an independent publication commissioned by UNESCO on behalf of the international community. It is the product of a collaborative effort involving members of the Report Team and many other people, agencies, institutions and governments.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The EFA Global Monitoring Report team is responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in this book and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization. Overall responsibility for the views and opinions expressed in the Report is taken by its Director.

### **The EFA Global Monitoring Report team**

Director: Pauline Rose

Kwame Akyeampong, Manos Antoninis, Madeleine Barry, Nicole Bella, Erin Chemery, Marcos Delprato, Nihan Köseleci Blanchy, Joanna Härmä, Catherine Jere, Andrew Johnston, François Leclercq, Alasdair McWilliam, Claudine Mukizwa, Judith Randrianatoavina, Kate Redman, Maria Rojnov-Petit, Martina Simeti, Emily Subden and Asma Zubairi.

The *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* is an independent annual publication. It is facilitated and supported by UNESCO.

For more information about the Report, please contact:

EFA Global Monitoring Report team  
c/o UNESCO, 7, place de Fontenoy  
75352 Paris 07 SP, France  
Email: [efareport@unesco.org](mailto:efareport@unesco.org)  
Tel.: +33 1 45 68 07 41  
[www.efareport.unesco.org](http://www.efareport.unesco.org)

#### *Previous EFA Global Monitoring Reports*

2012. Youth and skills: Putting education to work	2007. Strong foundations: Early childhood care and education
2011. The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education	2006. Literacy for life
2010. Reaching the marginalized	2005. Education for All: The quality imperative
2009. Overcoming inequality: Why governance matters	2003/4. Gender and Education for All: The leap to equality
2008. Education for All by 2015: Will we make it?	2002. Education for All: Is the world on track?

Any errors or omissions found subsequent to printing will be corrected in the online version at [www.efareport.unesco.org](http://www.efareport.unesco.org).

© UNESCO, 2014

All rights reserved

First edition

Published in 2014 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
7, Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

Cover photo by Poulomi Basu

Graphic design by FHI 360

Layout by FHI 360

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Data available

Typeset by UNESCO

# Foreword

This 11th *EFA Global Monitoring Report* provides a timely update on progress that countries are making towards the global education goals that were agreed in 2000. It also makes a powerful case for placing education at the heart of the global development agenda after 2015. In 2008, the *EFA Global Monitoring Report* asked – ‘will we make it?’ With less than two years left before 2015, this Report makes it clear that we will not.

Fifty-seven million children are still failing to learn, simply because they are not in school. Access is not the only crisis – poor quality is holding back learning even for those who make it to school. One third of primary school age children are not learning the basics, whether they have been to school or not. To reach our goals, this Report calls on Governments to redouble efforts to provide learning to all who face disadvantages – whether from poverty, gender, where they live or other factors.

An education system is only as good as its teachers. Unlocking their potential is essential to enhancing the quality of learning. Evidence shows that education quality improves when teachers are supported – it deteriorates if they are not, contributing to the shocking levels of youth illiteracy captured in this Report.

Governments must step up efforts to recruit an additional 1.6 million teachers to achieve universal primary education by 2015. This Report identifies four strategies to provide the best teachers to reach all children with a good quality education. First, the right teachers must be selected to reflect the diversity of the children they will be teaching. Second, teachers must be trained to support the weakest learners, starting from the early grades. A third strategy aims to overcome inequalities in learning by allocating the best teachers to the most challenging parts of a country. Lastly, governments must provide teachers with the right mix of incentives to encourage them to remain in the profession and to make sure all children are learning, regardless of their circumstances.

But teachers cannot shoulder the responsibility alone. The Report shows also that teachers can only shine in the right context, with well-designed curricula and assessment strategies to improve teaching and learning.

These policy changes have a cost. This is why we need to see a dramatic shift in funding. Basic education is currently underfunded by US\$26 billion a year, while aid is continuing to decline. At this stage, governments simply cannot afford to reduce investment in education – nor should donors step back from their funding promises. This calls for exploring new ways to fund urgent needs.

We must learn from the evidence as we shape a new global sustainable development agenda after 2015. As this Report shows, equality in access and learning must stand at the heart of future education goals. We must ensure that all children and young people are learning the basics and that they have the opportunity to acquire the transferable skills needed to become global citizens. We must also set goals that are clear and measurable, to allow for the tracking and monitoring that is so essential for governments and donors alike, and to bridge the gaps that remain.

As we advance towards 2015 and set a new agenda to follow, all governments must invest in education as an accelerator of inclusive development. This Report's evidence clearly shows that education provides sustainability to progress against all development goals. Educate mothers, and you empower women and save children's lives. Educate communities, and you transform societies and grow economies. This is the message of this *EFA Global Monitoring Report*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Irina Bokova". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "I" and "B".

Irina Bokova  
Director-General of UNESCO

# Introduction

With the deadline for the Education for All goals less than two years away, it is clear that, despite advances over the past decade, not a single goal will be achieved globally by 2015. This year's *EFA Global Monitoring Report* vividly underlines the fact that people in the most marginalized groups have continued to be denied opportunities for education over the decade. It is not too late, however, to accelerate progress in the final stages. And it is vital to put in place a robust global post-2015 education framework to tackle unfinished business while addressing new challenges. Post-2015 education goals will only be achieved if they are accompanied by clear, measurable targets with indicators tracking that no one is left behind, and if specific education financing targets for governments and aid donors are set.

The *2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report* is divided into three parts. Part 1 provides an update of progress towards the six EFA goals. The second part presents clear evidence that progress in education is vital for achieving development goals after 2015. Part 3 puts the spotlight on the importance of implementing strong policies to unlock the potential of teachers so as to support them in overcoming the global learning crisis.

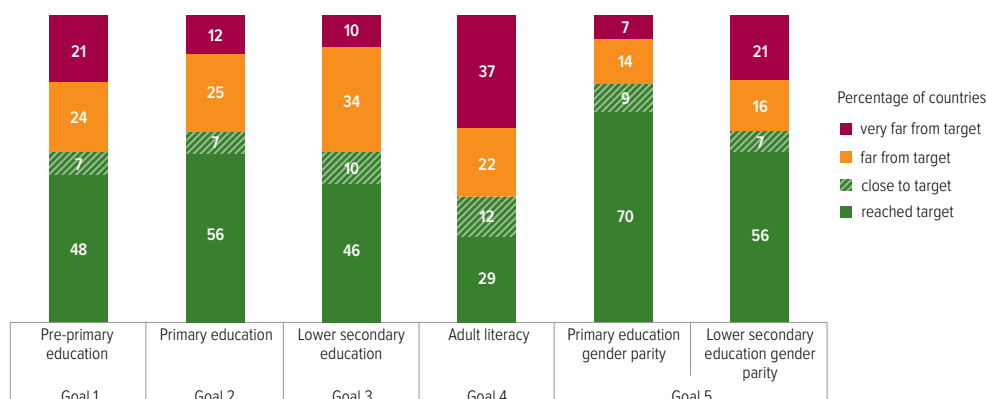
## Highlights

- *Goal 1: Despite improvements, far too many children lack early childhood care and education.* In 2012, 25% of children under 5 suffered from stunting. In 2011, around half of young children had access to pre-primary education, and in sub-Saharan Africa the share was only 18%.
- *Goal 2: Universal primary education is likely to be missed by a wide margin.* The number of children out of school was 57 million in 2011, half of whom lived in conflict-affected countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, only 23% of poor girls in rural areas were completing primary education by the end of the decade. If recent trends in the region continue, the richest boys will achieve universal primary completion in 2021, but the poorest girls will not catch up until 2086.
- *Goal 3: Many adolescents lack foundation skills gained through lower secondary education.* In 2011, 69 million adolescents were out of school, with little improvement in this number since 2004. In low income countries, only 37% of adolescents complete lower secondary education, and the rate is as low as 14% for the poorest. On recent trends, girls from the poorest families in sub-Saharan Africa are only expected to achieve lower secondary completion in 2111.
- *Goal 4: Adult literacy has hardly improved.* In 2011, there were 774 million illiterate adults, a decline of just 1% since 2000. The number is projected to fall only slightly, to 743 million, by 2015. Almost two-thirds of illiterate adults are women. The poorest young women in developing countries may not achieve universal literacy until 2072.
- *Goal 5: Gender disparities remain in many countries.* Even though gender parity was supposed to be achieved by 2005, in 2011 only 60% of countries had achieved this goal at the primary level and 38% at the secondary level.
- *Goal 6: Poor quality of education means millions of children are not learning the basics.* Around 250 million children are not learning basic skills, even though half of them have spent at least four years in school. The annual cost of this failure, around US\$129 billion. Investing in teachers is key: in around a third of countries, less than 75% of primary school teachers are trained according to national standards. And in a third of countries, the challenge of training existing teachers is worse than that of recruiting and training new teachers.

# PART 1: Monitoring the Education for All goals

Since the Education for All framework was established in 2000, countries have made progress towards the goals. However, too many will still be far from the target in 2015 (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: By 2015, many countries will still not have reached the EFA goals**  
Percentage of countries projected to achieve a benchmark for five EFA goals by 2015



*Notes:* Countries are assessed as having reached the target if they have achieved a pre-primary education gross enrolment ratio of 80% (goal 1); a primary education adjusted net enrolment ratio of 97% (goal 2); a lower secondary education adjusted net enrolment ratio of 97% (goal 3); an adult literacy rate of 97% (goal 4); a gender parity index between 0.97 and 1.03 at primary and lower secondary education respectively (goal 5). The analysis was conducted on the subset of countries for which a projection was possible; therefore, it covers fewer countries than those for which information is available on either 1999 or 2011.

*Source:* Bruneforth (2013).

## Goal 1: Early childhood care and education

The foundations set in the first thousand days of a child's life, from conception to the second birthday, are critical for future well-being. It is therefore vital that families have access to adequate health care, along with support to make the right choices for mothers and babies. In addition, access to good nutrition holds the key to developing children's immune systems and the cognitive abilities they need in order to learn.

Despite improvements, an unacceptably high number of children suffer from ill health: under-5 mortality fell by 48% from 1990 to 2012, yet 6.6 million children still died before their fifth birthday in 2012.

Progress has been slow. In 43 countries, more than one in ten children died before age 5 in 2000. If the annual rate of reduction for child mortality in these 43 countries between 2000 and 2011 is projected to 2015, only eight countries will reach the target of reducing child deaths by two-thirds from their 1990 levels. Some poorer countries that invested in early childhood interventions, including Bangladesh and Timor-Leste, reduced child mortality by at least two-thirds in advance of the target date.

Progress in improving child nutrition has been considerable. Yet, as of 2012, some 162 million children under 5 were still malnourished; three-quarters of them live in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia. While the share



of children under 5 who were stunted – a robust indicator of long-term malnutrition – was 25%, down from 40% in 1990, the annual rate of reduction needs to almost double if global targets are to be achieved by 2025.

The links between early childhood care and education are strong and mutually reinforcing. Early childhood care and education services help build skills at a time when children’s brains are developing, with long-term benefits for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. In Jamaica, for example, infants who were stunted and from disadvantaged backgrounds receiving weekly psychosocial stimulation were earning 42% more than their peers by their early 20s.

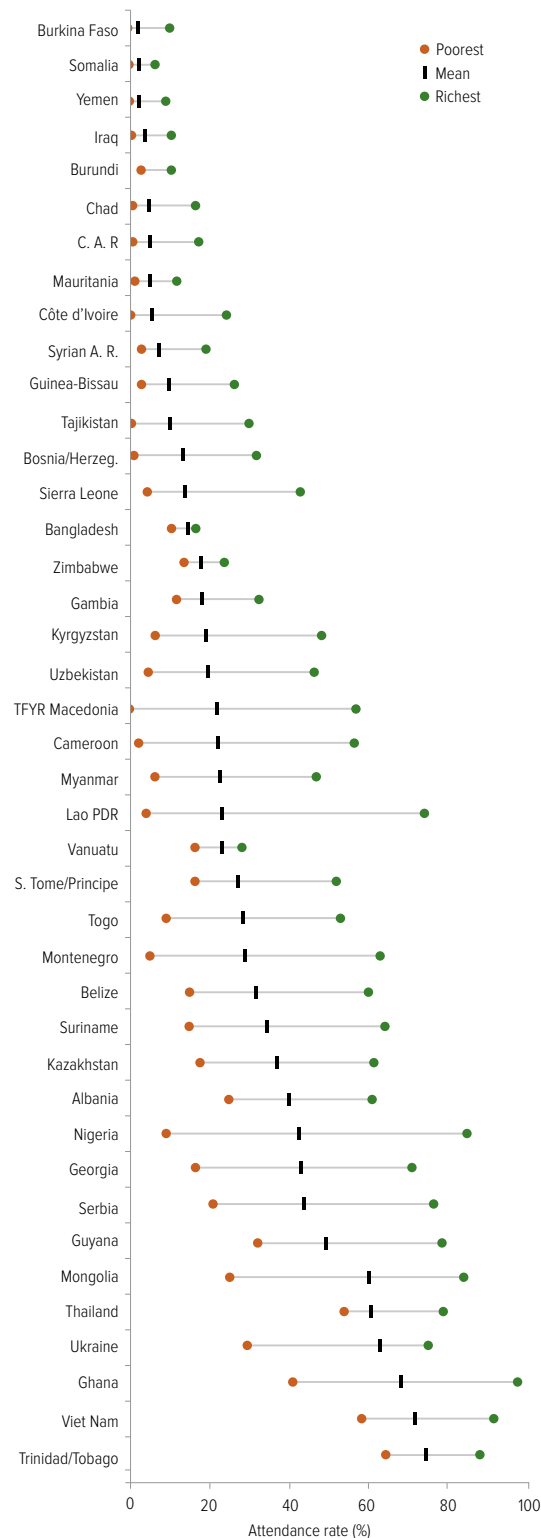
Since 2000, pre-primary education has expanded considerably. The global pre-primary education gross enrolment ratio increased from 33% in 1999 to 50% in 2011, although it reached only 18% in sub-Saharan Africa. The number of children enrolled in pre-primary schools grew by almost 60 million over the period.

In many parts of the world, however, there is a wide gap in enrolment between the richest and poorest (Figure 2). Part of the reason is that governments have yet to assume sufficient responsibility for pre-primary education: as of 2011, private providers were catering for 33% of all enrolled children, rising to 71% in the Arab States. The cost of private provision is one of the factors that contribute to inequity in access at this level.

No target was set at Dakar in 2000 to guide assessment of success in early childhood education. To gauge progress, this Report has set a pre-primary education gross enrolment ratio of 80% as an indicative target for 2015. Of the 141 countries with data, 21% had reached the target in 1999. By 2011, the number had risen to 37%. Looking ahead to 2015, it is projected that 48% of countries will reach the target.

An 80% target is modest, leaving many young children, often the most vulnerable, out of pre-school. Any post-2015 goal must provide a clear target to make sure all young children have access to pre-primary education, and a way to track the progress of disadvantaged groups to be sure they do not miss out.

**Figure 2: Few poor 4-year-olds receive pre-primary education**  
Percentage of children aged 36 to 59 months who attended some form of organized early childhood education programme, by wealth, selected countries, 2005–2012



Source: World Inequality Database on Education, [www.education-inequalities.org](http://www.education-inequalities.org).



## Goal 2: Universal primary education

With just two years until the 2015 deadline for the Education for All goals, the goal of universal primary education (UPE) is likely to be missed by a wide margin. By 2011, 57 million children were still out of school.

There is some good news: between 1999 and 2011, the number of children out of school fell almost by half. Following a period of stagnation, there was a small improvement between 2010 and 2011. But that reduction of 1.9 million is scarcely more than a quarter of the average between 1999 and 2004. Had the rate of decline between 1999 and 2008 been maintained, UPE could almost have been achieved by 2015 (Figure 3).

Sub-Saharan Africa is the region that is lagging most behind, with 22% of the region's primary school age population still not in school in 2011. By contrast, South and West Asia experienced the fastest decline, contributing more than half the total reduction in numbers out of school.

Girls make up 54% of the global population of children out of school. In the Arab States, the share is 60%, unchanged since 2000. In South and West Asia, by contrast, the percentage of girls in the out-of-school population fell steadily, from 64% in 1999 to 57% in 2011. Almost half the

**In 2011,  
14 countries  
had more  
than  
1 million  
children out  
of school**

children out of school globally are expected never to make it to school, and the same is true for almost two of three girls in the Arab States and sub-Saharan Africa.

The top three performers in the last five years have been the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Rwanda and Viet Nam, which reduced their out-of-school populations by at least 85%. There has been little change in the list of countries with the highest numbers of children out of school. The top 10 was unchanged over the period with one exception: Ghana was replaced by Yemen.

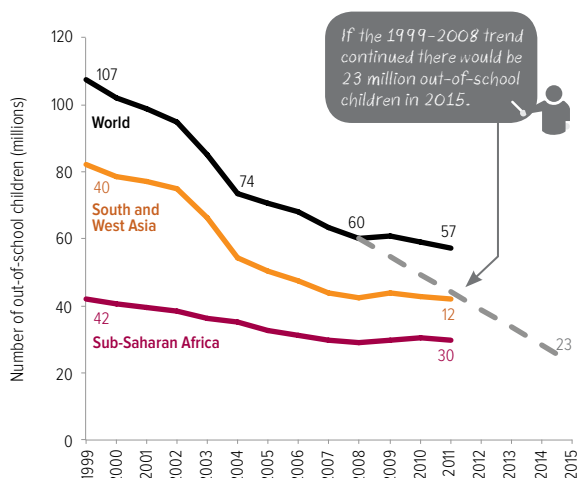
Some countries that might have been in the list with the largest out-of-school populations are not there simply because they have no recent reliable data. Using household surveys, this Report estimates that 14 countries had more than 1 million children out of school in 2011, including Afghanistan, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Sudan (pre-secession) and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Around half the world's out-of-school population lives in conflict-affected countries, up from 42% in 2008. Of the 28.5 million primary school age children out of school in conflict-affected countries, 95% live in low and lower middle income countries. Girls, who make up 55% of the total, are the worst affected.

Often children do not make it to school because of disadvantages they are born with. One of the most neglected disadvantages is disability. New analysis from four countries shows that children at higher risk of disability are far more likely to be denied a chance to go to school, with differences widening depending on the type of disability. In Iraq, for instance, 10% of 6- to 9-year-olds with no risk of disability had never been to school in 2006, but 19% of those with a risk of hearing impairment and 51% of those who were at higher risk of mental disability had never been to school.

Children are more likely to complete primary schooling if they enter at the right age. However, the net intake rate for the first year of primary school increased only slightly between 1999 and 2011, from 81% to 86% – and it rose by less than one percentage point over the last four years of the period. Some countries have made great progress in getting children into school on time, however, including Ethiopia, which increased its rate from 23% in 1999 to 94% in 2011.

**Figure 3: Millions of children remain out of school in 2011**  
Number of primary school age children out of school, by region, 1999–2011



Dropout before completing a full primary cycle has hardly changed since 1999. In 2010, around 75% of those who started primary school reached the last grade. In sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion of those starting school who reached the last grade worsened from 58% in 1999 to 56% in 2010; by contrast, in the Arab States this proportion improved from 79% in 1999 to 87% in 2010.

Universal participation in primary school is likely to remain elusive in many countries by 2015. Of 122 countries, the proportion reaching universal primary enrolment rose from 30% in 1999 to 50% in 2011. Looking ahead to 2015, it is projected that 56% of countries will reach the target. In 2015, 12% of countries will still have fewer than 8 in 10 enrolled, including two-thirds of countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Assessing whether UPE has been achieved should be judged not by participation alone, but also by whether children complete primary education. Among the 90 countries with data, it is expected that at least 97% of children will reach the last grade of primary school by 2015 in just 13 countries, 10 of which are OECD or EU member states.

**Goal 3: Youth and adult skills**

The third EFA goal has been one of the most neglected, in part because no targets or indicators were set to monitor its progress. The 2012 Report proposed a framework for various pathways to skills – including foundation, transferable, and technical and vocational skills – as a way of improving monitoring efforts, but the international community is still a long way from measuring the acquisition of skills systematically.

The most effective route to acquiring foundation skills is through lower secondary schooling. The lower secondary gross enrolment ratio increased from 72% to 82% over 1999–2011. The fastest growth was in sub-Saharan Africa, where enrolment more than doubled, albeit from a low base, reaching 49% in 2011.

Children need to complete lower secondary education to acquire foundation skills. Analysis using household surveys shows that completion rates had only reached 37% in low income countries by around 2010. There are wide

inequalities in completion, with rates reaching 61% for the richest households but 14% for the poorest.

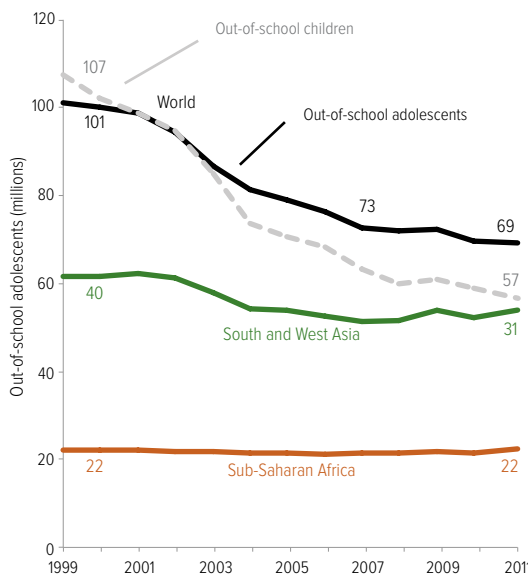
The number of out-of-school adolescents has fallen since 1999 by 31%, to 69 million. However it has all but stagnated since 2007, leaving many young people needing access to second-chance programmes to acquire foundation skills. Slow progress towards reducing the number of adolescents out of school in South and West Asia resulted in the region’s share of the total number increasing from 39% in 1999 to 45% in 2011. In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of adolescents out of school remained at 22 million between 1999 and 2011 as population growth cancelled out enrolment growth (Figure 4).

Given that universal lower secondary education is expected to become an explicit goal after 2015, it is vital to assess where the world is likely to stand in 2015. An assessment of progress based on 82 countries finds that only 26% achieved universal lower secondary education in 1999. By 2011, 32% of countries had reached that level. By 2015, the proportion of countries reaching that level is expected to grow to 46%.

**In low income countries, only 14% of the poorest complete lower secondary school**

**Figure 4: The number of adolescents out of school has hardly fallen since 2007**

Out-of-school adolescents, by region, 1999 to 2011



Source: UIS database.

This assessment is based on information from only 40% of all countries. It includes two-thirds of the countries in North America and Western Europe but only a quarter of sub-Saharan African countries, so it is not representative. Taking into account the countries that have not yet achieved universal primary enrolment, the percentage of countries that could achieve lower secondary enrolment by 2015 would be much lower.

**Goal 4: Adult literacy**

Universal literacy is fundamental to social and economic progress. Literacy skills are best developed in childhood through good quality education. Few countries offer genuine second chances to illiterate adults. As a result, countries with a legacy of low access to school have been unable to eradicate adult illiteracy.

The number of illiterate adults remains stubbornly high at 774 million, a fall of 12% since 1990 but just 1% since 2000. It is projected only to fall to 743 million by 2015. Ten countries are responsible for almost three-quarters of the world’s illiterate adults (Figure 5). Women make up almost two-thirds of the total, and there has been no progress in reducing this share since 1990. Of the 61 countries with data, around half are expected to achieve gender parity in adult literacy by 2015, and 10 will be very close.

Since 1990, adult literacy rates have risen fastest in the Arab States. Nevertheless, population growth has meant that the number of illiterate adults has only fallen from 52 million to 48 million. Similarly, the region with the second fastest increase in adult literacy rates, South and West Asia, has seen its population of illiterate adults remain stable at just over 400 million. In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of illiterate adults has increased by 37% since 1990, mainly due to population growth, reaching 182 million in 2011. By 2015, it is projected that 26% of all illiterate adults will live in sub-Saharan Africa, up from 15% in 1990.

Slow progress means that there has been little change in the number of countries achieving universal adult literacy. Of 87 countries, 21% had reached universal adult literacy in 2000. Between 2000 and 2011, the number of countries that had reached this level increased to 26%. By

contrast, 26% of countries were very far from this level in 2011. In 2015, 29% of countries are expected to achieve universal adult literacy, while 37% will still be very far.

The 15 countries of West Africa are among those with the worst adult literacy rates globally, and include the five countries with the world’s lowest literacy rates, below 35%. Those five countries also have female literacy rates below 25%, compared with an average for sub-Saharan Africa of 50%. These trends are not likely to improve soon. In 12 out of the 15 countries, fewer than half of young women are literate.

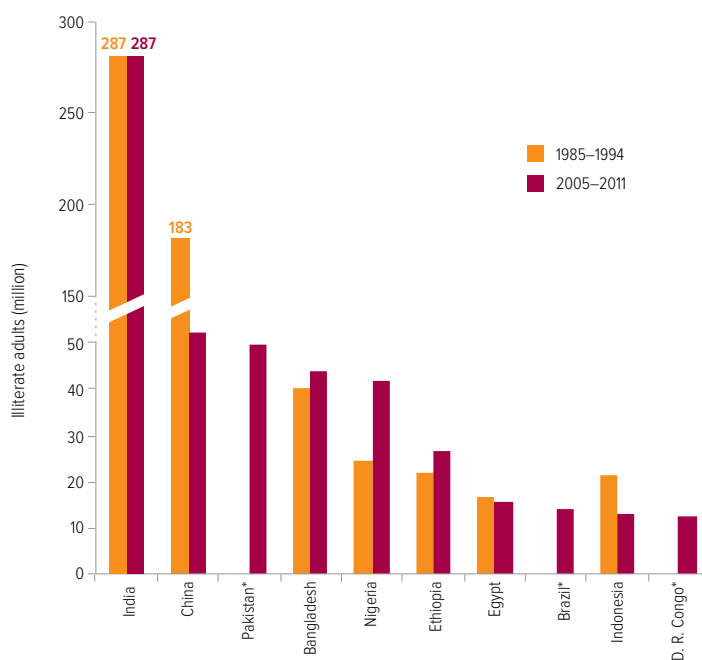
**Goal 5: Gender parity and equality**

Gender parity – ensuring an equal enrolment ratio of girls and boys – is the first step towards the fifth EFA goal. The full goal – gender equality – also demands appropriate schooling environments, practices free of discrimination, and equal opportunities for boys and girls to realize their potential.

Gender disparity patterns vary between countries in different income groups. Among low income countries, disparities are commonly at the expense of girls: 20% achieve gender parity

**The number of illiterate adults fell by just 1% since 2000**

**Figure 5: 10 countries account for 72% of the global population of illiterate adults**  
Number of illiterate adults, 10 countries with highest populations of illiterate adults, 1985–1994 and 2005–2011



\*Data not available  
Source: Annex, Statistical Table 2.

in primary education, 10% in lower secondary education and 8% in upper secondary education. Among middle and high income countries, where more countries achieve parity at any level, the disparities are increasingly at the expense of boys as one moves up to the lower and upper secondary levels. For example, 2% of upper middle income countries have disparity at the expense of boys in primary school, 23% in lower secondary school and 62% in upper secondary school (Figure 6).

Reaching parity at both the primary and secondary levels was singled out to be achieved by 2005, earlier than the other goals. Yet, even by 2011, many countries had not achieved this goal. At the primary levels, for 161 countries, 57% had achieved gender parity in 1999. Between 1999 and 2011, the proportion of countries that had reached the target increased to 63%. The number of countries furthest from the target, with fewer than 90 girls for every 100 boys enrolled, fell from 19% in 1999 to 9% in 2011.

Looking ahead, it is projected that by 2015, 70% of countries will have reached the goal and 9% of countries will be close. By contrast, 14% of countries will still be far from the target, and 7% will be very far, of which three-quarters are in sub-Saharan Africa.

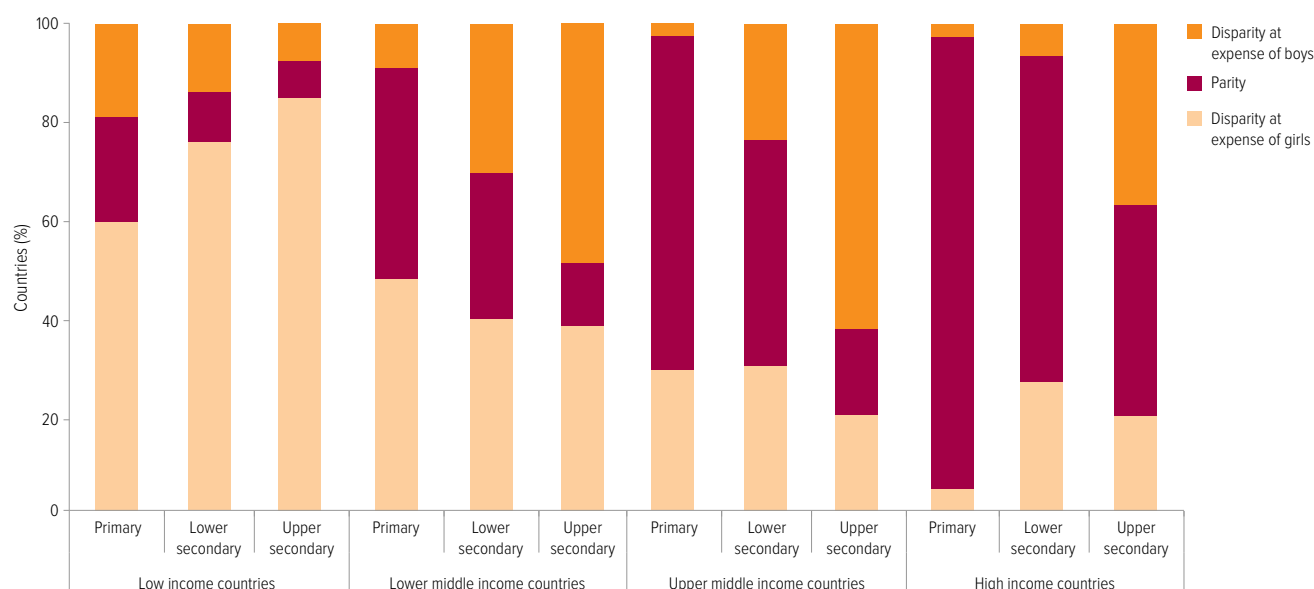
A move towards gender parity does not always mean more children in school. Burkina Faso, for example, is projected to achieve parity in primary school by 2015, but it still has the seventh-lowest gross enrolment ratio in the world. And in Senegal, where progress has been made in narrowing the gender gap, this is due to improvement in female enrolment while the male enrolment ratio has not increased since 2004.

At the lower secondary level, of 150 countries, 43% had achieved gender parity in 1999. It is projected that by 2015, 56% of countries will have achieved the target. At the other extreme, 33% of countries were far from the target in 1999, of which three-quarters had disparity at the expense of girls. It is expected that by 2015, 21% of countries will still experience gender disparity in lower secondary school, in 70% of which the disparity will be at girls' expense.

Fast progress is feasible, as the example of Turkey shows: it has almost achieved parity at both lower and upper secondary levels, even though the gender parity index in 1999 was 0.74 in lower secondary and 0.62 in upper secondary. But there is no room for complacency. Traditional perceptions of gender roles that permeate society filter down to schools.

**By 2015, 70% of countries are expected to reach gender parity in primary enrolment**

**Figure 6: Few low income countries have achieved gender parity at any level of education**  
Countries with gender parity in enrolment ratios, by country income group, 2011



Source: UIS database.

## Goal 6: Quality of education

Improving quality and learning is likely to be more central to the post-2015 global development framework. Such a shift is vital to improve education opportunities for the 250 million children who are unable to read, write, or do basic mathematics, 130 million of whom are in school.

**In a third of countries, less than 75% of teachers are trained**

The pupil/teacher ratio is one measure for assessing progress towards goal 6. Globally, average pupil/teacher ratios have barely changed at the pre-primary, primary and secondary levels. In sub-Saharan Africa, with teacher recruitment lagging behind growth in enrolment, ratios stagnated and are now the highest in the world at the pre-primary and primary levels. Of the 162 countries with data in 2011, 26 had a pupil/teacher ratio in primary education exceeding 40:1, 23 of which are in sub-Saharan Africa.

Between 1999 and 2011, the pupil/teacher ratio in primary education increased by at least 20% in nine countries. By contrast, it fell by at least 20% in 60 countries. Congo, Ethiopia and Mali more than doubled primary school enrolment and yet decreased their pupil/teacher ratios by more than 10 pupils per teacher.

However, many countries have expanded teacher numbers rapidly by hiring people to teach without training. This may serve to get more children into school, but jeopardizes education quality. In a third of countries with data, less than 75% of teachers are trained according to national standards. The pupil/trained teacher ratio exceeds the pupil/teacher ratio by 10 pupils in 29 of the 98 countries, of which two-thirds are in sub-Saharan Africa (Figure 7).

At the secondary level, in 14 of 130 countries with data the pupil/teacher ratio exceeds 30:1. Although the vast majority of the countries facing the largest challenges are in sub-Saharan Africa, the region nevertheless managed to double the number of secondary teachers over 1999–2011. Of the 60 countries with data on the share of trained secondary teachers, half had less than 75% of the

teaching force trained to the national standard, while 11 had less than 50% trained.

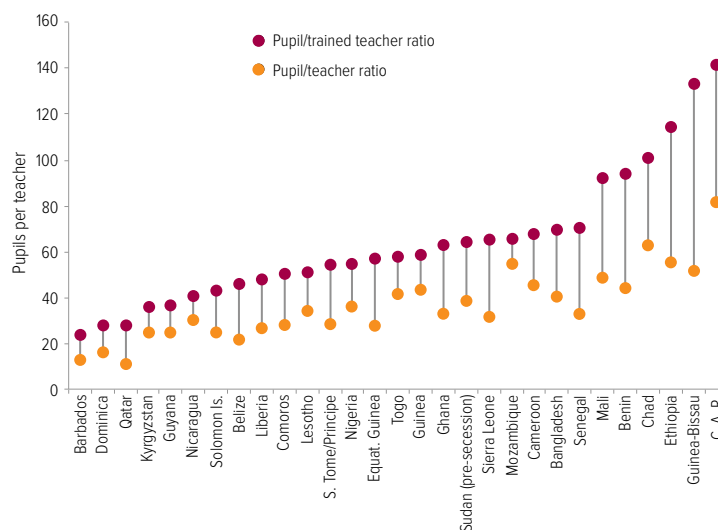
The proportion of teachers trained to national standards is particularly low in pre-primary education. Although the number of teachers at this level has increased by 53% since 2000, in 40 of the 75 countries with data, less than 75% of teachers are trained to the national standard.

In some contexts, the presence of female teachers is crucial to attract girls to school and improve their learning outcomes. Yet women teachers are lacking in some countries with high gender disparity in enrolment, such as Djibouti and Eritrea.

Teachers need good quality learning materials to be effective but many do not have access to textbooks. In the United Republic of Tanzania, only 3.5% of all grade 6 pupils had sole use of a reading textbook. Poor physical infrastructure is another problem for students in many poor countries. Children are often squeezed into overcrowded classrooms, with those in early grades particularly disadvantaged. In Malawi, there are 130 children per class in grade 1, on average, compared with 64 in the last grade. In Chad, just one in four schools has a toilet, and only one in three of those toilets is reserved for girls' use.

**Figure 7: In 29 countries, there is a big gap between the number of pupils per teacher and per trained teacher**

Pupil/teacher ratio and pupil/trained teacher ratio, primary education, countries where the pupil/trained teacher ratio exceeds the pupil/teacher ratio by at least 10:1, 2011



Source: Annex, Statistical Table 8.

With 250 million children not learning the basics, it is vital for a global post-2015 goal to be set which will monitor whether, by 2030, all children and youth, regardless of their circumstances, acquire foundation skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Meeting this need requires countries to strengthen their national assessment systems and ensure that they are used to inform policy. Many national assessment systems are lacking in this respect. Governments often consider their public examination system as equivalent to a national assessment system, even though it is mainly used to promote students between levels of education. National assessments should be a diagnostic tool that can establish whether students achieve the learning standards expected by a particular age or grade, and how this achievement changes over time for subgroups of the population.

Regional and international assessments are critical for monitoring a global learning goal after 2015. Just as improved global monitoring of access has helped maintain pressure on governments to ensure that each child completes primary school, better global monitoring of learning can push governments to make certain that all children not only go to school but are achieving the basics.

For these assessments to facilitate monitoring post-2015 global learning goals, three key principles need to be adhered to. First, all children and young people need to be taken into account when interpreting results, not just those who were in school and took part in the assessment. Disadvantaged children may already be out of the school system, and therefore unlikely to have reached minimum learning standards, by the time the assessment is administered. Not counting them means that the scale of the problem is understated. Second, better information on background characteristics of students is needed to identify which groups of students are not learning. Third, information on the quality of education systems should also be included as part of the assessments.

### Leaving no one behind – how long will it take?

After 2015, unfinished business will remain across the six EFA goals, while new priorities are likely to emerge. Analysis of the time it will take to achieve universal primary and lower secondary school completion and youth literacy paints a worrying picture.

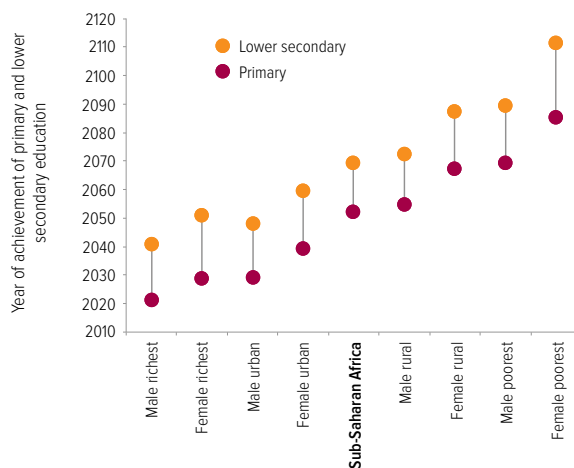
While rich boys are expected to reach universal primary completion by 2030 in 56 of 74 low and middle income countries, poor girls will reach the goal by that date in only 7 countries, just one of which is low income. Even by 2060, poor girls will not have reached the goal in 24 of the 28 low income countries in the sample. In sub-Saharan Africa, if recent trends continue, the richest boys will achieve universal primary completion in 2021, but the poorest girls will not catch up until 2086 (Figure 8).

Spending time in primary school is no guarantee that a child will be able to read and write. Among 68 countries with data, the poorest young women are projected to achieve universal literacy only in 2072.

The situation is even more dire for lower secondary school completion. In 44 of the 74 countries

**In sub-Saharan Africa, the poorest girls will not achieve universal primary completion until 2086**

**Figure 8: The achievement of universal primary and lower secondary education lies well into the future for sub-Saharan Africa**  
 Projected year of achieving primary and lower secondary completion in excess of 97%, by population group, sub-Saharan Africa



Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations (2013), based on Lange (2013).

analysed, there is at least a 50-year gap between when all the richest boys complete lower secondary school and when all the poorest girls do so. And, if recent trends continue, girls from the poorest families in sub-Saharan Africa will only achieve this target in 2111, 64 years later than the boys from the richest families.

While these projections are extremely disconcerting, they are based on recent trends that can be changed if governments, aid donors and the international education community take concerted action to make education available to all, including the marginalized. The projections also show how vital it will be to track progress towards education goals for the most disadvantaged groups after 2015 and to put policies in place that maintain and accelerate progress by redressing imbalances.

### Monitoring global education targets after 2015

Since the six Education for All goals were adopted in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000, a lack of precise targets and indicators has prevented some education priorities from receiving the attention they deserve.

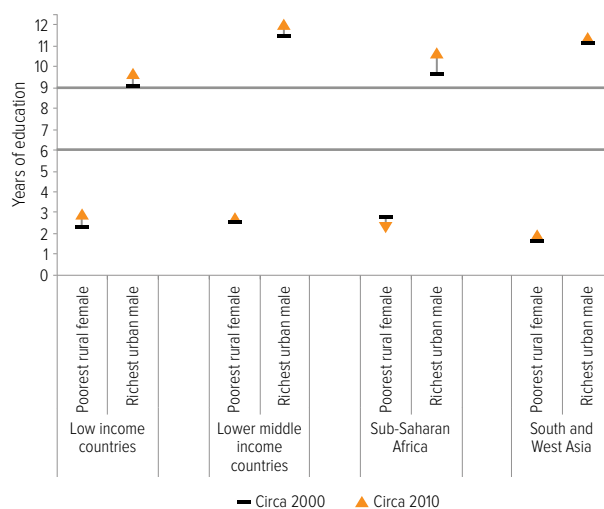
**By 2010, the poorest rural young women had spent less than 3 years in school**

The shape of new goals after 2015 should be guided by the principles of upholding education as a right, making sure all children have an equal chance of education and recognizing the learning stages at each phase of a person's life. There should be one core set of goals aligned with the global development agenda, accompanied by a more detailed set of targets that make up a post-2015 Education for All framework. Each goal must be clear and measurable, with the aim of ensuring that no one is left behind. To achieve this, progress should be tracked by the achievements of the lowest performing groups, making sure the gap between them and the better-off is narrowing.

The number of years young people spend in school is one measure of overall progress in access to education. To achieve a goal of universal lower secondary completion by 2030, young people will need to stay in school about nine years. By 2010, the richest urban young men had already spent more than 9.5 years in school in low income countries, on average, and more than 12 years in lower middle income countries. But the poorest young women in rural areas had spent less than 3 years in school in both low and lower middle income countries,

**Figure 9: Inequality in educational attainment remained unchanged over the last decade**

Years of education, 20- to 24-year-olds, circa 2000 and 2010



Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report team analysis (2013), based on Demographic and Health Surveys and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys.

leaving them well below the 6-year target that is associated with universal primary completion, which is supposed to be achieved by 2015 (Figure 9). In sub-Saharan Africa, the gap between the time the poorest rural females and the richest urban males spent in school actually widened between 2000 and 2010, from 6.9 years to 8.3 years.

Over the past decade there has been more progress in getting children into primary school than in ensuring that children complete primary or lower secondary education. And extreme inequality persists and in some cases has widened. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, almost all the richest boys in urban areas were entering school in 2000. By the end of the decade, their primary school completion rate had reached 87%, and their lower secondary school completion rate 70%. By contrast, among the poorest girls in rural areas, 49% were entering school at the beginning of the decade and 61% by the end of the decade. Only 25% were completing primary education and 11% lower secondary education in 2000; furthermore, these rates had fallen by the end of the decade to 23% and 9%, respectively. Inequality in South and West Asia is also wide and largely unchanged: by the end of the decade, while 89% of the richest urban males completed lower secondary school, only 13% of the poorest rural girls did so.



A goal on learning is an indispensable part of a future global education monitoring framework, but focusing only on learning assessments can be misleading if large numbers of children never make it to the grade where skills are tested. In the United Republic of Tanzania, for example, the proportion of children in grade 6 who achieved a minimum standard in reading in 2007 ranged from 80% of the poorest rural girls to 97% of the richest urban boys. However, while 92% of the richest urban boys of grade 6 age had reached that grade, only 40% of the poorest rural girls had done so. If it is assumed that children who did not reach grade 6 could not have achieved the minimum standard, then the proportions among children of that cohort who learned the basics were 90% for the richest urban boys and 32% for the poorest rural girls.

To make sure inequality is overcome by 2030, country plans need to include specific targets so that education participation and learning can be monitored for individual population groups. Very few currently do so. Gender is the disadvantage most frequently covered in education plans, yet only 24 of 53 country plans reviewed for this report included gender equality targets in primary and lower secondary education.

Four plans included indicators on participation of particular ethnic groups. Only three specifically

targeted disparity in access between rural and urban areas in primary and lower secondary education. Moreover, only three plans had an enrolment indicator that differentiated between poorer and richer children. Bangladesh's plan included a monitoring framework for tracking progress in enrolment ratios across wealth quintiles, and Namibia's included a target of making sure 80% of orphans and other vulnerable children in each region were enrolled in primary and secondary education by the final year of the plan.

Even fewer countries plan to monitor inequality in learning outcomes. Only 8 of the 53 countries did so at the primary level and 8 at the lower secondary level, and in most cases monitoring was restricted to gender inequality. Sri Lanka is one exception, with targets for achievement scores in mathematics and native language in the lowest performing regions.

The failure over the past decade to assess progress in education goals by various population subgroups has concealed wide inequality. Its invisibility is further reflected in country plans' lack of national targets for assessing progress in narrowing gaps in access or learning. Post-2015 goals need to include a commitment to making sure the most disadvantaged groups achieve benchmarks set for goals. Failure to do so could mean that measurement of progress continues to mask the fact that the most advantaged benefit the most.

**Only 8 of 53 countries plan to monitor inequality in learning**

# Monitoring progress on financing Education for All

**Of 150 countries, only 41 spent 6% or more of GNP on education in 2011**

Insufficient financing is one of the main obstacles to achieving Education for All. The finance gap to achieve good quality basic education for all by 2015 has reached US\$26 billion, putting the goal of getting every child into school far out of reach. Unfortunately, donors seem more likely to reduce their aid than increase it in coming years. Unless urgent action is taken to change aid patterns, the goal of ensuring that every child is in school and learning by 2015 will be seriously jeopardized.

With little time left before 2015, closing the financing gap might seem impossible. But analysis in this Report shows that the gap could be filled by raising more domestic revenue, devoting an adequate share of existing and projected government resources to education and sharpening the focus of external assistance.

If, as expected, new education goals after 2015 extend to lower secondary education, the finance gap will rise to US\$38 billion. The post-2015 framework must include explicit financing targets, demanding full transparency, so that all donors are accountable for their commitments, and finance gaps do not thwart our promises to children.

## **Many countries far from EFA need to spend more on education**

Domestic spending on education has increased in recent years, particularly in low and lower middle income countries, partly because of improvements in economic growth. Government spending on education increased from 4.6% to 5.1% of gross national product (GNP) between 1999 and 2011, on average. In low and middle income countries it rose faster: 30 of these countries increased their spending on education by one percentage point of GNP or more between 1999 and 2011.

The Dakar Framework for Action did not establish how much countries should commit to education. The failure to set a common financing target for the EFA goals should be addressed after 2015, with a specific goal set: that countries should

allocate at least 6% of GNP to education. Of the 150 countries with data, only 41 spent 6% or more of GNP on education in 2011, and 25 countries dedicated less than 3%.

It is widely accepted that countries should allocate at least 20% of their budget to education. Yet the global average in 2011 was only 15%, a proportion that has hardly changed since 1999. Of the 138 countries with data, only 25 spent more than 20% in 2011, while at least 6 low and middle income countries decreased their education expenditure as a share of total government expenditure by 5 percentage points or more between 1999 and 2011.

This situation is not expected to improve in coming years. Of 49 countries with data in 2012, 25 planned to shrink their education budget between 2011 and 2012. Of these, 16 were in sub-Saharan Africa. However, some countries, including Afghanistan, Benin and Ethiopia, are resisting this negative trend and are expected to increase their education budgets.

To tap into the potential for economic growth in many of the world's poorest countries, governments need to expand their tax base and devote a fifth of their budget to education. If governments in 67 low and middle income countries did this, they could raise an additional US\$153 billion for education in 2015. That would increase the average share of GDP spent on education from 3% to 6% by 2015.

Few poor countries manage to raise 20% of their GDP in taxes, as needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Only 7 of the 67 countries with data both generate 20% of GDP in taxes and allocate the recommended 20% of the revenue to education. In Pakistan, tax revenue is just 10% of GDP and education receives only around 10% of government expenditure. If the government increased its tax revenue to 14% of GDP by 2015 and allocated one-fifth of this to education, it could raise sufficient funds to get all of Pakistan's children and adolescents into school.

Ethiopia is one of 11 among the 67 countries that have been successful in prioritizing education in the government budget but could do far more to maximize revenue from taxation. In 2011, the government received 12% of GDP from taxes, on average. If the proportion were to increase to 16% by 2015, the sector would receive 18% more resources – enabling US\$19 more to be spent per primary school age child.

Tax revenue as a share of GDP is, however, growing far too slowly in poorer countries. At present rates, only 4 of the 48 countries currently raising less than 20% of GDP in tax would reach the 20% threshold by 2015.

A well-functioning taxation system enables governments to support their education system with domestic finance. Some middle income countries, such as Egypt, India and the Philippines, have far greater potential to mobilize domestic resources for education through improved taxes. Higher levels of tax revenue in Brazil help explain how it spends ten times as much as India per primary school child.

Some countries in South Asia grant large tax exemptions to strong domestic interest groups, resulting in some of the lowest tax-to-GDP ratios in the world. In Pakistan, the tax/GDP ratio of 10% can be partly explained by the political influence of the agricultural lobby. While the agricultural sector makes up 22.5% of Pakistan's GDP, its share in tax revenue is just 1.2%. In India, the majority of tax revenue forgone is due to exemptions from custom and excise duties. The revenue lost to exemptions came to the equivalent of 5.7% of GDP in 2012/13. If 20% of this had been earmarked for education, the sector would have received an additional US\$22.5 billion in 2013, increasing funding by almost 40% compared with the current education budget.

Some governments sell concessions to exploit natural resources for less than their true value. The Democratic Republic of the Congo lost US\$1.36 billion from deals with mining companies over three years in 2010 to 2012, equal to the amount allocated to education over two years in 2010 and 2011.

For many of the world's poorest countries, tax evasion results in the elite building personal fortunes, rather than strong education systems for the majority. If the trillions of dollars estimated to be hidden away in tax havens were subject to capital gains tax, and 20% of the resulting income was

allocated to education, it would add between US\$38 billion and US\$56 billion to funding for the sector.

Illegal tax practices cost African governments an estimated US\$63 billion a year. If these practices were halted and 20% of the resulting income spent on education, it would raise an additional US\$13 billion for the sector each year.

While governments must lead the drive to reform taxation, donors can play an important complementary role. Just US\$1 of donor aid to strengthen tax regimes, for example, can generate up to US\$350 in tax revenue. Yet less than 0.1% of total aid was spent supporting tax programmes between 2002 and 2011. In addition, donor country governments should demand transparency from corporations registered in their countries.

Increasing tax revenue and allocating an adequate share to education could raise considerable extra resources for the sector in a short time. The EFA Global Monitoring Report team estimates that 67 low and middle income countries could increase education resources by US\$153 billion, or 72%, by 2015 through reforms to raise tax/GDP ratios and public expenditure on education.

**67 countries could increase education resources by US\$153 billion through reforms to expand the tax base**



© Eduardo Martino/UNESCO

**Reforms to expand domestic resources could meet 56% of the annual financing gap in basic education**

On average across the 67 countries, spending per primary school age child would increase from US\$209 to US\$466 in 2015. In the low income countries among the 67, the average amount spent per primary school age child would increase from US\$102 to US\$158.

Fourteen of these 67 countries have already reached the proposed target of spending at least 6% of GDP on education. Of the 53 yet to reach the target, 19 could achieve it if they expanded and diversified the tax base and prioritized education spending by 2015 (Figure 10).

These additions to domestic resources could meet 56% of the US\$26 billion average annual financing gap in basic education for 46 low and lower middle income countries, or 54% of the US\$38 billion gap in basic and lower secondary education.

Such reforms are not without precedent. Ecuador renegotiated contracts with oil companies, widened its tax base and made education a higher priority, tripling its education expenditure between 2003 and 2010.

To achieve Education for All, it is necessary not only to increase domestic resources for education but also to redistribute these resources so that a fair share reaches those most in need. More often, however, resources are skewed towards the most privileged. To shift education spending in favour of the marginalized, many governments have introduced funding mechanisms that allocate more resources to parts of the country

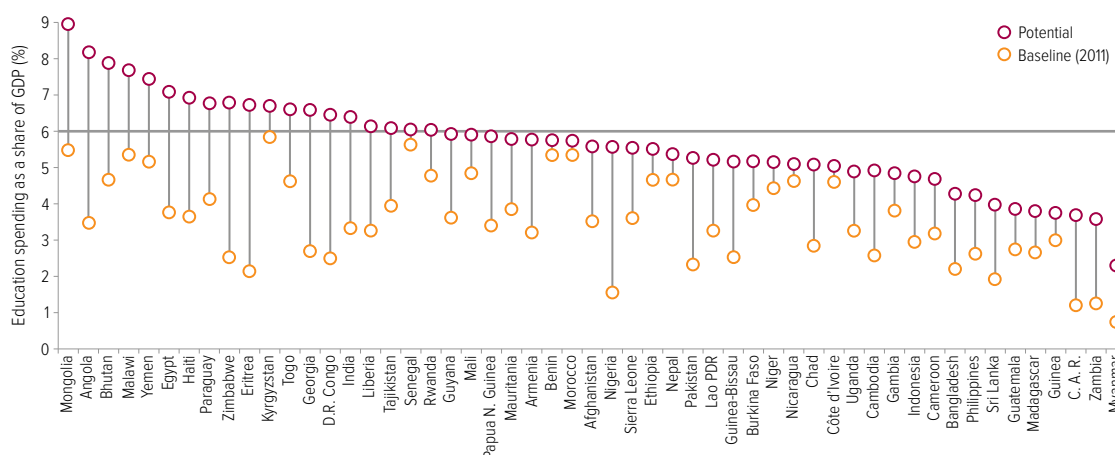
or groups of schools that need greater support to overcome educational deprivation and inequality. Countries have different methods of redistributing resources. Brazil, for example, guarantees a certain minimum spending level per pupil, giving priority to schools in rural areas, with greater weight on highly marginalized indigenous groups. The reforms have led to improvement in enrolment and learning in the disadvantaged north of the country.

Other redistribution programmes have been less successful, however. One reason is that allocations per child still do not adequately reflect the costs of delivering quality education to the marginalized. In one of India's wealthier states, Kerala, education spending per pupil was about US\$685. By contrast, in the poorer state of Bihar it was just US\$100.

Poorer countries can find it difficult to identify and target the groups most in need. As a result, many base allocations on enrolment figures, to the detriment of areas where large numbers of children are out of school. In Kenya, for example, the capitation grant is distributed on the basis of number of students enrolled, a disadvantage for the 12 counties in the arid and semi-arid areas that are home to 46% of the out-of-school population.

To realize the full potential of redistributive measures, governments need to ensure that such resources cover the entire cost of a quality education for the most vulnerable and that far-reaching reforms strengthen education systems' capacity to implement such measures.

**Figure 10: Modest increases in tax effort and prioritizing education spending could significantly increase resources**  
Expenditure on education as percentage of GDP in 2015 if the tax/GDP ratio grew and the budget share of education increased



Sources: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations (2013), based on UIS database; Development Finance International and Oxfam (2013); IMF (2012, 2013).

### Trends in aid to education

With improvement in the numbers of children out of school stagnating, a final push is needed to ensure that all children are in school by 2015. Even before the economic downturn, donors were off track to fulfil their education finance promises. A more recent decline in aid to basic education increases the difficulty of this task.

While aid to education rose steadily after 2002, it peaked in 2010 and is now falling: total aid to all levels of education declined by 7% between 2010 and 2011 (Figure 11). Aid to basic education fell for the first time since 2002, by 6%: from US\$6.2 billion in 2010 to US\$5.8 billion in 2011. Aid to secondary education declined by 11% between 2010 and 2011 from an already low level. This puts at risk the chance of meeting Education for All goals and any hope of more ambitious goals to include universal lower secondary education after 2015.

Low income countries, which only receive around one-third of aid to basic education, witnessed a larger decrease in aid to basic education than middle income countries. Aid fell by 9% in low income countries between 2010 and 2011, from US\$2.05 billion to US\$1.86 billion. As a result, the resources available per child dropped from US\$18 in 2010 to US\$16 in 2011.

In sub-Saharan Africa, home to over half the world's out-of-school population, aid to basic education declined by 7% between 2010 and 2011. The US\$134 million reduction in basic education aid to the region would have been enough to fund good quality school places for over 1 million children.

In some countries, aid has been falling for more than a year. Aid has played a key part in supporting efforts to get more children into school in the United Republic of Tanzania, but it fell by 12% between 2009 and 2010 and by a further 57% in 2011.

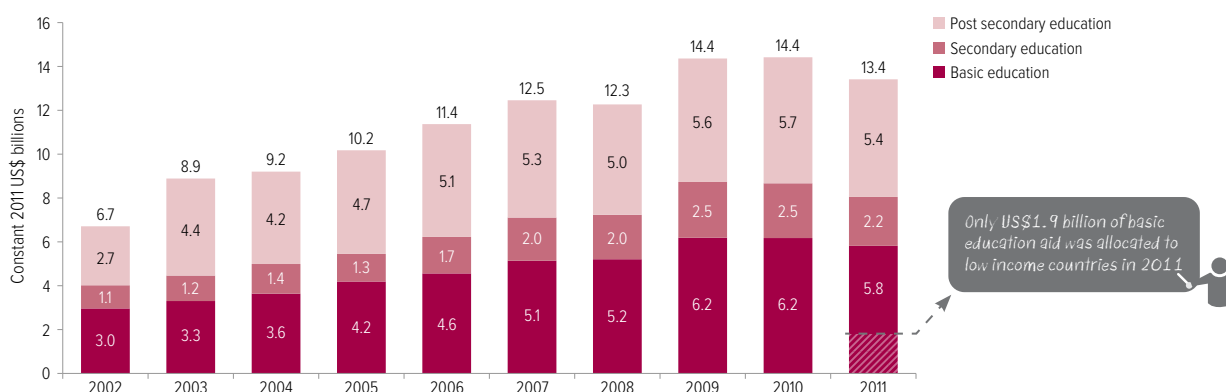
The world's poorest children, who are the most likely to be out of school, live not only in low income countries but also in some lower middle income countries. Since 2000, 25 countries have graduated to this group, which now comprises 54 countries, while 36 are classified as low income. In 1999, 84% of the world's out-of-school children lived in low income countries and 12% in lower middle income countries; by 2011, 37% lived in low income countries and 49% in lower middle income countries. This shift was largely due to the graduation to lower middle income status of some large-population countries, such as India, Nigeria and Pakistan. While these countries could do far more to raise their own resources for education and distribute them to those most in need, such reforms will take time. In the meantime, donors should direct aid to the areas in lower middle income countries where poverty is concentrated to make sure another generation of children in these countries is not denied its right to education.

Direct aid to education fell slightly more than overall aid to other sectors between 2010 and 2011, and thus the share of aid to education declined from 12% to 11%. The fall in aid to education reflects the changing spending patterns of a large number of donors. Canada, France, the Netherlands and the United States, in particular, cut spending on education more than they reduced overall aid. Between 2010 and 2011, 21 bilateral and

**In 2011, aid to basic education fell for the first time since 2002**

**Figure 11: Aid to education fell by US\$1 billion between 2010 and 2011**

Total aid to education disbursements, 2002–2011



Source: OECD-DAC (2013).

**Education receives just 1.4% of humanitarian aid**

multilateral donors reduced their aid disbursements to basic education. The largest decreases in volume terms were by Canada, the European Union, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain and the United States, which together accounted for 90% of the reduction in aid to basic education.

The United States moved from being the largest bilateral donor to basic education in 2010 to second place in 2011. The United Kingdom is now the largest donor to education. The Netherlands' aid to basic education fell by over a third between 2010 and 2011; it had been the largest donor to basic education in 2007, but by 2011 was in 11th place.

Australia, the IMF and the World Bank increased their overall aid to basic education between 2010 and 2011 but reduced their spending in low income countries. World Bank aid to basic education increased by 13% overall, but fell by 23% in low income countries. The United Republic of Tanzania saw World Bank disbursements fall from US\$88 million in 2002 to less than US\$0.3 million in 2011.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is an important source of financing for some low income countries. In 2011, the GPE disbursed a record US\$385 million to basic education, making it the fourth largest donor to low and lower middle income countries that year. For the 31 countries with a programme implementation grant in 2011, 24% of basic education aid was disbursed by the GPE. It is unlikely, however, to have made up for the reduction in World Bank spending. The United Republic of Tanzania became a GPE partner in 2013 with a US\$5.2 million grant for its education plan. All this, however, is allocated to Zanzibar, and the amount is small compared with what the country received from the World Bank early in the 2000s. To improve monitoring of its contributions, the GPE needs to report its aid flows to the OECD-DAC, just as global health funds such as the GAVI Alliance and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria do.

There is no sign that overall aid will stop declining before the 2015 deadline. From 2011 to 2012, total aid decreased by 4%, with 16 DAC donors decreasing their aid: 13 DAC donors made aid a lower priority by decreasing aid as a proportion of gross national income (GNI). Less developed countries are expected to bear the brunt of these reductions, with cuts to their bilateral aid of 12.8%

from 2011 to 2012. In 2013, aid is expected to fall in 31 of 36 low income countries, the majority of which are in sub-Saharan Africa.

In addition, only five of the fifteen members of the European Union that agreed to increase their aid to 0.7% of GNI by 2015 are expected to meet their commitment. If these countries met their promises, they would raise US\$9 billion more for education in 2015.

Education in conflict-affected countries should be a priority for donors. These countries house half of the world's out-of-school children. Currently education receives just 1.4% of humanitarian aid, far from the 4% called for by the UN Secretary-General's Global Education First Initiative (Figure 12). In plans for 2013, education's share of overall humanitarian aid is likely to reach no more than 2%.

In Mali, where most schools in the north remained closed due to conflict, education made up 5% of appeal requests for 2013, but just 15% of the requested funds had been pledged by September 2013. Similarly, 36% of the resources requested in 2013 for education in Syria had actually been pledged. While these countries might receive more of the requested funds later in 2013, they would come too late for the millions of children who have had to drop out of school due to conflict.

It is not only the amount of aid that counts but also whether it is used to target the most disadvantaged. These children do not receive all the aid available, however: a quarter of direct aid to education is spent on students studying in universities in rich countries. Even though scholarships and imputed student costs may be vital to strengthen human resource capacity in low income countries, most of this funding actually goes to upper middle income countries, with China the largest recipient, receiving 21% of the total.

On average over 2010–2011, donors – primarily Germany and Japan – disbursed US\$656 million per year to China for scholarships and student imputed costs, which was 77 times the amount of aid disbursed to Chad for basic education over the same period. The total funding in the form of imputed student costs and scholarships received annually by Algeria, China, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey was equivalent to the total amount of direct aid to basic education for all 36 low income countries in 2010–2011, on average.



Aid can also be delivered on unfavourable terms for poorer countries: 15% of aid is in the form of loans that countries have to pay back at concessional interest rates. Without funding from bilateral donors, poorer countries risk becoming dependent on these loans, leading to debt that could restrict their ability to fund education from their own resources.

Removing imputed student costs, scholarships and loans, Germany would drop from being the largest donor in direct aid to education to being the fifth largest; the World Bank would fall from third to fourteenth place. The United Kingdom and United States, by contrast, would jump from sixth and seventh position to first and second.

Information on the whole spectrum of education financing – including aid, domestic resources and household spending – is often insufficient and fragmented, resulting in only partial analysis and diagnosis of how much money is needed and where. New analysis from seven countries shows that households bear up to 37% of education expenditure in primary education and up to 58% in secondary education, which places a particular burden on

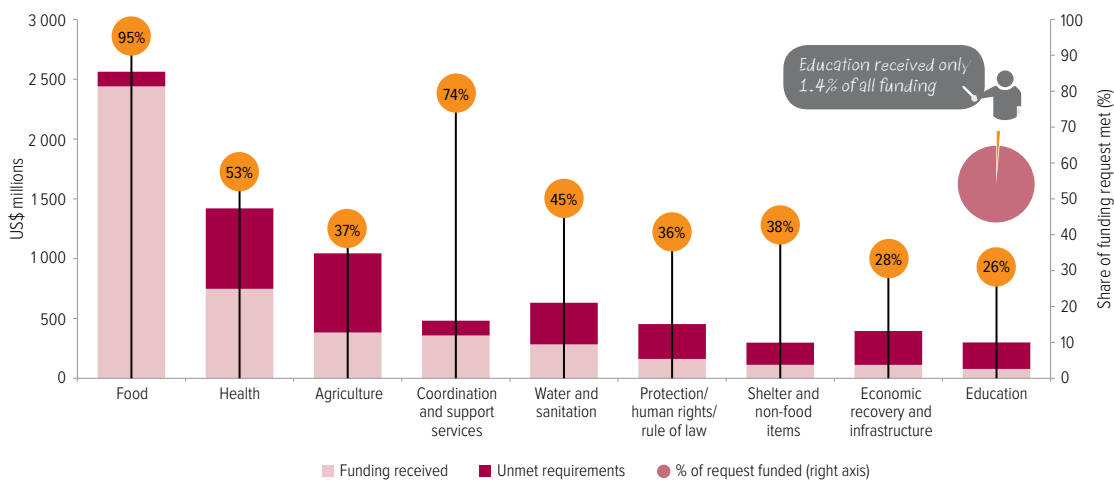
the poorest households. In addition, it shows how vital aid is to education financing in some of the poorest countries: it accounts for almost a quarter of education spending in Malawi and Rwanda. These findings highlight the importance of building a comprehensive national education accounts system, which could be modelled on the experience in health.

To avoid failing another generation of children due to lack of resources after 2015, national governments and aid donors need to be held to account for their commitments to provide the resources necessary to reach education goals. Drawing on analysis included in *EFA Global Monitoring Reports* over the years, the Report team proposes that a target should be set for national governments to allocate at least 6% of their GNP to education. Targets for governments and aid donors should also include commitments for them to spend at least 20% of their budgets on education. Setting these targets, and making sure governments and aid donors keep to them, will be an important contribution to the education opportunities of children and young people in the future.

**Financing targets after 2015 are needed to avoid failing another generation of children**

**Figure 12: Education’s double disadvantage in humanitarian aid: a small share of requests and the smallest share of requests that get funded**

Consolidated and flash appeal requests and funding by sector, 2012



Source: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2013).



# PART 2: Education transforms lives

**If all students left school with basic reading skills, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty**

Treaties and laws worldwide recognize that education is a fundamental human right. In addition, education imparts knowledge and skills that enable people to realize their full potential, and so it becomes a catalyst for the achievement of other development goals. Education reduces poverty, boosts job opportunities and fosters economic prosperity. It also increases people's chances of leading a healthy life, deepens the foundations of democracy, and changes attitudes to protect the environment and empower women.

Educating girls and women, in particular, has unmatched transformative power. As well as boosting their own chances of getting jobs, staying healthy and participating fully in society, educating girls and young women has a marked impact on the health of their children and accelerates their countries' transition to stable population growth.

To unlock the wider benefits of education and achieve development goals after 2015, it needs to be equitable and to extend at least to lower secondary school. And the schooling that children receive needs to be of good quality so that they actually learn the basics.

## **Education reduces poverty and boosts jobs and growth**

Education is a key way of helping individuals escape poverty and of preventing poverty from being passed down through the generations. It enables those in paid formal employment to earn higher wages and offers better livelihoods for those who work in agriculture and the urban informal sector.

EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations show that if all students in low income countries left school with basic reading skills, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty, which would be equivalent to a 12% cut in world poverty. An

important way education reduces poverty is by increasing people's income. Globally, one year of school increases earnings by 10%, on average.

Education can help people escape from working poverty. In the United Republic of Tanzania, 82% of workers who had less than primary education were below the poverty line. But working adults with primary education were 20% less likely to be poor, while secondary education reduced the chances of being poor by almost 60%. It is not just time in school, but skills acquired that count. In Pakistan, working women with good literacy skills earned 95% more than women with weak literacy skills.

In the formal sector, higher wages reflect the higher productivity of more educated workers. But many of the poorest are involved in informal sector work, running small businesses. Educated people are more likely to start a business, and their businesses are likely to be more profitable. In Uganda, owners of household enterprises with a primary education earned 36% more than those with no education; those with a lower secondary education earned 56% more.

In rural areas, farmers with good literacy and numeracy skills can interpret and respond to new information, making better use of modern inputs and technologies to increase the productivity of traditional crops and diversify into higher value crops. In Mozambique, literate farmers were 26 percentage points more likely than non-literate ones to cultivate cash crops.

Education also helps people in rural areas diversify their income by involvement in off-farm work. In rural Indonesia, 15% of men and 17% of women with no education were employed in non-farm work, compared with 61% of men and 72% of women with secondary education.

One of the benefits of increased education is that educated parents are likely to have more educated children. Analysis of household surveys from 56 countries finds that, for each additional year of the mother's education, the average child attains an extra 0.32 years, and for girls the benefit is slightly larger.

By benefiting women in particular, education can help narrow gender gaps in work opportunities and pay. In Argentina and Jordan, for instance, among people with primary education, women earned around half the average wage of men, while among those with secondary education, women earned around two-thirds as much as men.

Education helps protect working adults from exploitation by increasing their opportunities to obtain secure contracts. In urban El Salvador, only 7% of working adults with less than primary education had an employment contract, compared with 49% of those with secondary education.

Education not only facilitates individuals' escape from poverty, but also generates productivity that fuels economic growth. A one-year increase in the average educational attainment of a country's population increases annual per capita GDP growth from 2% to 2.5%.

Education can help explain differences in regional growth trajectories. In 1965, adults in East Asia and the Pacific had spent 2.7 more years in school than those in sub-Saharan Africa. Over the next 45 years, the average growth rate was more than four times faster in East Asia and the Pacific.

Comparing experiences within regions further illustrates the importance of education. In Guatemala, adults had 3.6 years of schooling, on average, in 2005 and the average level increased by only 2.3 years from 1965 to 2005. If the country had matched the average for Latin America and the Caribbean, where the average number of years that adults spent at school rose from 3.6 in 1965 to 7.5 in 2005, it could have more than doubled its average annual growth rate between 2005 and 2010, equivalent to an additional US\$500 per person.

Only by investing in equitable education – making sure that the poorest complete more years in school – can countries achieve the kind of growth that banishes poverty. Equality in education can be

measured by the Gini coefficient, which ranges from zero, indicating perfect equality, to one, indicating maximum inequality. An improvement in the Gini coefficient by 0.1 accelerates growth by half a percentage point, increasing income per capita by 23% over 40 years. If sub-Saharan Africa's education Gini coefficient of 0.49 had been halved to the level in Latin America and the Caribbean, the annual growth rate in GDP per capita over 2005–2010 could have risen by 47% (from 2.4% to 3.5%) and income could have grown by US\$82 per capita over the period.

Comparing Pakistan and Viet Nam illustrates starkly the importance of equitable education. In 2005, the average number of years adults had spent at school was similar: 4.5 in Pakistan and 4.9 in Viet Nam. Education levels, however, were very unequally distributed in Pakistan: Pakistan's Gini coefficient for education inequality was more than double the level in Viet Nam. The difference in education inequality between the countries accounts for 60% of the difference in their per capita growth between 2005 and 2010. Viet Nam's per capita income, which was around 40% below Pakistan's in the 1990s, not only caught up with Pakistan's but was 20% higher by 2010.

**For each additional year of mothers' education, a child spends an extra 0.32 years in school**



© Karel Prinsloo/ARETE/UNESCO

## Education improves people's chances of a healthier life

Education is one of the most powerful ways of improving people's health. It saves the lives of millions of mothers and children, helps prevent and contain disease, and is an essential element of efforts to reduce malnutrition. Educated people are better informed about diseases, take preventative measures, recognize signs of illness early and tend to use health care services more often. Despite its benefits, education is often neglected as a vital health intervention in itself and as a means of making other health interventions more effective.

**If all women completed primary education, there would be 66% fewer maternal deaths**

There are few more dramatic illustrations of the power of education than the estimate that the lives of 2.1 million children under 5 were saved between 1990 and 2009 because of improvements in the education of women of reproductive age. However, the challenge remaining is enormous. In 2012, 6.6 million children under 5 died, most of them in low and lower middle income countries. If all women completed primary education in these countries, the under-5 mortality rate would fall by 15%. If all women completed secondary education, it would fall by 49%, equal to around 2.8 million lives a year (Infographic: Saving Children's Lives).

Around 40% of all under-5 deaths occur within the first 28 days of life, the majority being due to complications during delivery. Yet the most recent estimates suggest there were no skilled birth attendants present in over half the births in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Across 57 low and middle income countries, a literate mother was 23% more likely to have a skilled attendant at birth than an illiterate mother. In Mali, maternal literacy more than tripled this likelihood.

Educated mothers are better informed about specific diseases, so they can take measures to prevent them. Pneumonia is the largest cause of child deaths, accounting for 17% of the total worldwide. One additional year of maternal education can lead to a 14% decrease in the pneumonia death rate – equivalent to 160,000 child lives saved every year. Diarrhoea is the fourth biggest child killer, accounting for 9% of child deaths. If all women completed primary education, the incidence of diarrhoea would fall by 8% in low and lower middle income countries; with secondary education, it would fall by 30%. The probability of a

child being immunized against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough would increase by 10% if all women in low and lower middle income countries completed primary education, and by 43% if they completed secondary education.

A mother's education is just as crucial for her own health as it is for her offspring's. Every day, almost 800 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. If all women completed primary education, there would be 66% fewer maternal deaths, saving 189,000 lives per year. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, if all women completed primary education, there would be 70% fewer maternal deaths, saving 113,400 women's lives.

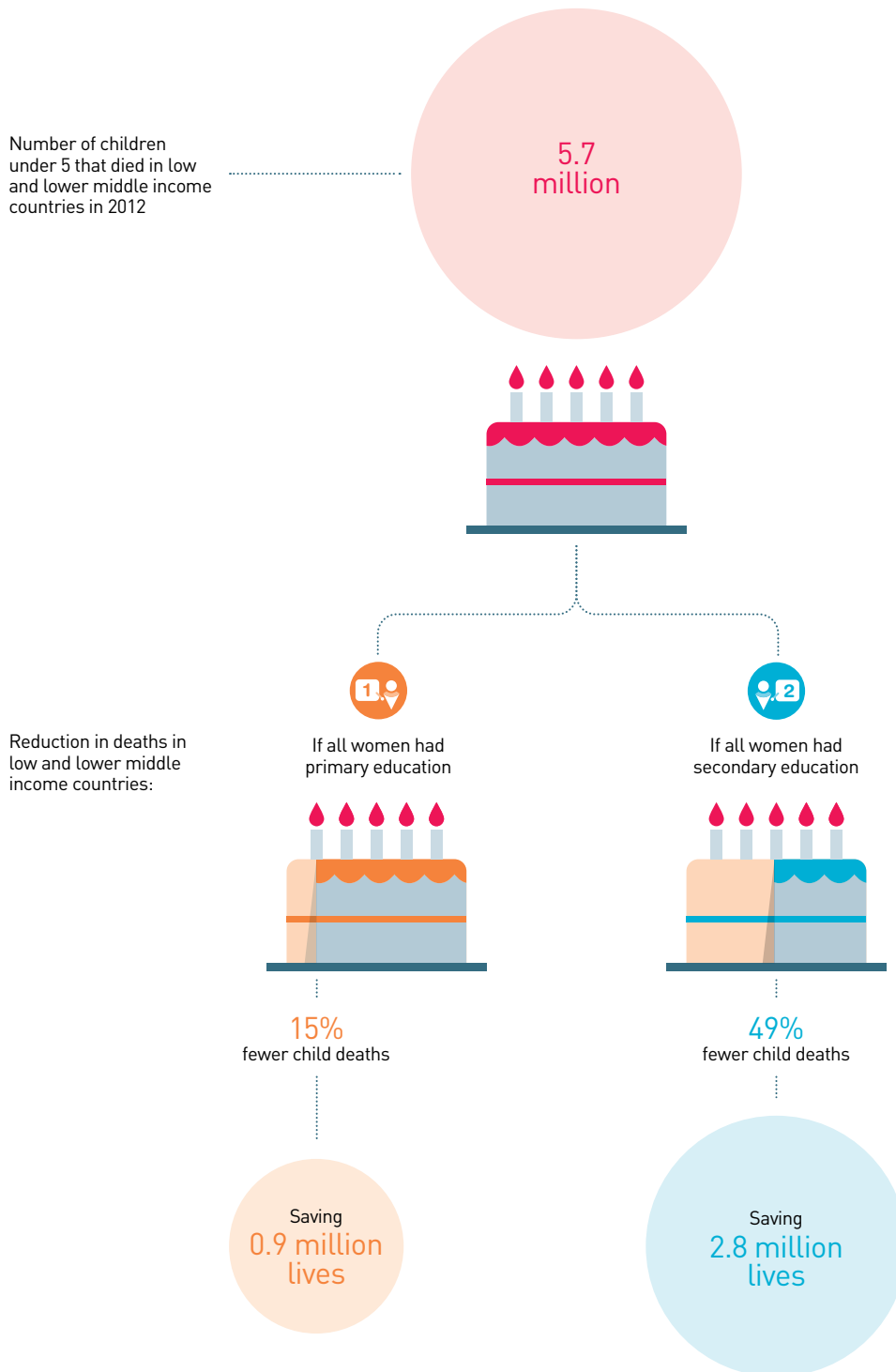
Some countries have seen considerable gains. Thanks to education reforms in the 1970s, the average amount of schooling young women received increased by 2.2 years in Nigeria. This accounted for a 29% reduction in the maternal mortality rate.

Improving education is a powerful way to help reduce the incidence of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Education helps increase awareness about HIV prevention, for example. In South and West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, literate women were as much as 30 percentage points more likely than those who were not literate to be aware that they had the right to refuse sex or request condom use if they knew that their partner had a sexually transmitted disease. Knowing where to get tested for HIV is a first step to receiving treatment if needed. But only 52% of women who were not literate in sub-Saharan Africa knew where to get tested for HIV, compared with 85% of the literate.

Malaria is one of the world's deadliest diseases, killing one child every minute in Africa. Improved access to education is crucial in ensuring the effectiveness of preventative measures, such as the use of drugs or bed nets treated with insecticide. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where a fifth of the world's malaria-related deaths occur, the education of the household head or the mother increased the probability that the family slept under a bed net. Such changes result in fewer infections, especially in areas of high transmission risk. In these areas, the odds of children having malaria parasites were 22% lower if their mothers had primary education than if they had no education, or 36% less if they had secondary education.

# SAVING CHILDREN'S LIVES

A higher level of education reduces preventable child deaths



Sources: Gakidou (2013); Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (2013).



© Amina Sayeed/UNESCO

**Providing all women in poor countries with secondary education would reduce stunting by 26%**

Education – especially education that empowers women – is key to tackling malnutrition, the underlying cause of more than 45% of child deaths. Educated mothers are more likely to know about appropriate health and hygiene practices at home, and have more power to ensure that household resources are allocated so as to meet children's nutrition needs. In low and lower middle income countries, providing all women with a primary education would reduce stunting – a robust indicator of malnutrition – by 4%, or 1.7 million children; providing a secondary education would reduce stunting by 26%, or 11.9 million children.

By age 1, adverse effects of malnutrition on life prospects are likely to be irreversible. Infants in Peru whose mothers had reached lower secondary education were 60% less likely to be stunted than children whose mothers had no education.

### **Education promotes healthy societies**

Education helps people understand democracy, promotes the tolerance and trust that underpin it, and motivates people to participate in politics. Education also has a vital role in preventing environmental degradation and limiting the causes and effects of climate change. And it can empower women to overcome discrimination and assert their rights.

Education improves people's understanding of politics and how to participate in it. Across 12 sub-Saharan African countries, 63% of individuals without formal schooling had an understanding of democracy, compared with 71% of those with primary education and 85% of those with secondary. People with higher levels of education are more interested in politics and



so more likely to seek information. In Turkey, for example, the share of those who said they were interested in politics rose from 40% among those with primary education to 52% among those with secondary education.

Education increases people's support for democracy, particularly where there have been recent democratic transitions. Across 18 sub-Saharan African countries, those of voting age with primary education were 1.5 times more likely to express support for democracy than those with no education, and twice as likely if they had completed secondary education.

Educated people are more likely to vote. In 14 Latin American countries, turnout was five percentage points higher for those with primary education and nine percentage points higher for individuals with secondary education compared to those with no education. The effect was larger in countries where average levels of education were lower, such as El Salvador, Guatemala and Paraguay. Education also encourages other forms of political participation. In Argentina, China and Turkey, citizens were twice as likely to sign a petition or boycott products if they had secondary education than if they just had primary education.

Education has an indispensable role in strengthening the bonds that hold communities and societies together. In Latin America, people with secondary education were 47% less likely than those with primary education to express intolerance for people of a different race. In the Arab States, people with secondary education were 14% less likely than those with only primary education to express intolerance towards people of a different religion. In sub-Saharan Africa, people with primary education were 10% less likely to express intolerance towards people with HIV and 23% less likely if they had a secondary education. In Central and Eastern Europe, those with secondary education were 16% less likely than those who had not completed secondary education to express intolerance towards immigrants.

Education also helps overcome gender biases in political behaviour to deepen democracy. In India, reducing the gender literacy gap by 40% increased the probability of women standing for state assembly election by 16% and the share of votes that they received by 13%.

Education lowers tolerance towards corruption and helps build accountability. In 31 countries, those with secondary education were one-sixth more likely than average to complain about deficient government services.

Increasing access to school for all generally reduces feelings of injustice in society that have fuelled many conflicts. But it needs to increase equally for all population groups; otherwise, perceived unfairness can reinforce disillusionment. In 55 low and middle income countries where the level of educational inequality doubled, the probability of conflict more than doubled, from 3.8% to 9.5%.

By improving knowledge, instilling values, fostering beliefs and shifting attitudes, education has considerable potential to change environmentally harmful lifestyles and behaviour. A key way in which education can increase environmental awareness and concern is by improving understanding of the science behind climate change and other environmental issues. Students with higher science scores across 57 countries reported being more aware of complex environmental issues. Similarly, across 29 mostly high income countries, 25% of people with less than secondary education expressed concern for the environment, compared with 37% of people with secondary education and 46% of people with tertiary education.

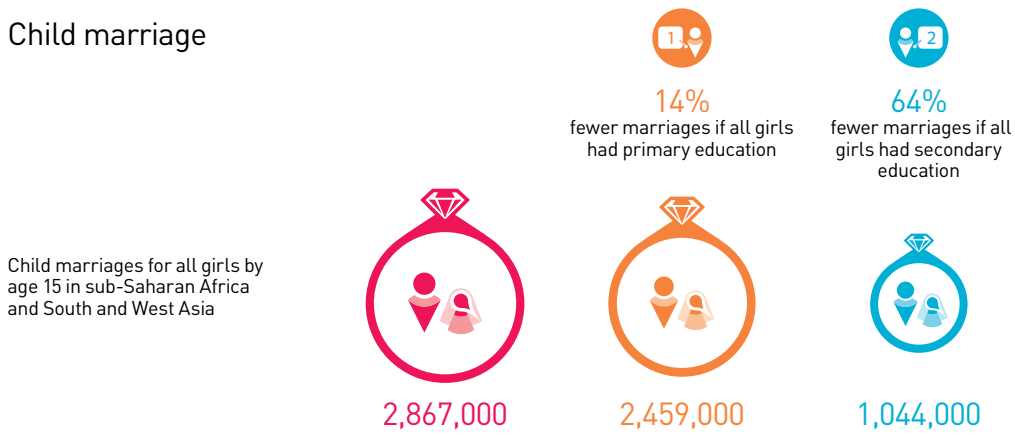
Education is also critical for helping people adapt to the consequences of climate change, especially in poorer countries, where threats to livelihoods are being felt most strongly by farmers dependent on rain-fed agriculture. In Ethiopia, six years of education increased by 20% the chance that a

**In Argentina, China and Turkey, citizens are twice as likely to sign a petition if they have secondary education**

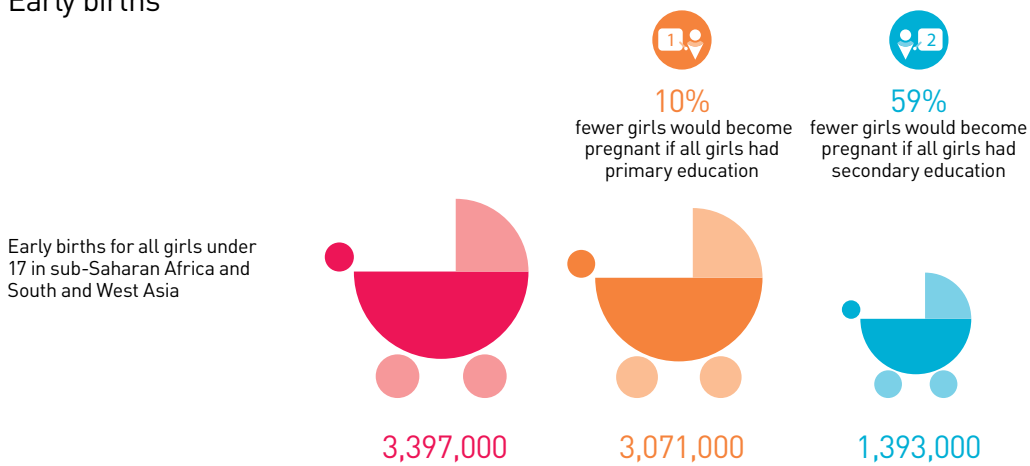
# LEARNING LESSENS EARLY MARRIAGES AND BIRTHS

Women with higher levels of education are less likely to get married or have children at an early age

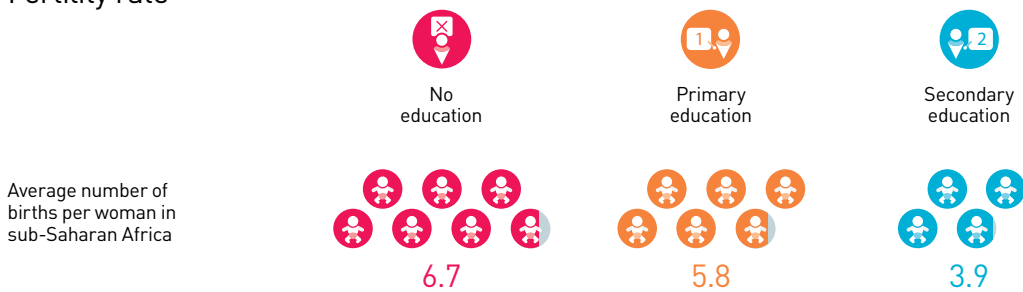
## Child marriage



## Early births



## Fertility rate\*



\*Fertility rate is the average number of children that would be born to a woman over her lifetime

Sources: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations (2013), based on Demographic and Health Surveys; UNPD (2011).



farmer would adapt to climate change through techniques such as practising soil conservation, varying planting dates and changing crop varieties.

Education can empower women to claim their rights and overcome barriers that prevent them from getting a fair share of the fruits of overall progress. Having the freedom to choose one's spouse is one such right. Women in India with at least secondary education were 30 percentage points more likely to have a say over their choice of spouse than their less educated peers.

Likewise, ensuring that girls stay in school is one of the most effective ways to prevent child marriage. If all girls completed primary school in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, the number of girls getting married by age 15 would fall by 14%; with secondary education, 64% fewer girls would get married (Infographic: Learning Lessens Early Marriages and Births).

Staying in school longer also gives girls more confidence to make choices that avert the health risks of early births and births in quick succession. Currently one in seven girls have children before age 17 in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia. In these regions, 10% fewer girls would become pregnant if they all had primary education, and 59% fewer would if they all had secondary education. This would result in around 2 million fewer early births.

Women with more education tend to have fewer children, which benefits them, their families and society more generally. One reason for this is because education allows women to have a greater influence on family size. In Pakistan, only 30% of women with no education believe they have a say over how many children they have, compared with 52% of women with primary education and 63% of those with lower secondary education.

In some regions, education has been a key factor in bringing forward the demographic transition. Other parts of the world are lagging, however, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, where women average 5.4 live births. In the region, women with no education have 6.7 births. The figure falls to 5.8 for those with primary education and more than halves, to 3.9, for those with secondary education.

### Conclusion

The striking evidence laid out in this chapter demonstrates not only education's capacity to accelerate progress towards other development goals, but also how best to tap that potential, most of all by making sure that access to good quality education is available to all, regardless of their circumstances. Education's unique power should secure it a central place in the post-2015 development framework, and in the plans of policy-makers in poor and rich countries alike.

**Education's power to transform lives should secure it a central place in the post-2015 framework**



# PART 3: Supporting teachers to end the learning crisis

A lack of attention to education quality and a failure to reach the marginalized have contributed to a learning crisis that needs urgent attention. Worldwide, 250 million children – many of them from disadvantaged backgrounds – are not learning even basic literacy and numeracy skills, let alone the further skills they need to get decent work and lead fulfilling lives.

To solve the learning crisis, all children must have teachers who are trained, motivated and enjoy teaching, who can identify and support weak learners, and who are backed by well-managed education systems.

As this Report shows, governments can increase access while also making sure that learning

improves for all. Adequately funded national education plans that aim explicitly to meet the needs of the disadvantaged and that ensure equitable access to well-trained teachers must be a policy priority. Attracting and retaining the best teachers as a means to end the learning crisis requires a delicate juggling act on the part of policy-makers (see illustration).

To ensure that all children are learning, teachers also need the support of an appropriate curriculum and assessment system that pays particular attention to the needs of children in early grades, when the most vulnerable are in danger of dropping out. Beyond teaching the basics, teachers must help children gain important transferable skills to help them become responsible global citizens.



### The learning crisis hits the disadvantaged hardest

Despite impressive gains in access to education over the past decade, improvements in quality have not always kept pace. Many countries are not ensuring that their children achieve even the most basic skills in reading and mathematics. The disadvantaged are the most likely to suffer because of insufficient numbers of trained teachers, overstretched infrastructure and inadequate materials. Yet it is possible for countries to extend access to school while also improving equitable learning.

### *The global learning crisis: action is urgent*

Of the world's 650 million primary school age children, at least 250 million are not learning the basics in reading and mathematics. Of these, almost 120 million have little or no experience of primary school, having not even reached grade 4. The remaining 130 million are in primary school but have not achieved the minimum benchmarks for learning. Often unable to understand a simple

sentence, these children are ill equipped to make the transition to secondary education.

There is a vast divide between regions in learning achievement. In North America and Western Europe, 96% of children stay in school until grade 4 and achieve the minimum reading standards, compared with only one-third of children in South and West Asia and two-fifths in sub-Saharan Africa (Figure 13). These two regions account for more than three-quarters of those not crossing the minimum learning threshold.

The learning crisis is extensive. New analysis shows that less than half of children are learning the basics in 21 out of the 85 countries with full data available. Of these, 17 are in sub-Saharan Africa; the others are India, Mauritania, Morocco and Pakistan.

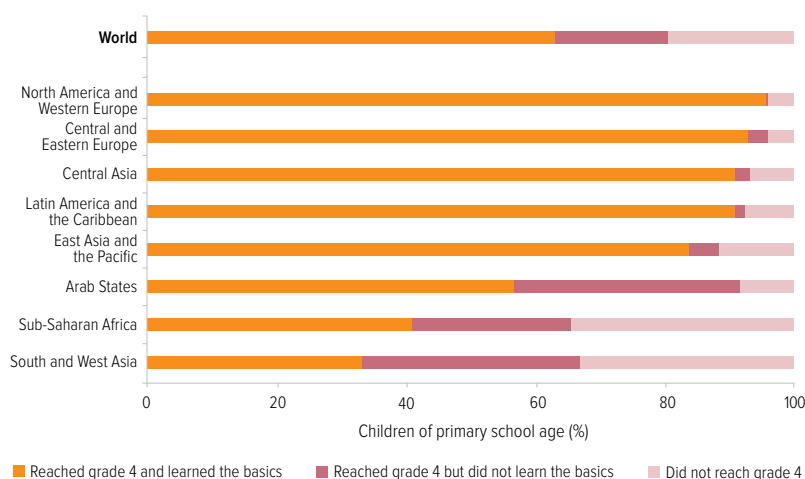
This learning crisis has costs not only for the future ambitions of children, but also for the current finances of governments. The cost of 250 million children not learning the basics is equivalent to US\$129 billion, or 10% of global spending on primary education.

**The cost of 250 million children not learning the basics is equivalent to US\$129 billion**



© Nguyen Thanh Tuan/UNESCO

**Figure 13: 250 million children are failing to learn the basics in reading**  
Percentage of children of primary school age who reached grade 4 and achieved minimum learning standard in reading, by region



*Notes:* The definition of children who reached grade 4 is based on the expected cohort completion rate method. The definition of achievement of a minimum learning standard is based on an anchoring process that transforms the results from different surveys to a common scale.

*Sources:* EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations based on (1) expected cohort survival rate to grade 4: UIS database; (2) learning achievement: Altinok (2013a), using data from the 2011 PIRLS, 2007 SACMEQ, 2004–2008 PASEC, 2006 SERCE; and analysis by the 2012 ASER India and 2012 ASER Pakistan survey teams.

### *Global disparities mask huge inequalities within countries*

While average figures on learning achievement provide an overall picture of the scale of the learning crisis, they can conceal large disparities within countries. Poverty, gender, location, language, ethnicity, disability and other factors mean some children are likely to get less support from schools to improve their learning.

How much a child learns is strongly influenced by family wealth. Analysis of 20 African countries for this year's Report shows that children from richer households are more likely not only to complete school, but also to achieve a minimum level of learning. By contrast, in 15 of the countries, no more than one in five poor children reach the last grade and learn the basics.

In Latin America, where performance is higher in general, children from disadvantaged backgrounds

also lag far behind their wealthier peers. In El Salvador, 42% of children from the poorest households complete primary education and master the basics, compared with 84% of those from richest households.

Girls in poor households face some of the worst disadvantages, indicating that there is an urgent need to tackle gender gaps through education policies. In Benin, for example, around 60% of rich boys stay in school and attain basic numeracy skills, compared with 6% of poor girls.

Living in a disadvantaged area – especially rural ones, which often lack teachers and teaching resources – is a huge barrier to learning. In the United Republic of Tanzania, only 25% of poor children in rural areas learn the basics, compared with 63% of rich children in urban areas. In some Latin American countries, including El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama and Peru, achievement gaps in mathematics and reading between rural and urban students exceed 15 percentage points.

Location-related disadvantages begin in the early grades and widen. In Ghana, urban students were twice as likely as rural students to reach minimum levels of English in 2011 in grade 3, and more than three times as likely by grade 6.

Geographical disadvantage is often aggravated by poverty and gender. In Balochistan province, Pakistan, only 45% of children of grade 5 age could solve a two-digit subtraction, compared with 73% in wealthier Punjab province. Only around one-quarter of girls from poor households in Balochistan achieved basic numeracy skills, while boys from rich households in the province fared much better, approaching the average in Punjab.

The discrimination some indigenous or ethnic groups face is reinforced by the fact that the language used in the classroom may not be one that they speak. In Peru in 2011, Spanish speakers were more than seven times as likely as indigenous language speakers to reach a satisfactory standard in reading. Well-designed bilingual programmes taught by qualified teachers can help children overcome this challenge.



Children who learn less are more likely to leave school early. In Ethiopia, India, Peru and Viet Nam, children who achieved lower scores in mathematics at age 12 were more likely than others to drop out by age 15. In Viet Nam, for instance, almost half the poorer performers at age 12 had dropped out by age 15, compared with around one in five of the stronger performers.

The disadvantages children face in gaining access to school and remaining there will stay with them into secondary school. In South Africa, for example, there is a vast gap in learning between rich and poor, with only 14% of poor adolescents achieving the minimum standard in mathematics, comparable to the performance of poor students in Ghana, a country that has less than one-fifth South Africa's wealth. Such gaps are not inevitable. Botswana has achieved much higher levels of learning thanks largely to its much narrower gap between rich and poor.

In some countries, the gap between rich and poor becomes more apparent in later grades. In Chile, for example, while the gap is narrow at grade 4, 77% of rich students achieve the minimum standards by grade 8, compared with 44% of poor students.

### *Rich countries are also failing to ensure that the marginalized can learn*

While rich countries' achievement levels are generally higher, their education systems also fail significant minorities. For example, over 10% of grade 8 students in Norway and England performed below minimum learning levels in mathematics in 2011.

While East Asian countries, including Japan, the Republic of Korea and Singapore, have shown it is possible to overcome the disadvantages those living in poverty face, the same cannot be said for some OECD countries and for wealthy countries in the Arab States. The chance of a poor student in Oman achieving minimum learning standards, for example, is similar to that of a student in less wealthy countries, such as Ghana. In New Zealand, only two-thirds of poor students achieved the minimum standards, compared with 97% of rich students.

Immigrant students face a high risk of marginalization in education, resulting in lower levels of learning achievement. In France, Germany and the United Kingdom, over 80% of 15-year-old students achieve minimum benchmarks in reading. But immigrants perform far worse: in the United Kingdom, the proportion of immigrants making it above the minimum benchmark is no better than the average for Turkey, while Germany's immigrants are on a par with students in Chile. Immigrants in France face particular problems, with less than 60% passing the minimum benchmark – equivalent to the average for students in Mexico.

Indigenous children in high income countries often face disadvantage, and the gap in learning outcomes with the rest of the population has been persistent. In Australia, around two-thirds of indigenous students achieved the minimum benchmark in grade 8 between 1994/95 and 2011, compared with almost 90% of their non-indigenous peers.

### *Improving learning while expanding access*

It is often claimed that expanding access to primary school in poorer countries means lowering the quality of education. Yet, although vast numbers of children are not learning the basics, some countries have been able to get more children into school while ensuring that they learn once there. This balance is particularly impressive given that new entrants are more likely to come from marginalized households. Even so, far more needs to be done to bridge the learning gap more quickly, even in richer countries.

The United Republic of Tanzania made great strides in the numbers of students reaching the end of primary school, partly because primary school fees were abolished in 2001. Between 2000 and 2007, the proportion of children who completed primary school rose from half to around two-thirds, while the proportion learning the basics in mathematics increased from 19% to 36%. This is equivalent to around 1.5 million additional children learning the basics. While it is unacceptable that 27% were in school but not learning the basics, the fact that the problems with quality were already apparent in 2000 suggests that they were more inherent in the education system than directly associated with education expansion.

**Less than 60% of immigrants in France passed the minimum learning benchmark**

In Malawi and Uganda, access and quality did not improve significantly between 2000 and 2007, and the learning gap between rich and poor widened. These countries face a triple challenge, needing to strengthen access, quality and equity.

At secondary level, too, efforts to increase access have not always succeeded in increasing learning and reaching the disadvantaged. In Mexico, as access increased, the share of students performing above minimum benchmarks also increased, from one-third in 2003 to one-half in 2009. Targeted social protection programmes aimed at disadvantaged families helped improve learning outcomes for the rich and poor alike. In Ghana, by contrast, while secondary enrolment increased from 35% in 2003 to 46% in 2009, and performance in numeracy also increased by 10 percentage points, gender gaps in learning more than doubled and the poorest barely benefited at all.

Malaysia experienced a particularly worrying trend of worsening learning outcomes coupled with widening inequality and an increasing number of adolescents out of school. In 2003, the vast majority of adolescents passed the minimum benchmark, whether rich or poor. However, only around half the poorest boys reached the minimum benchmark in 2011, compared with over 90% in 2003. Poor boys in Malaysia went from being similar to average performers in the United States to being similar to those in Botswana.

### *Poor quality education leaves a legacy of illiteracy*

The quality of education during childhood has a marked bearing on youth literacy. New analysis for this Report, based on direct assessments of literacy in household surveys, shows that youth illiteracy is more widespread than previously believed: around 175 million young people in low and lower middle income countries – equivalent to around one-quarter of the youth population – cannot read all or part of a sentence. In sub-Saharan Africa, 40% of young people are not able to do so (Figure 14).

Young women are the worst affected of all, making up 61% of youth who are not literate. In South and West Asia, two out of three of young people who cannot read are young women.

Comparisons among countries expose the widespread problems of illiteracy. In 9 of the 41 low and lower middle income countries in the analysis, more than half of 15- to 24-year-olds are not literate. All these countries are in sub-Saharan Africa.

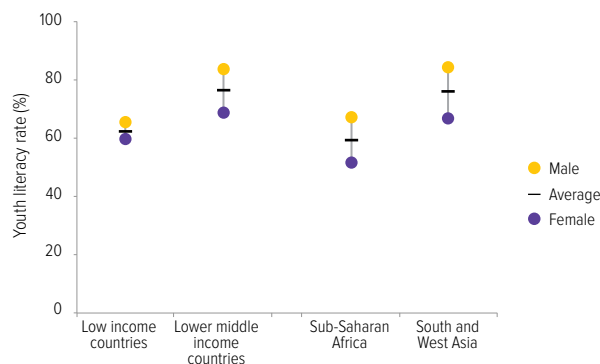
The analysis confirms the assumption that children need to spend at least four years in school to become literate: among those who have spent four years or less in school, around 77% are not able to read all or part of a sentence. In 9 of the 41 countries analysed, more than half of young people have spent no more than four years in school, and almost none of them are literate.

Spending five or six years in school, equivalent in some systems to completing a full cycle of primary schooling, does not guarantee literacy, however. In the 41 countries in the analysis, around 20 million young people still cannot read all or part of a sentence – equivalent to one in three of those who leave school after grade 5 or 6.

Young people from poorer households are far less likely to be literate. Among the countries analysed, more than 80% of those from rich households can read a sentence in 32 countries, but 80% of the poor can do so in only 4 countries. At the other end of the scale, less than half of poor youth can read a sentence in 22 countries, while the rich fall below

**Figure 14: Less than three-quarters of young people in low and lower middle income countries are literate**

Youth literacy rate, by gender, selected regions and country income groups



Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report team analysis (2013), based on Demographic and Health Survey data.

**In low and lower middle income countries, one-quarter of youth cannot read a sentence**

this threshold only in Niger. In several countries, including Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, the difference in youth literacy rates between rich and poor is more than 50 percentage points.

Disadvantages in acquiring basic skills are further compounded by a combination of poverty, gender, location and ethnicity. In Senegal, only 20% of rural young women could read in everyday situations in 2010, compared with 65% of urban young men. In Indonesia, almost all rich young women in Bali province have literacy skills, while just 60% of poor women in Papua province are literate.

These outcomes may reflect the combined effects of poverty, isolation, discrimination and cultural practices. However, they also echo failures of education policy to provide learning opportunities for the most disadvantaged populations, and they indicate an urgent need to provide these people with a second chance.

There are some signs of improvement in youth literacy that offer hope. Thanks to the expansion of primary schooling over the past decade, the youth literacy rate increased in Ethiopia from 34% in 2000 to 52% in 2011. Youth literacy has also improved in Nepal, especially among the most disadvantaged, who started with very low levels of literacy. Literacy among poor young women increased from 20% in 2001 to 55% in 2011.

Information on how much children with disabilities are learning is so scarce that analysis is difficult. Uganda provides a rare example where information is sufficient to compare literacy rates of young people according to types of impairment. In 2011, around 60% of young people with no identified impairment were literate, compared with 47% of those with physical or hearing impairments and 38% of those with mental impairments.

Striving for equal learning, including for children and youth with disabilities, requires identifying the particular difficulties children and young people with various types of disadvantage face, and implementing policies to tackle them.

## **Making teaching quality a national priority**

Strong national policies that give a high priority to improving learning and teaching are essential to ensure that all children in school obtain the skills and knowledge they are meant to acquire. Education plans should describe goals and establish benchmarks against which governments can be held to account, as well as ways to achieve the goals. Improving learning, especially among the most disadvantaged children, needs to be made a strategic objective. Plans should include a range of approaches to improve teacher quality, devised in consultation with teachers and teacher unions. They also need to guarantee that strategies will be backed by sufficient resources.

### *Quality must be made a strategic objective in education plans*

The global learning crisis cannot be overcome unless policies aim to improve learning for the disadvantaged. Of 40 national education plans reviewed for this Report, 26 list improved learning outcomes as a strategic objective. While the plans of all 40 countries address the needs of disadvantaged groups to some extent, learning is often only addressed as a by-product of increased access.

To improve learning for all, national education plans must improve teacher management and quality. Only 17 of the 40 plans include strategies for improving teacher education programmes, and only 16 envisage further training of teacher educators.

It is even less common for plans to recognize explicitly that improving teaching quality can enhance learning outcomes. In Kenya, in-service training is aimed at substantially boosting the learning of primary school leavers in poorly performing districts. South Africa and Sri Lanka link recruitment of teachers with improvements in quality and learning.

Governments need to get incentives right to attract and retain the best teachers. Of the 40 plans reviewed, 10 include reforms to improve teacher pay and 18 emphasize better career paths and promotion prospects.

**Ethiopia's youth literacy rate increased from 34% in 2000 to 52% in 2011**



Only some of the plans target teacher reforms at improving learning for disadvantaged students, mainly by getting teachers into disadvantaged areas. Among the 28 plans that aim to send teachers to disadvantaged areas, 22 aim to provide incentives, such as housing benefits and salary supplements. In 14 countries, education plans include incentives to promote deployment to rural areas, while 8, including Afghanistan, actively encourage female teachers. Cambodia's plan is notable for strategies to recruit teachers from target areas and ethnic groups and deploy them where they are most needed. In remote areas, where student numbers are often small, teachers may have to teach more than one age group at the same time. In Cambodia, Kenya and Papua New Guinea, there are plans to provide training in multigrade teaching.

Few plans highlight the need for support to students who are falling behind. Guyana's is one exception; it gives a high priority to building teachers' capacity to deliver targeted programmes.

For plans to be successfully implemented, they need to be backed by sufficient resources, but only 16 of the 40 policy documents reviewed include a budget breakdown. Countries assign different levels of importance in their budgets to policies aimed at improving education quality: they amount to over a fifth of the budget in Papua New Guinea, but to 5% or less in Palestine, for example. Few plans earmark expenditure for the disadvantaged, however.

Policies can only be effective if those responsible for implementing them are involved in shaping them. However, a survey in 10 countries showed that only 23% of teachers thought they had influence over policy and practice. Given their reach, teacher unions are key partners for governments. In some countries, engaging teacher unions has improved policies aimed at helping disadvantaged groups. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, for example, teacher unions campaigned to ensure that indigenous rights were enshrined in the constitution.

Overall, teachers and their unions can help make sure policies are effective. Thus it is important to include them from the early stages in designing strategies aimed at tackling learning deficits.

### *Getting enough teachers into classrooms*

The quality of education is held back in many of the poorest countries by a lack of teachers, which often results in large class sizes in early grades and in the poorest areas. Future teacher recruitment needs are determined by current deficits, demographics, enrolment trends and numbers of children out of school. Analysis by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics shows that, between 2011 and 2015, 5.2 million teachers – including replacement and additional teachers – need to be recruited to ensure that there are sufficient teachers to achieve universal primary education. This amounts to over 1 million teachers per year, equivalent to about 5% of the current primary school teaching force.

Most initial teacher education programmes last at least two years. With 57 million children still out of school, it is unlikely that countries with a lack of teachers will be able to meet the 2015 Education for All deadline for achieving universal primary education. Nevertheless, countries must start planning now to make up the shortfall. If the deadline were extended to 2020, accounting for projected increases in enrolment, the number of teachers required would rise to 13.1 million over 9 years. If it were extended to 2030, 20.6 million teachers would be needed over 19 years.

Of the teachers required between 2011 and 2015, 3.7 million are needed to replace teachers who retire, change occupations or leave due to illness or death. The remaining 1.6 million are the additional teachers needed to make up the shortfall, address expanding enrolment and underwrite quality by ensuring that there are no more than 40 students for every teacher (Figure 15). Thus, around 400,000 additional teachers need to be recruited each year if there are to be sufficient teachers by 2015.

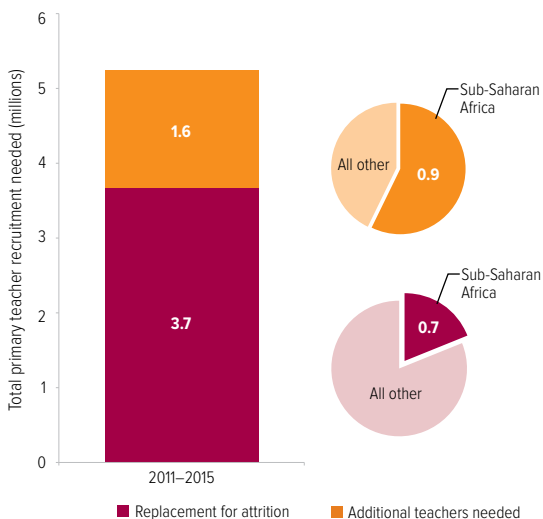
Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 58% of the additional primary teachers needed, requiring approximately 225,000 per year between 2011 and 2015. However, over the past decade the average annual increase in the region has been only 102,000.

Nigeria has by far the largest gap to fill. Between 2011 and 2015, it needs 212,000 primary school teachers, 13% of the global total. Of the 10 countries needing the most additional primary teachers, all but one are in sub-Saharan Africa, the exception being Pakistan.

**In Bolivia, teacher unions campaigned to ensure that indigenous rights were enshrined in the constitution**

**Figure 15: Globally 1.6 million additional teachers are needed by 2015**

Total number of teachers needed to achieve universal primary education by 2015



Source: UIS (2013).

The challenge of recruiting teachers becomes even greater when the needs of lower secondary education are taken into account. To achieve universal lower secondary education by 2030 with 32 students per teacher, an additional 5.1 million would be needed, or 268,000 per year. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for half of the additional lower secondary school teachers needed over this period.

It is unlikely that the countries with the most severe teacher gaps can recruit the numbers needed by 2015. Of the 93 countries that need to find additional primary school teachers by 2015, only 37 will be able to bridge the gap; 29 will not even be able to fill the gap by 2030. Meanwhile, 148 countries need more teachers for lower secondary schools by 2015; 29 countries will not have filled this gap by 2030.

To fill the teacher gap by 2015, some countries need to speed up expansion of their teacher force. Rwanda and Uganda would need to expand recruitment by 6%, on average, compared with a current average increase of 3% per year. In Malawi, the teaching force is growing by just 1% per year, which is far from sufficient to reduce the pupil/teacher ratio from 76:1 to 40:1. For Malawi to meet the universal primary education goal by 2015, it would need to increase its teaching force by 15% annually between 2011 and 2015.

Many poor countries will not be able to fill their teacher gap simply because they do not have enough upper secondary school graduates – the minimum qualification for primary teacher trainees. In 8 out of 14 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, at least 5% of all upper secondary school graduates in 2020 would need to be drawn into teaching to fill the teacher gap, rising to almost 25% in Niger. By comparison, just over 3% of those in the labour force with at least secondary education are primary school teachers in middle income countries.

Teachers need not only to be recruited, but also to be trained. Many countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, also need to train existing teachers. Mali, for example, recruited teachers at a rate of 9% per year over the past decade, which helped lower the number of pupils per teacher from 62 in 1999 to 48 in 2011. However, many of these teachers are untrained. The result is that Mali's ratio of pupils per trained teacher, 92:1, is one of the world's highest. On its past trend of trained teacher recruitment, Mali would not achieve a ratio of 40 pupils per trained teacher until 2030.

Countries that have many untrained teachers need to find ways to train them. In 10 out of 27 countries with available data, this challenge is greater than that of recruiting and training new teachers. In Benin, 47% of teachers were trained in 2011. The country needs to expand teacher recruitment by just 1.4% per year to achieve UPE by 2020, but the number of existing teachers who need to be trained would have to grow by almost 9% per year, well above Benin's 6% average annual growth rate since 1999 for trained teachers.

The shortage of trained teachers is likely to affect disadvantaged areas in particular. In the northern state of Kano, one of the poorer parts of Nigeria, the pupil/trained teacher ratio exceeded 100 in 2009/10, with at least 150 pupils per trained teacher in the most disadvantaged 25% of schools.

Children in the early grades who live in remote areas often face a double disadvantage. In Ethiopia, for example, where 48% of teachers are trained, only around 20% of teachers were trained in grades 1 to 4 in 2010, compared with 83% in grades 5 to 8.

**29 countries will not fill the primary school teacher gap by 2030**

**Donors spend only US\$189 million per year on teacher education**

Countries that require additional teachers will have to increase their overall budgets for teacher salaries. New analysis by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics for this Report finds that US\$4 billion annually is needed in sub-Saharan Africa to pay the salaries of the additional primary school teachers required to achieve UPE by 2020, after taking into account projected economic growth. This is equivalent to 19% of the region's total education budget in 2011. Nigeria alone accounts for two-fifths of the gap.

While the required increases may seem vast, most countries should be able to meet them if their economies grow as projected and if they dedicate a larger share of their GDP to education while staying within the benchmark of 3% allocated to primary education. On average, sub-Saharan African countries would have to increase the share of the budget they allocate to education from 12% to 14% in 2011 to close the teacher gap by 2020.

The financing challenge is inevitably greater for lower secondary school. In sub-Saharan Africa, recruiting enough teachers to achieve universal lower secondary education by 2030 would add US\$9.5 billion to the annual education budget.

While many countries should be able to meet the cost of recruiting and paying the required additional primary teachers from their national budgets, they will also need to pay for teacher training, as well as school construction and learning materials, to ensure that children receive an education of a good quality. Expanding the lower secondary teacher workforce will place a further burden on national budgets. Some of the poorest countries are therefore likely to face a substantial financing gap and will require the support of aid donors. This need is likely to be even greater when the cost of expanding teacher education programmes is taken into account.

However, between 2008 and 2011, donors spent only US\$189 million per year, on average, on pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes, equivalent to 2% of the education aid budget. While the countries most in need are in sub-Saharan Africa, the largest country recipients of this aid included richer middle income countries such as Brazil, China and Indonesia.

## Four strategies to provide the best teachers

Policy-makers need to give teachers every chance to put their motivation, energy, knowledge and skills to work in improving learning for all. This Report describes the four strategies that governments need to adopt to attract and retain the best teachers, improve teacher education, allocate teachers more fairly and provide incentives in the form of appropriate salaries and attractive career paths. It then highlights the areas of teacher governance that need to be strengthened to ensure that the benefits of these four strategies are realized.

### Strategy 1: Attract the best teachers

*I chose to be a teacher because I believe that education has the power to transform the society we live in. What motivates me to be a good teacher is to be an active agent in this change that is so necessary for my country to fight against discrimination, injustice, racism, corruption, poverty.*

– Ana, teacher, Lima, Peru

The first step to getting good teachers is to attract the best and most motivated candidates into the profession. Many people who decide to become teachers are driven by the satisfaction of helping students learn, fulfil their potential and develop into confident, responsible citizens.

It is not enough just to want to teach. People should enter the profession having received a good education themselves. They need to have at least completed secondary schooling of appropriate quality and relevance, so that they have a sound knowledge of the subjects they will be teaching and the ability to acquire the skills needed to teach.

Teaching does not always draw the best candidates, however. In some countries, teaching is seen as a second-class job for those who do not do well enough academically to enter more prestigious careers, such as medicine or engineering. The level of qualification required to enter teaching is a signal of the field's professional status. To elevate the status of teaching and attract talented applicants, for example, Egypt has introduced more stringent entry requirements, requiring candidates to have strong performance in secondary school as well as a favourable interview assessment. Once selected, candidates also have to pass an entrance examination to establish whether they match the profile of a good teacher.

Making sure there are enough female teachers and recruiting teachers from a wide range of backgrounds are important factors in providing an inclusive, good quality education. Flexible policies for entry qualifications may be required to improve diversity of the teaching force. In South Sudan, women make up about 65% of the post-war population, yet less than 10% of all teachers are women. To increase the number of female teachers, financial and material incentives have been given to over 4,500 girls to complete secondary school and to women trainees to enter the teaching profession.

Recruiting teachers from under-represented groups to work in their own communities guarantees that children have teachers familiar with their culture and language. Flexible policies on entry requirements can help increase the number of candidates recruited from ethnic minority groups. In Cambodia, where teacher trainees normally have to have completed grade 12, this requirement is waived for remote areas where upper secondary education is unavailable, increasing the pool of teachers from ethnic minorities.

### *Strategy 2: Improve teacher education so all children can learn*

Initial teacher education should impart the skills needed to teach – especially for teaching the disadvantaged and those in early grades – and lay the foundation for ongoing training. But initial teacher education is not always effective in preparing teachers to deliver good quality, equitable education.

Trainees need a good understanding of the subjects they will be teaching. In low income countries, however, teachers often enter the profession lacking core subject knowledge because their own education has been poor. In a 2010 survey of primary schools in Kenya, grade 6 teachers scored only 60% on tests designed for their students. In such circumstances, teacher education programmes need to start by ensuring that all trainees acquire a good understanding of the subjects they will be teaching.

Teacher education institutions often do not have time to upgrade weak subject knowledge, partly because of competing curriculum demands. In Kenya, teacher trainees are required to take up to 10 subjects and participate in teaching practice

in the first year. This leaves little time to fill gaps in subject knowledge. Ghana has addressed this problem by making trainees pass an examination on subject knowledge in their first year.

Teachers need not only sound subject knowledge but also training in how to teach, particularly in the early grades. However, teachers are seldom trained in these skills. In Mali, few teachers were able to teach their pupils how to read. Teachers had been inadequately prepared to apply the required teaching methods and did not give sufficient attention to supporting pupils' individual reading. This is no doubt an important reason why nearly half the pupils in Mali could not read a word in their own language at the end of grade 2. Teachers are also rarely prepared for the reality of multilingual classrooms. In Senegal, for example, only 8% of trainees expressed any confidence about teaching reading in local languages.

As a result of inadequate training, including overemphasis on theory rather than practice, many newly qualified teachers are not confident that they have the skills necessary to support children with more challenging learning needs, including those with severe physical or intellectual disabilities, in mainstream classrooms. To address this, teachers in Viet Nam create individual education plans for all learners, designing and adapting activities for children with different learning needs, and assessing learning outcomes of children with special needs.

Teacher education should also prepare teachers for remote or under-resourced schools, where some teachers need to teach multiple grades, ages and abilities in one classroom. In some countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo, at least 10% of students study in such classrooms. A small project in Sri Lanka trained teachers to develop lesson plans and grade-appropriate tasks for classes combining grades 4 and 5. Results indicated that such methods had a positive impact on pupils' achievement in mathematics.

Countries with high student learning outcomes require trainees to receive practical training in classrooms before teaching. This is especially important for teachers who teach in under-resourced and diverse classrooms, but is rarely provided. In Pakistan, trainee teachers only

**In Kenya, grade 6 teachers scored only 60% on tests designed for their students**

**In Turkey, a pre-service course on gender equity had a significant impact on female teachers' gender attitudes**

spend 10% of their training time in classrooms. To address this need, an NGO teacher education programme in Malawi includes a full year of practice teaching in rural districts. Some 72% of the participants said the school practice component was the area of study that most prepared them for teaching in rural areas. In addition, 80% of them gained experience in providing remedial support to students, compared with 14% in government colleges.

Teachers also need training in how attitudes to gender can affect learning outcomes. In Turkey, a one-term pre-service course on gender equity had a significant impact on female teachers' gender attitudes and awareness.

All teachers require continuing support once they reach the classroom to enable them to reflect on teaching practices, to foster motivation and to help them adapt to change, such as using a new curriculum or language of instruction. Ongoing training can also provide teachers with new ideas about how to support weak learners. Teachers who have received some in-service training are generally found to teach better than those who have not, although it depends on the purpose and quality of the training.

Ongoing training is even more important for teachers who enter classrooms with little or no pre-service teacher education, or whose training has not sufficiently exposed them to the reality of the classroom. In Benin, many teachers have been hired as community or contract teachers with no pre-service teacher education. A programme designed in 2007 offers them three years of training to give them qualifications equivalent to those of civil service teachers.

Teachers in conflict zones are among those most in need of a coherent strategy to upgrade their skills. In the Dadaab refugee camps in northern Kenya, 90% of teachers are hired from the refugee community, only 2% of whom are qualified. Refugee teachers are ineligible for admission to higher education institutions in Kenya, and so require alternative qualification options. A teacher management and development strategy for 2013–2015 aims to provide them with training, including school-based practice. The strategy also recommends qualification and certification options for teachers who meet minimum higher education admission requirements, as well as options for the majority who do not meet the requirements. Ongoing training can bridge gaps in the quality

and relevance of pre-service teacher education, but often fails to foster the skills teachers need to respond to particular learning needs, especially in the early grades. An Early Grade Reading Assessment in Liberia found that around one-third of grade 2 students were unable to read a word. As a result, in 2008, the Ministry of Education launched a new programme consisting of teacher education and support, structured lesson plans, teaching resource materials, and books for children to take home. Teachers participated in an intensive one-week course in early grade reading instruction and how to use formative and diagnostic assessment to identify and support weak learners. This was followed up with classroom-based support from trained mentors over two years. Pupils in this programme increased their reading comprehension scores by 130%, compared with 33% for non-participants.

In many low income countries, teaching relies on traditional approaches such as lecturing, rote learning and repetition, rather than fostering transferable skills such as critical thinking. A school-based teacher development programme in Kenya has shown that training can be effective in helping teachers adopt learner-centred methods. The programme, involving self-study using distance-learning materials and meetings with tutors at cluster resource centres, led to teaching becoming more interactive, with improved use of lesson plans and resources.

The key role that teacher educators play in shaping teachers' skills is often the most neglected aspect of teacher preparation systems, particularly in developing countries. Many teacher educators seldom set foot in local schools to learn about the challenges prospective teachers face. Analysis of six sub-Saharan African countries found that teacher educators helping train teachers how to teach reading skills were rarely experts in approaches used in the field.

Reforms aimed at helping disadvantaged students need to ensure that teacher educators are trained to give teachers appropriate support. In Viet Nam, many teacher educators had limited awareness of how to deal with diversity until training was provided for teacher educators from universities and colleges to act as experts on inclusive education in pre-service programmes.

Not only is the quality of teacher education often insufficient, but many teacher education institutions also lack the capacity for the huge



© Karel Prinsloo/ARETE/UNESCO

numbers of people needing to be trained, and expanding capacity is costly. Using technology to provide training from a distance is one way to reach larger numbers of trainees. Distance education programmes must be of adequate quality, and should be complemented by mentoring and face-to-face support at key stages.

The extent to which information and communication technology (ICT) is used in distance learning for teacher education is dictated by ICT infrastructure and resources, and the needs of target audiences. In South Africa, where surveys revealed that only 1% of teachers had regular Internet access but the vast majority had access to mobile phones, a teacher education programme supplements paper-based distance learning with text messaging. In Malawi, battery-powered DVD players and interactive instructional DVDs are used to assist with training.

Distance teacher education programmes could reach more future teachers at lower cost than programmes in teacher education institutions. Costs per student graduating from distance programmes have been estimated at between one-third and two-thirds of conventional programmes.

### *Strategy 3: Get teachers where they are most needed*

Teachers are understandably reluctant to work in deprived areas, which lack basic facilities such as electricity, good housing and health care. If the best teachers seldom work in remote, rural, poor or dangerous areas, however, the learning opportunities of children who are already disadvantaged suffer further as a result of larger class sizes, high rates of teacher turnover and a scarcity of trained teachers.

Governments need to devise strategies to ensure that teachers are equally allocated, but they rarely do so. In Yemen, schools with 500 students were found to have between 4 and 27 teachers. In South Sudan, average pupil/teacher ratios varied from 51:1 in Central Equatoria to 145:1 in Jonglei.

Unequal distribution of teachers is one reason some children leave school before learning the basics. In Bangladesh, only 60% of students reach the last grade of primary school in subdistricts where there are 75 students per teacher, compared with three-quarters where there are 30.

**In South Sudan, pupil/teacher ratios reached 145:1 in Jonglei**



The unequal allocation of teachers is affected by four main factors:

*Urban bias:* Weak infrastructure in rural areas means teachers are less keen to teach there. In Swaziland, for example, remote rural schools are mostly staffed with newly recruited, inexperienced teachers and teachers with low qualifications.

*Ethnicity and language:* Because education levels of ethnic minorities are often lower, fewer can apply to be teachers. In India, states cannot fill their caste-based quotas for recruitment of teachers unless teachers with lower levels of qualifications are hired.

*Gender:* Women are less likely than men to work in disadvantaged areas. In Rwanda, only 10% of primary school teachers were female in Burera district, compared with 67% in wealthier Gisagara district.

*Subjects:* In secondary schools, in particular, there are often teacher shortages in specific subjects. In Indonesia, for example, at junior secondary level there is a surplus of teachers in religion, but a shortage in computer science.

**Average teacher salaries are below US\$10 per day in 8 countries**

To achieve a balance of teachers across the country, some governments post teachers to disadvantaged areas. One reason for the Republic of Korea's strong and more equitable learning outcomes is that disadvantaged groups have better access to more qualified and experienced teachers. Over three-quarters of teachers in villages have at least a bachelor's degree, compared with 32% in large cities, and 45% have more than 20 years of experience, compared with 30% in large cities. Teachers working in disadvantaged schools benefit from incentives such as an additional stipend, smaller class sizes, less teaching time, the chance to choose their next school after teaching in a difficult area and greater promotion opportunities.

Providing incentives is a way to encourage teachers to accept difficult postings. Safe housing is particularly important in encouraging women to teach in rural areas, as in Bangladesh. The Gambia introduced an allowance of 30% to 40% of their base salary for positions in remote regions. By 2007, 24% of teachers had requested a transfer to hardship schools.

Alternatively, countries can recruit teachers from within their own communities. In Lesotho, a system

of local recruitment allows school management committees to hire teachers, who apply directly to the schools for vacant posts. As a result, there is relatively little difference in pupil/teacher ratios between rural and urban areas.

Some countries are opening alternative pathways into teaching to attract highly qualified professionals with strong subject knowledge. One approach is exemplified by the Teach for All programmes in a range of countries, which recruit graduates with strong subject-level degree qualifications to teach in schools that predominantly serve disadvantaged students. Evidence from evaluations of Teach for America suggests that, once they have gained some experience, these teachers help improve students' learning, provided they receive some training.

#### **Strategy 4: Provide the right incentives to retain the best teachers**

Salaries are just one of many factors that motivate teachers, but they are a key consideration in attracting the best candidates and retaining the best teachers. Low salaries are likely to damage morale and can lead teachers to switch to other careers. At the same time, teacher salaries make up the largest share of most education budgets, so they need to be set at a realistic level to ensure that enough teachers can be recruited.

The level of teacher salaries influences education quality. In 39 countries, a 15% rise in pay increased student performance by 6% to 8%. However, teachers in some countries do not even earn enough to lift their households above the poverty line. A teacher who is the main breadwinner, and has at least four family members to support, needs to earn at least US\$10 per day to keep the family above the poverty line of US\$2 per day per person. However, average teacher salaries are below this level in eight countries. In the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia, teachers are paid no more than US\$5, on average. Teacher salaries are similarly low in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where communities often have to supplement their pay. Communities that are too poor to do so suffer from further disadvantage, losing good teachers.

In some countries, few teachers can afford basic necessities without taking a second job. In Cambodia, where a teacher salary did not cover the cost of basic food items in 2008, over two-thirds of teachers had a second job.

National data on average teacher pay disguise variations in pay among different types of teachers: salaries are often considerably less than average for teachers at the beginning of their career, unqualified teachers and those on temporary contracts. In Malawi, those entering the profession, or lacking the academic qualifications needed for promotion, earn less than one-third of teachers in the highest pay category. Their salary was equivalent to just US\$4 per day in 2007/08.

When teachers are paid less than people in comparable fields, the best students are less likely to become teachers, and teachers are more likely to lose motivation or leave the profession. In Latin America, teachers are generally paid above the poverty threshold, but their salaries do not compare favourably with those working in professions requiring similar qualifications. In 2007, professionals and technicians with similar characteristics earned 43% more than pre-school and primary school teachers in Brazil, and 50% more in Peru.

In sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, policy-makers have responded to the need to expand education systems rapidly by recruiting teachers on temporary contracts with little formal training. Contract teachers are usually paid considerably less than civil service teachers; some are hired directly by the community or by schools.

In West Africa, contract teachers made up half the teaching force by the mid-2000s. At the end of the decade, there were far more teachers on temporary contracts than on civil service contracts in some of these countries: the proportion reached almost 80% in Mali and Niger and over 60% in Benin and Cameroon. In Niger, contract teachers earn half as much as civil service teachers.

In some countries, governments eventually hire contract teachers as civil service teachers. In Benin, for example, contract teachers, with the support of teacher unions, campaigned to obtain more stable employment conditions and better pay. In 2007, the government issued a decree absorbing into the civil service contract all teachers who had achieved the required qualifications. Thus, despite the share of contract teachers having increased dramatically, the average teacher salary in Benin rose by 45% between 2006 and 2010 as the salaries of contract and civil service teachers converged.

In Indonesia, where contract teachers made up over a third of the primary school teaching force in 2010, regular teachers earned up to 40 times their salary. The government ensured that contract teachers would eventually attain civil service status, with implications for the education budget: giving all contract teachers permanent status would increase the salary bill for basic education by 35%, to about US\$9 billion.

Where contract teachers are paid by the community, sustaining their services depends on parents' ability to mobilize funding, putting considerable financial pressure on poorer communities. In some cases this can lead to the government taking over some of the responsibility, ultimately adding to the budget. In Madagascar, community teachers, who made up around half of all teachers in 2005/06, are hired directly by parent-teacher associations and generally receive less than half of regular teachers' salaries. Since 2006, the government has increasingly taken on the responsibility for paying community teachers.

While hiring contract teachers to alleviate teacher shortages can help in the short term, it is unlikely to meet the long-term need to extend quality education. Countries that rely heavily on contract teachers, notably in West Africa, rank at or near the bottom for education access and learning.

Teachers' salaries – and the rates at which they increase – are conventionally determined by formal qualifications, the amount of training and years of experience. But pay structures based on these criteria do not necessarily lead to better learning outcomes. Relating teachers' pay to the performance of their students is an alternative approach that has intuitive appeal. This appeal is supported by PISA data from 28 OECD countries: the countries where teachers' salaries are adjusted for student performance have higher scores in reading, mathematics and science. However, a closer look at the evidence on performance-related pay from around the world does not show clear-cut benefits.

It is difficult to find reliable ways to evaluate which teachers are the best and add the most value, as experience from the United States shows. Performance-related pay can also have unintended side effects on teaching and learning. In Portugal, it has led to competition between teachers in ways that can be harmful for the weakest students. In Mexico, many teachers are excluded from

**In Peru, professionals with similar characteristics to teachers earn 50% more**



participating in such programmes, with those teaching in schools with low achievement at a disadvantage. Experience in Brazil suggests that rewarding schools with collective bonuses may be a more effective way to improve learning outcomes.

In poorer countries, performance-related pay has rarely been tried on a large scale, but experience suggests there is a risk of it encouraging teachers to teach to the test, rather than promoting wider learning. In an experiment in Kenyan primary schools, teachers were rewarded for good student test scores and penalized if students did not take end-of-year examinations. Test scores and examination attendance increased, but test scores did not go up in subject areas that were not taken into account in the teacher pay formula.

A more appropriate way of motivating teachers is to offer an attractive career path. In some OECD countries, the difference in pay between a more experienced teacher and a new teacher is small and there is little scope for promotion. In England, for example, a beginning teacher earns US\$32,000 while the most experienced teacher can receive, at most, US\$15,000 more. By contrast, the Republic of Korea has a considerably steeper pay structure: a new teacher earns a similar salary to new teachers in England, but an experienced teacher can earn more than twice that. In France, insufficient career management and other inadequate teacher policies are contributing to poor learning.

**In the Republic of Korea, an experienced teacher can earn more than twice as much as a new teacher**

In many developing countries, teachers' career structures are not sufficiently linked to prospects of promotion that recognize and reward teacher effectiveness. In 2010, Ghana began reviewing its teacher management and development policy to address such concerns.

### *Strengthening teacher governance*

Better teacher governance is vital to reduce disadvantage in learning. If days are lost because teachers are absent or devote more attention to private tuition than classroom teaching, for example, the learning of the poorest children can be harmed. Understanding the reasons behind these problems is crucial for the design of effective strategies to solve them. Strong school leadership is required to ensure that teachers show up on time, work a full week and provide equal support to all. Gender-based violence, which is sometimes perpetrated by teachers, damages girls' chances of learning. Strategies to prevent and respond to teacher misconduct, and take action against perpetrators, require advocacy and support from head teachers, teachers and their unions, as well as communities, if girls are to be protected.

The scale of absenteeism is evident from surveys carried out in a range of poor countries over the past decade: in the mid-2000s, teacher absenteeism ranged from 11% in Peru to 27% in Uganda. Absenteeism exacerbates the problem

of teacher shortages. In Kenya, where the typical primary school faces, on average, a shortage of four teachers, 13% of teachers were absent during school visits. Absenteeism can also affect disadvantaged students in particular. Across India, absenteeism varied from 15% in Maharashtra and 17% in Gujarat – two richer states – to 38% in Bihar and 42% in Jharkhand, two of the poorest states.

Teacher absenteeism harms learning. In Indonesia, a 10% increase in teacher absenteeism was estimated to lead to a 7% decrease in mathematics scores, on average, and absenteeism was most likely to harm weaker students: the teacher absence rate was 19% for the quarter of students with the highest mathematics scores, and 22% for the quarter with the lowest scores.

Head teachers themselves are sometimes absent, impeding effective monitoring of teacher attendance and demonstrating inadequate leadership regarding the problem. A 2011 survey of schools in Uganda found that, on average, 21% of head teachers were absent on the day the schools were visited.

Policy-makers need to understand why teachers miss school. In some countries, teachers are absent because their pay is extremely low, in others because working conditions are poor. In Malawi, where teachers' pay is low and payment often erratic, 1 in 10 teachers stated that they were frequently absent from school in connection with financial concerns, such as travelling to collect salaries or dealing with loan payments. High rates of HIV/AIDS can take their toll on teacher attendance. Zambia has introduced strategies to improve living conditions for HIV-positive teachers, including greater access to treatment, provision of nutritional supplements and loans.

Gender-based violence in schools is a major barrier to quality and equality in education. A survey in Malawi found that around one-fifth of teachers said they were aware of teachers coercing or forcing girls into sexual relationships.

Programmes and policies addressing gender discrimination and gender-based violence need to protect and empower girls, challenge entrenched practices, bring perpetrators to light and take action against them. Legal and policy frameworks that provide general protection for children need to be strengthened and publicized, and teachers need to be made aware of their own roles and responsibilities. In Kenya, for example, a range of penalties is available to discipline teachers

in breach of professional conduct, including suspension and interdiction; new regulations state that a teacher convicted of a sexual offence against a pupil is to be deregistered.

Advocacy and lobbying constitute an important first step in seeing that policies tackling gender-based violence are in place and enforced. In Malawi, a project lobbied successfully for revisions to codes of conduct and stronger reporting mechanisms. When it ran an awareness campaign, the number of teachers who said they knew how to report a code violation rose by over one-third.

Working directly with teacher unions is a way to build support for taking action against teachers who violate codes of conduct. In Kenya, the National Union of Teachers collaborated with the Teachers' Service Commission, Ministry of Education and Children's Department to help draft a parliamentary bill that would reinforce procedures for reporting abuse or violence by teachers and prevent convicted teachers from simply being transferred to other schools.

Private tuition is another outcome of poor teacher governance. If unchecked or uncontrolled, it can be a detriment to learning outcomes, especially for the poorest students who are unable to afford it. Private tutoring by teachers is often a symptom of badly functioning school systems and low pay that forces teachers to supplement their income. In Cambodia, teacher salaries are small and often paid late. One consequence is that 13% of primary school teachers and 87% of secondary teachers provide private tuition. This reinforces disparities between those who can afford fees and those who cannot. In urban areas, grade 9 students scored 8.3 points out of 10 in Khmer with tutoring and 3.8 points without.

In Egypt, the situation has become extreme, partly due to a decline in the quality of education and partly because teachers need to supplement their low income. The amount spent annually on private tutoring is reported to be US\$2.4 billion, equivalent to 27% of government spending on education in 2011. Private tuition is a significant part of household education spending, averaging 47% in rural areas and 40% in urban areas. Children from rich households are almost twice as likely as poorer students to receive private tuition. Teachers may be their own students' private tutors, and thus responsible for their grades. Students complain that teachers do not cover the curriculum during the school day, forcing them to take private tuition to cover the syllabus to enable them to pass exams.

**In Egypt, rich students are almost twice as likely as poorer students to receive private tuition**

**In Pakistan, 36% of grade 5 students in private schools could not read a sentence in English**

Strategies should at least be in place to prevent tutoring of pupils by teachers who are responsible for teaching them in their daily classes. This would ensure that full curriculum coverage is available to all students, even those unable to afford tutoring.

Private schools that charge low fees are seen by some as a way of expanding access to better quality education for disadvantaged children where government schools are failing. In Pakistan, a child in a low fee private school performs better than the average child in the top one-third of children in government schools. However, even in private schools, many pupils barely reach expected competency levels. According to analysis by the Annual State of Education Report team in Pakistan, 36% of grade 5 students in private schools could not read a sentence in English, which they should have been able to do by grade 2.

Learning outcomes may be better in low fee private schools in part because lower salaries enable these schools to hire more teachers and keep pupil/teacher ratios low. In private schools in parts of Nairobi, there are 15 students per teacher, compared with 80 in government schools. Small class sizes also enable teachers at private schools to interact more with their students. In Andhra Pradesh, India, 82% of teachers regularly corrected exercises given to children, compared with only 40% in government schools.

Private school teachers are generally thought to work under conditions of greater accountability. In India, only one head teacher in 3,000 government schools reported dismissing a teacher for repeated absence. By contrast, 35 private school head teachers, out of 600 surveyed, reported having dismissed teachers for this reason.

The benefits of low fee private schools do not mean they are better per se; often their students face far fewer disadvantages than students in government schools. In Andhra Pradesh, over 70% of students attending government schools belong to the poorest 40% of households, compared with 26% in private schools. Around one-third of teachers in government schools are teaching students of different ages in multigrade classrooms, compared with 3% in private schools.

There are no excuses for students not having the right conditions to learn: ultimately, it is vital that all children, regardless of their background and the type of school they attend, have the best teachers to offer them this opportunity.

## **Curriculum and assessment strategies that improve learning**

To improve learning for all children, teachers need the support of curriculum and assessment strategies that can reduce disparities in school achievement and offer all children and young people the opportunity to acquire vital transferable skills. Such strategies need to build strong foundation skills by starting early, moving at the right pace, enabling disadvantaged pupils to catch up, meeting the language needs of ethnic minorities and building a culture of reading.

### *Ensuring all children acquire foundation skills*

The key to ensuring that children succeed at school is to enable them to attain critical foundation skills, such as reading and basic mathematics. Without these basic skills, many children will struggle to keep up with the prescribed curriculum, and learning disparities will widen for disadvantaged children.

The quality of pre-school education makes a crucial difference to children's learning in early primary grades. In Bangladesh, primary school children who had attended pre-school performed better than children without any pre-school experience in skills relating to reading, writing and oral mathematics.

It is crucial that primary school pupils master the foundation skills of basic numeracy and literacy in the early grades so they can understand what is taught in later grades, but they sometimes fail to do so because curricula are too ambitious. Viet Nam's curriculum focuses on foundation skills, is closely matched to what children are able to learn and pays particular attention to disadvantaged learners. By contrast, India's curriculum, which outpaces what pupils can realistically learn and achieve in the time given, is a factor in widening learning gaps. In Viet Nam, 86% of 8-year-olds answered grade-specific test items correctly. Similarly, 90% of children aged 8 in India did so. However, when 14- to 15-year-olds were asked a two-stage word problem involving multiplication and addition, 71% of children in Viet Nam answered correctly, while in India the percentage was 33%.

For children from ethnic and linguistic minorities to acquire strong foundation skills, schools need to teach the curriculum in a language children understand. A bilingual approach that combines continued teaching in a child's mother tongue with



the introduction of a second language can improve performance in the second language as well as in other subjects. To reduce learning disparities in the long term, bilingual programmes should be sustained over several years. In Cameroon, children taught in their local language, Kom, showed a marked advantage in achievement in reading and comprehension compared with children taught only in English. Kom-educated children also scored twice as high on mathematics tests at the end of grade 3. However, these learning gains were not sustained when the students switched to English-only instruction in grade 4. By contrast, in Ethiopia, children in regions where local language instruction extends through to upper primary school performed better in grade 8 subjects than pupils taught only in English.

Language policies may be difficult to implement, particularly where there is more than one language group in the same classroom and teachers are not proficient in the local language. For bilingual education to be effective, governments need to recruit and deploy teachers from minority language groups. Initial and ongoing programmes are also needed to train teachers to teach in two languages and to understand the needs of second-language learners.

For early grade literacy and bilingual education to be successful, pupils need access to inclusive learning materials that are relevant to their situation and in a language they are familiar with. Open licensing and new technology can make learning materials more widely available, including in local languages. In South Africa, open source educational materials are being developed and made available in several African languages. Digital distribution is increasing the number of districts, schools and teachers with access to curricular resources.

Providing appropriate reading materials may not be enough on its own, however, to improve children's learning; children and families must also be encouraged to use them. In poor or remote communities where there is little access to print media, providing reading materials and supporting activities to practice reading can improve children's learning. Save the Children's Literacy Boost programme aims to improve early grade reading skills in government schools through interventions such as training teachers to teach core reading skills and monitor pupils' mastery of them. In addition, communities are encouraged to

support children's reading. Evaluations in Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal and Pakistan all showed greater learning gains by children in Literacy Boost schools than by their peers, including a reduction in the number of children whose scores were zero, suggesting that the programme benefited low achievers.

Support outside school hours is one reason for such success. In Pakistan, children who had attended after-school reading camps coordinated by community volunteers showed greater learning gains in reading fluency and accuracy in both Pashto and Urdu than classmates in the same schools. In Malawi, pupils whose parents had received training to support their children's reading made greater vocabulary gains than those whose parents had not.

Curricula need to address issues of inclusion to enhance the chances of students from marginalized backgrounds to learn effectively. Where gender-responsive curricula have been developed, as in projects in Mumbai, India, and in Honduras, test scores measuring attitudes on several gender-related issues improved. In Honduras, adolescents who participated in the project also demonstrated better problem-solving skills and higher test scores.

More needs to be done to design curricula that pay attention to the needs of disabled learners. In Canberra, Australia, curriculum reform aims to help teachers improve student attitudes regarding students with disabilities, improve the quality of interactions between students with and without disabilities, and enhance the well-being and academic achievement of students with disabilities.

Classroom-based assessment tools can help teachers identify, monitor and support learners at risk of low achievement. In Liberia, the EGRA Plus project, which trained teachers in the use of classroom-based assessment tools and provided reading resources and scripted lesson plans to guide instruction, raised previously low levels of reading achievement among grade 2 and 3 pupils.

Assessments need to be aligned with the curriculum so that they do not add significantly to teachers' workloads. In South Africa, well-designed assessments with clear guidelines on how to interpret results helped teachers with little training who were working in difficult conditions: 80% of teachers were able to use them in class.

**In Canberra, Australia, curriculum reform aims to help teachers improve attitudes regarding students with disabilities**



**In India, schools with trained female community volunteers helped increase children's learning**

Students can make considerable gains if they are offered opportunities to monitor their own learning. In the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, primary students learn at their own pace, using self-evaluation cards that can be administered alone or with the help of another child; teachers strategically pair more advanced learners with less advanced ones for certain exercises. Overall, children's self-confidence has grown as a result of the approach, and learning achievement in the state is high.

Targeted additional support for students via trained teaching assistants is another way of improving learning for students at risk of falling behind. An initial early reading intervention delivered by teaching assistants in London schools in the United Kingdom was found to improve reading skills and have longer-term positive effects for children with poor literacy skills. In India, schools with trained female community volunteers helped increase the proportion of children able to do two-digit addition. While only 5% of pupils were able to carry out simple subtraction at the start of the study, 52% could by the end of the year, compared with 39% in other classes.

Interactive radio instruction can lead to improvement in learning outcomes for disadvantaged groups by addressing barriers such as distance and poor access to resources and quality teachers, as identified in a review of 15 projects. The use of interactive radio can be particularly beneficial in conflict contexts. Between 2006 and 2011, the South Sudan Interactive Radio Instruction project enrolled over 473,000 pupils, providing half-hour lessons linked to the national curriculum and including instruction in English, local language literacy, mathematics and life skills elements such as HIV/AIDS and land mine risk awareness. In locations that were out of range of any radio signal, the project distributed digital MP3 players to be used by trained teachers.

Digital classrooms can complement classes given by less qualified teachers. In India, the Digital Study Hall project provides digital video recordings of live classes taught by expert teachers, which are shown by DVD in rural and slum schools. An evaluation of four schools in Uttar Pradesh found that, after eight months, 72% of pupils had improved test scores.

Innovation in the use of technology can help improve learning by enriching teachers' curriculum delivery and encouraging flexibility in pupil learning. Greater

access to computers in schools can also help reduce the digital divide between low and high income groups. However, new technology is not a substitute for good teaching.

Teachers' ability to use ICT as an educational resource plays a critical role in improving learning. A study in Brazil found that the introduction of computer laboratories in schools had a negative impact on student performance, but that teachers' use of the Internet as a pedagogical resource supported innovative classroom teaching and learning, resulting in improved test scores.

Children from low income groups are less likely to have experience of ICT outside school and may thus take longer to adapt to it and need additional support. In Rwanda, 79% of students who used computers in secondary school had previously used ICT and the Internet outside school (primarily in Internet cafés). However, girls and rural children were at a disadvantage because they were less likely to have access to Internet cafés or other ICT resources in their communities.

One promising way of increasing the accessibility of ICT for teaching and learning is 'mobile learning' – the use of mobile phones and other portable electronic devices, such as MP3 players. In rural India, an after-school programme for children from low income families used mobile phone games to help them learn English. This resulted in significant learning gains in tests of the spelling of common English nouns, particularly for children in higher grades who had stronger foundation skills.

Where children are learning little and dropping out early, second-chance programmes can teach foundation skills through a shorter cycle of learning, which is one way of accelerating children's progress and raising achievement for disadvantaged groups. Several such accelerated learning programmes raise achievement for disadvantaged groups in less time than formal government schools, allowing them the opportunity to catch up and to re-enter formal schools. They usually benefit from small classes and teachers speaking the local language recruited from surrounding communities. In northern Ghana, for example, 46% of those who had attended an accelerated learning programme and re-entered primary school attained grade-appropriate levels in grade 4, compared with 34% of other students.

Formal primary schools can also use accelerated learning programmes in situations where large proportions of students are over-age for their grade. In Brazil, over-age students in grades 5 to 8 were taught a substantially modified curriculum, covering more than one grade in a year. Overall, schools' share of students with a two-year age grade gap was reduced from 46% in 1998 to 30% in 2003. Once the students were restored to the right grade for their age, they were able to maintain their performance and their promotion rates in secondary school were comparable with those of other students.



### *Beyond the basics: transferable skills for global citizenship*

Curricula need to ensure that all children and young people learn not just foundation skills, but also transferable skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, advocacy and conflict-resolution, to help them become responsible global citizens. An interdisciplinary approach involving hands-on, locally relevant educational activities can also develop students' understanding of the environment and build skills to promote sustainable development.

Between 1999 and 2004, Germany introduced an interdisciplinary programme that fostered participatory learning and provided opportunities for students to work together on innovative projects for sustainable living. An evaluation found that participants had a greater understanding of sustainable development than their peers, and up to 80% of the students said they had gained transferable skills. In South Africa, an initiative links the curriculum to practical actions such as adopting recycling systems and water harvesting in schools, using alternative energy sources for cooking, cleaning up public spaces, creating indigenous gardens and planting trees. Participating schools have reported increased environmental awareness and improved sustainability practices at school and in homes.

Empowering children through communication and advocacy can help them reduce their vulnerability to environmental risk. In the Philippines, which is prone to environmental disasters, a strong commitment to integrating disaster risk reduction into education has led children to take an active role in making their communities safer.

**The Philippines has integrated disaster risk reduction into education**

Programmes that emphasize inclusion and conflict resolution can also help bolster individuals' rights and build peace. In Burundi in 2009, secondary schools taught communication and conflict mediation skills to help returning refugees. After two years, trained teachers had abandoned corporal punishment, issues of sexual abuse and corruption were more easily debated, relationships had improved among pupils, their peers and their teachers, and pupils were acting as mediators in the resolution of minor conflicts at school and in the community.

# Unlocking teachers' potential to solve the learning crisis

This Report identifies the 10 most important teaching reforms that policy-makers should adopt to achieve equitable learning for all.

## **1** *Fill teacher gaps*

On current trends, some countries will not be able to meet their primary school teacher needs by 2030. The challenge is even greater for other levels of education. Thus, countries need to activate policies that begin to address the vast shortfall.

## **2** *Attract the best candidates to teaching*

It is important for all children to have teachers with at least a good secondary-level qualification. Therefore, governments should invest in improving access to quality secondary education to enlarge the pool of good teacher candidates. This reform is particularly important if the pool of better-educated female teachers is to increase in disadvantaged areas. In some countries, this will mean introducing affirmative measures to attract more women into teaching.

Policy-makers also need to focus their attention on hiring and training teachers from under-represented groups, such as ethnic minorities, to serve in their own communities. Such teachers, familiar with the cultural context and local language, can improve learning opportunities for disadvantaged children.

## **3** *Train teachers to meet the needs of all children*

All teachers need to receive training to enable them to meet the learning needs of all children. Before teachers enter the classroom, they should undergo good quality pre-service teacher education programmes that provide a balance between knowledge of the subjects to be taught and knowledge of teaching methods.

Pre-service teacher education should also make adequate classroom teaching experience an essential part of training to become a qualified teacher. It should equip teachers with practical skills to teach children to read and to understand basic mathematics. In ethnically diverse societies, teachers should learn to teach in more than one language. Teacher education programmes should also prepare teachers to teach multiple grades and ages in one classroom, and to understand how teachers' attitudes to gender differences can affect learning outcomes.

Ongoing training is vital for every teacher to develop and strengthen teaching skills. It can also provide teachers with new ideas to support weak learners, especially in the early grades, and help teachers adapt to changes such as a new curriculum.

Innovative approaches such as distance teacher education, combined with face-to-face training and mentoring, should also be encouraged so as to extend both pre-service and ongoing teacher education to greater numbers of teachers.

## **4** *Prepare teacher educators and mentors to support teachers*

To ensure that teachers have the best training to improve learning for all children, it is important for those who train teachers to have knowledge and experience of real classroom teaching challenges and how to tackle them. Policy-makers should thus make sure teacher educators are trained and have adequate exposure to the classroom learning requirements facing those teaching in difficult circumstances.

To enable newly qualified teachers to translate teaching knowledge into activities that improve learning for all children, policy-makers should provide for trained mentors to help them achieve this transition.

#### **5** *Get teachers to where they are needed most*

Governments need to ensure that the best teachers are not only recruited and trained, but also deployed to the areas where they are most needed. Adequate compensation, bonus pay, good housing and support in the form of professional development opportunities should be used to encourage trained teachers to accept positions in rural or disadvantaged areas. In addition, governments should recruit teachers locally and provide them with ongoing training so that all children, irrespective of their location, have teachers who understand their language and culture and thus can improve their learning.

#### **6** *Use a competitive career and pay structure to retain the best teachers*

Governments should ensure that teachers earn at least enough to lift their families above the poverty line and make their pay competitive with comparable professions. Performance-related pay has intuitive appeal as a way to motivate teachers to improve learning. However, it can be a disincentive to teach students who achieve less well, have learning difficulties or live in poor communities. Instead, an attractive career and pay structure should be used as an incentive for all teachers to improve their performance. It can also be used to recognize and reward teachers in remote areas and those who support the learning of disadvantaged children.

#### **7** *Improve teacher governance to maximize impact*

Governments should improve governance policies to address the problems of teacher misconduct such as absenteeism, tutoring their students privately and gender-based violence in schools. Governments can also do more to address teacher absenteeism by improving teachers' working conditions, making sure they are not overburdened with non-teaching duties and offering them access to good health care. Strong school leadership is required to ensure that teachers show up on time,

work a full week and provide equal support to all. School leaders also need training in offering professional support to teachers.

Governments need to work closely with teacher unions and teachers to formulate policies and adopt codes of conduct to tackle unprofessional behaviour such as gender-based violence. Codes of practice should refer clearly to violence and abuse, making penalties consistent with legal frameworks for child rights and protection.

Where private tutoring by teachers is prevalent, explicit guidelines, backed up with legislation, so that teachers do not sacrifice classroom time to teach the school curriculum privately are needed.

#### **8** *Equip teachers with innovative curricula to improve learning*

Teachers need the support of inclusive and flexible curriculum strategies designed to meet the learning needs of children from disadvantaged groups. Equipped with the appropriate curriculum content and delivery methods, teachers can reduce learning disparities, allowing low achievers to catch up.

Policy-makers should ensure that early grade curricula focus on securing strong foundation skills for all and are delivered in a language children understand. It is important for curriculum expectations to match learners' abilities, as overambitious curricula limit what teachers can achieve in helping children progress.

Getting out-of-school children back into school and learning is vital. Governments and donor agencies should support second-chance accelerated learning programmes to achieve this goal.

In many countries, radio, television, computers and mobile technologies are being used to supplement and improve children's learning. Teachers in both formal and non-formal settings need to be given skills to maximize the benefits of technology in ways that help narrow the digital divide.

It is not sufficient for children to learn foundation skills in school. A curriculum that promotes interdisciplinary and participatory learning, and fosters skills for global citizenship, is vital for teachers to help children develop transferable skills.

**9** *Develop classroom assessments to help teachers identify and support students at risk of not learning*

Classroom-based assessments are vital tools to identify and help learners who are struggling. Teachers need to be trained to use them so that they can detect learning difficulties early and use appropriate strategies to tackle these difficulties.

Providing children with learning materials to evaluate their own progress, and training teachers to support their use, can help children make great strides in learning. Targeted additional support via trained teaching assistants or community volunteers is another key way of improving learning for students at risk of falling behind.

**10** *Provide better data on trained teachers*

Countries should invest in collecting and analysing annual data on the number of trained teachers available throughout the country, including characteristics such as gender, ethnicity and disability, at all levels of education. These data should be complemented by information on the capacity of teacher education programmes, with an assessment of the competencies teachers are expected to acquire. Internationally agreed standards need to be established for teacher education programmes so that their comparability is ensured.

More and better data on teacher salaries in low and middle income countries are also needed to enable national governments and the international community to monitor how well teachers are paid and to raise global awareness of the need to pay them well.

## Conclusion

To end the learning crisis, all countries, rich and poor, have to ensure that every child has access to a well-trained and motivated teacher. The 10 strategies outlined here are based on the evidence of successful policies, programmes, strategies from a wide range of countries and educational environments. By implementing these reforms, countries can ensure that all children and young people, especially the disadvantaged, receive the good quality education they need to realize their potential and lead fulfilling lives.



© Eva-Lotta Jansson/UNESCO

# TEACHING AND LEARNING: Achieving quality for all

The 2013/4 *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* shows that a lack of attention to education quality and a failure to reach the marginalized have contributed to a learning crisis that needs urgent attention. Worldwide, 250 million children – many of them from disadvantaged backgrounds – are not learning the basics, let alone the further skills they need to get decent work and lead fulfilling lives.

*Teaching and learning: Achieving quality for all* describes how policy-makers can support and sustain a quality education system for all children, regardless of background, by providing the best teachers. The Report also documents the reductions in aid that are holding back progress towards education goals, and shows how countries can boost education funding by tapping into domestic resources more effectively.

As the international community prepares to formulate post-2015 development goals, the Report makes a compelling case for giving education a central place in the global framework. It presents the latest evidence from around the world of the power of education – especially of girls – to help improve health and nutrition, reduce poverty, boost economic growth and protect the environment.

The *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* was established in order to inform, influence and sustain genuine commitment to achieving the Education for All goals by 2015. The Report monitors progress towards the goals across some 200 countries and territories, and acts as an authoritative reference for education policy-makers, development specialists, researchers and the media.

*I chose to be a teacher because I believe that education has the power to transform the society we live in. What motivates me to be a good teacher is to be an active agent in this change that is so necessary for my country, to fight against discrimination, injustice, racism, corruption and poverty. Our responsibility as teachers is enormous, and our commitment to provide quality education must be renewed every day.*

– Ana, teacher, Peru

*What motivates me to become a good teacher is to be able to impart my gift to make a difference in the life of another person. It is the fulfilment of being able to inspire others to find their own identities and be the best of who they are.*

– Lea, teacher, Philippines

*What motivates me is knowing that I have the power to transform the somewhat predetermined lives of the poorest classes of my country. I see education as the only tool to help them all, and as the only valid way to achieve a 'good life'.*

– Darwin, teacher, Ecuador

*I believe everyone has a right to education: to be literate, numerate and critical; to enjoy learning for learning's sake. I believe everyone has a right to a job and self-sufficiency and that they need the education to do that. I believe anything less than my best means that the above things cannot happen.*

– Laura, teacher, United Kingdom

*I consider myself a good teacher because I had good teachers, and I have been successful in my own studies and career. I figure that if someone taught me to be this successful, I can use the same passion and skills to help others.*

– Fwanshishak, teacher, Nigeria



UNESCO  
Publishing



[www.unesco.org/publishing](http://www.unesco.org/publishing)

[www.efareport.unesco.org](http://www.efareport.unesco.org)