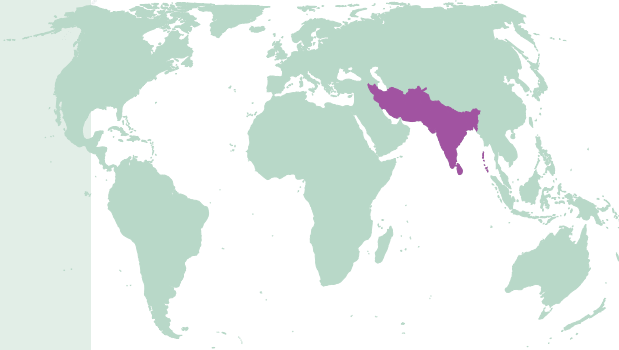


Regional overview: South and West Asia



EFA progress and challenges

Early childhood care and education: a long way to go

The path towards Education for All starts long before primary school. Adequate nutrition, good health and a language-rich home environment during the early years are vital for later success in education and in life. Yet millions of children in South and West Asia lack these advantages, and suffer from poor health and low access to pre-school programmes.

Child mortality is one of the most sensitive barometers of the well-being of children under 5. It captures premature death and provides a view of the health and nutritional status of the next generation of primary school-age children. High levels of child mortality and malnutrition not only represent a great development challenge in their own right, but are also symptoms of wider problems that directly affect education.

- Each year in South and West Asia over 3 million children – about one-third of the global total – die before they reach the age of 5. The most recent estimates indicate that, on average, 83 of every 1,000 children born in South and West Asia will not reach age 5, mainly due to poverty-related infectious diseases, hunger and inadequate access to basic services, such as clean water and sanitation. While the situation is improving, the observed rate of decline in child mortality in the region for 1990–2006 was around one-third what is required to achieve the MDG-related target of cutting under-5 deaths by two-thirds by 2015.
- There are huge differences in the current under-5 mortality rate among countries in the region, varying from a low of 13‰ in Sri Lanka and 35‰ in the Islamic Republic of Iran to 95‰ in Pakistan and 235‰ in Afghanistan (among the highest rates in the world). Within countries, being poor and living in a rural area dramatically reduce the prospect of a child's surviving to the fifth birthday.
- Malnutrition is a major health problem in the region and one of the biggest barriers to achieving universal primary education (UPE). The nutrition crisis starts in the womb.

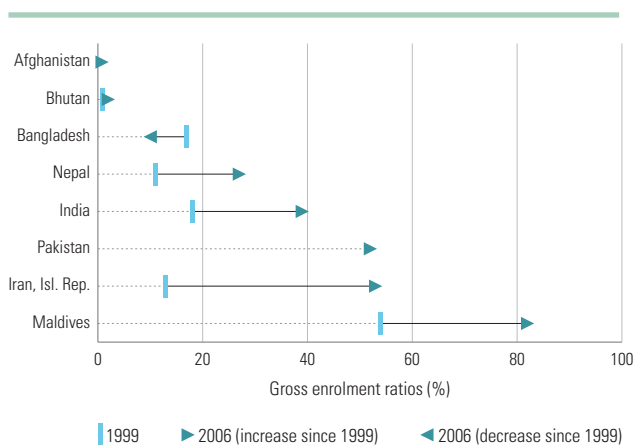
Overall, South and West Asia, like the Arab States and sub-Saharan Africa, still lags behind other regions in terms of distance from the EFA goals. Over 390 million adults in the region continue to be denied the right to literacy, and 18 million children are out of school. While progress in reducing gender disparities has occurred, girls and women remain at a distinct disadvantage in school participation and literacy acquisition. The region faces similar challenges for many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially in relation to child mortality and nutrition. Progress in EFA could help unlock progress on the MDGs, but will require a strengthened commitment to equity.

Persistent inequalities are clearly hindering progress towards the EFA goals at all levels: regional, national and subnational. The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009 finds that disparities based on wealth, location, gender and disability are denying millions of children a good-quality education. Focusing on those being left behind, the Report highlights current approaches to education governance reform. These approaches all too often fail the poor and disadvantaged. This regional overview for South and West Asia reveals that, while the region as a whole continues to advance in most EFA goals, wide disparities between and within countries are holding back overall progress.

Many women in the region suffer poor nutritional intake before and during pregnancy, often leading to low birth weight. In 2006, around 16% of children in developing countries – some 19 million – were born underweight; the share was 29% in South and West Asia. Malnutrition, such as iodine or iron deficiency, affects a child's physical and mental capacity and is one of the main reasons children perform poorly in school and fail to achieve their learning potential. In Afghanistan, India and Nepal, almost half of all children under 5 suffer from moderate to severe stunting. Relatively high stunting rates for children under 5 are also found in Bangladesh (43%), Bhutan (40%) and Pakistan (37%); rates are lower in the Islamic Republic of Iran (15%) and Sri Lanka (14%). Much of the region is off track for the MDG target of halving malnutrition by 2015, including countries with high rates of economic growth.¹

- Such crucial early child-care interventions as visits to health clinics and immunization are limited and poorly coordinated in much of South and West Asia. Few children below age 3 have access to programmes of early childhood care and education (ECCE) that comprehensively address health, nutrition and learning needs. Only four countries out of seven with data indicate they have such programmes; they do not exist in Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Changes in pre-primary gross enrolment ratios between 1999 and 2006



- Almost 39 million young children were enrolled in pre-primary education in South and West Asia in 2006, up from 21 million in 1999. This translated into an increase of eighteen percentage points in the average pre-primary gross enrolment ratio (GER) to 39% in 2006. All countries with data except Bangladesh showed increased participation in pre-primary education between 1999 and 2006, with significant improvements in India, Maldives and the Islamic Republic

of Iran. Pre-primary enrolment is still extremely limited in Afghanistan (1%), Bhutan (2%) and Bangladesh (10%), while participation levels above 50% are reported in Maldives, Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

- Good-quality ECCE provision can equip children with cognitive, behavioural and social skills that improve access, retention and learning outcomes in primary education. The interaction between children, carers and teachers is the key determinant of quality ECCE programmes. International research also points to the importance of class or group size, the adult/child ratio, teacher quality, curriculum and the availability of learning materials.
- While ECCE provision in low-income countries is constrained by a lack of resources, it is further limited by government neglect – notably with respect to the poor. Indeed, there are marked disparities in pre-primary education provision within countries. Although vulnerable children from poor households stand to benefit most from early childhood programmes, international evidence indicates that they are least likely to have access to them. Rural-urban gaps and other geographical disparities are also marked in many countries. For example, in Bangladesh, ECCE access among slum dwellers is at the bottom end of the distribution. Factors such as language, ethnicity and religion also influence which households gain access to ECCE services.
- While gender disparities in pre-primary education are less marked than at other levels of education, the need to enrol more girls remains a concern in Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal and Pakistan, which had gender parity indexes (GPIs) ranging from 0.80 to 0.93 in 2006.²

Universal primary education: nations at the crossroads

Progress towards UPE in the region has been steady since 1999. Still, with only six years to 2015, many governments may not fulfil their pledge to achieve UPE unless urgent policy measures are undertaken. The twin challenge is to accelerate increases in access and to strengthen retention so that all children enter and complete a full primary cycle.

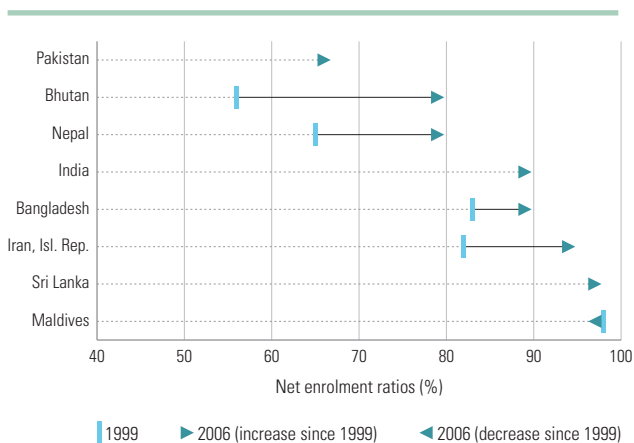
- In South and West Asia, almost 45 million children stepped through a grade 1 classroom door for the first time in 2006 – an increase of almost 11% since 1999. Primary education total enrolment stood at 192 million children in 2006, an increase of 34.5 million since 1999. Given the continued growth in the primary school-age population – especially in Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Maldives and Pakistan – governments will have to work harder at expanding school places in order to maintain existing gains.

1. For some two decades India, which accounts for one in three malnourished children in the world, has been in the fast lane of globalization, registering one of the world's highest economic growth rates. Yet, this economic breakthrough has not translated into similar progress in tackling child malnutrition.

2. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, many more girls than boys are enrolled in pre-primary education (GPI of 1.11), mainly due to the unusual inclusion in the figures of literacy programmes, in which 80% of participants are women.

- The net enrolment ratio (NER) is one of the most robust benchmarks for UPE. For South and West Asia the NER increased slowly in the 1990s: from 70% in 1991 to 75% in 1999 (Figure 2). Since then the regional NER has risen sharply, reaching 86% in 2006. This regional rate of progress was more rapid than for developing countries as a whole and reflects the higher priority attached to primary education in the region.

Figure 2: Changes in primary net enrolment ratios between 1999 and 2006



- Nevertheless, progress towards UPE is uneven. While the NER was 89% or above in Bangladesh, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Maldives and Sri Lanka in 2006, it was 79% in Bhutan and Nepal and a low 66% in Pakistan. Nepal is a striking success story: amid a destabilizing civil conflict, the country increased its NER from 65% (1999) to 79% (2006). Governance reforms involving the transfer of resources and authority to local communities, and incentives aimed at overcoming gender and caste inequalities played an important role in improving participation rates.
- South and West Asia halved its out-of-school population between 1999 and 2006, from 37 million to around 18 million. Nevertheless, the region is still home to about one-quarter of the world's out-of-school population, almost 60% of whom were girls. India and Pakistan together were home to 14 million out-of-school children; another 2 million reside in Bangladesh and Nepal. According to projections, Pakistan will have the largest out-of-school population (3.7 million) in the region by 2015, while Bangladesh and India are on track to get almost all their children in school by 2015.
- About two-thirds of the 18 million out-of-school children in the region have enrolled in school in the past but dropped out, while 31% are unlikely to enrol unless governments embark on policies to reach marginalized children, especially those in rural and impoverished areas. The inability to retain children in school particularly affects boys:

79% of out-of-school boys in the region have dropped out, compared with 53% of girls. On the other hand, girls' access to school remains a big issue in India and Pakistan where they are less likely to ever enrol than boys.

- Getting children into school is a necessary condition for achieving UPE, but not a sufficient one. What counts is completion of a full primary cycle. Though access to and participation in primary schooling are improving in the region, high repetition and dropout rates mean that millions of children fail to complete primary education. The median percentage of repeaters (for all grades) in South and West Asia was below 5% in 2006. However, high repetition levels were reported in Afghanistan (16%) and Nepal (21%). In Nepal, repetition rates in grade 1 exceeded 30%, more than in all the other countries. In India, where the percentage of primary school repeaters was quite low (3.4%), under-age children represent more than 20% of primary school pupils and account for the bulk of repeaters.³
- Early and late school entry and grade repetition affect the age distribution of children in school and increase the likelihood of dropping out. In Nepal and India, for example, only a small proportion of enrolled children (25% or less) attend the appropriate grade for their age.
- Large percentages of children in South and West Asia never complete primary education. In fact the median survival rate to the last grade of primary education was particularly low: 73% in 2006, the lowest after sub-Saharan Africa among developing regions. Survival rates to last grade varied from 65% in Bangladesh to 84% in Bhutan. Survival rates have improved in Bhutan, India and Nepal since 1999 but were still below 80% in 2006. Not all pupils who reach the last grade complete primary school. Among the three countries for which data are available – Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan – primary completion rates are at or below 55%.
- In sum, all countries in the region face massive challenges in retaining students through a complete primary school cycle, and thus urgently need to adopt strategies to expand access to out-of-school children and improve quality standards to retain them once they are enrolled.
- Within-country disparities are rampant throughout the region, with the richest households enjoying the highest level of school participation. While their countries may have a long way to go to UPE, children from the wealthiest 20% of households in countries such as Bangladesh, India and Nepal have primary net attendance rates close to 90%, while rates among children from the poorest quintile are much lower. Wealth-based inequalities in primary net attendance rates are wider in India than in Bangladesh

3. The prevalence of under-age children in this country suggests parents are using the first primary grade to make up for inadequate pre-school provision. Expanding pre-primary education participation could reduce repetition in the early primary grades, with important efficiency and equity benefits.

and Nepal. Some 30% to 40% of the children in the poorest two quintiles in these three countries do not attend school, while non-attendance levels are 11% or less among the richest quintiles.

- Household wealth also influences how children progress in education. For example, in India, while children from poor households are often almost as likely to start school as their richer counterparts, they are far more likely to drop out, with inequality widening progressively as children progress through the system.
- Poor rural girls and boys are at a distinct disadvantage: in many countries, rural children are less likely to attend school, and more likely to drop out, than their urban cousins. Living in slums also carries a marked handicap in terms of school attendance. In Bangladesh, attendance rates for children in slums were lower even than average rates in rural areas.
- Overall, reaching UPE will require the development of policies targeting the poor and the marginalized. This means targeting hard-to-reach households in remote rural areas and urban slums that face multiple disadvantages, including chronic poverty, high mortality, and poor health and nutritional status.
- Child labour, ill health and disability are three barriers to UPE.
 - *Child labour* not only violates a children's right to education, it is associated with delays in school entry and reduced school attendance as well as early dropout. Household poverty and associated labour demands pull children into labour markets. These factors are triggered by an inability to cope with crises such as drought or flooding. In Pakistan, for example, survey evidence shows that around 10% of poor households withdraw children from school as a deliberate coping strategy in times of economic and environmental hardship.
 - *Inadequate nutrition and poor health* also undermine a child's success in school. For example, research in Sri Lanka found that children aged 6 to 16 who had more than five bouts of malaria in a year scored 15% lower in language tests than children who had fewer than three, controlling for other factors such as income and location.
 - In many developing countries *children with disabilities* are still among the most marginalized and least likely to attend school. For example, the difference in school attendance rates between children aged 6 to 11 with and without disabilities is 10% in India. Speeding up progress towards UPE will require policies focused on facilitating access for disabled children – and on political leadership to change public attitudes.

Post-primary education

Increasing access to secondary and tertiary education supports government commitments to EFA, provides further incentive for children to complete primary school, expands the supply of qualified teachers and improves knowledge levels and skill training for the labour market. While participation in post-primary education is expanding, access remains limited for most of the region's young people. National disparities in participation and completion tend to reinforce existing social inequalities.

- Of children who complete the primary education cycle, girls are at a disadvantage to enter secondary education. The regional median transition rate from primary to secondary education was 87% in 2005, and lower for girls (83%) than for boys (90%).
- In 2006, nearly 123 million students were enrolled in secondary education, an increase of almost 26% since 1999. The average secondary GER rose from 45% to 51% during this period. In Bhutan, India and Maldives, the GER increased by ten percentage points or more.
- Nevertheless, participation levels in secondary education vary greatly in the region, with the highest GERs in Sri Lanka (87%), Maldives (83%) and the Islamic Republic of Iran (81%) and the lowest in Afghanistan (19%) and Pakistan (30%).
- Technical and vocational education and training are relatively undeveloped. Only 2% of secondary level enrolments are in such programmes, a percentage unchanged since 1999.
- The transition from lower to upper secondary education is a critical dropout point in many education systems. The gap in the GER between the two levels is especially large (more than thirteen percentage points) in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- As with primary education, disparities in secondary education participation and survival are marked, especially by household wealth, residence, age and language. In India, the net attendance rate in secondary education is 91% for children from the wealthiest quintile but only 58% for the poorest quintile. In Bangladesh the respective percentages are 69% and 48%. Wealth-based inequalities in survival rates are more pronounced in the secondary grades in India and Nepal. Gender and rural-urban disparities in secondary level survival rates also occur but to a lesser extent than wealth-based ones.
- The demand for tertiary education is growing in South and West Asia with more than 17 million students enrolled, an increase of 77% since 1999. Nevertheless, access to higher education remains very limited for most young people, with a regional average GER of 11% in 2006, up from 7% in 1999.

Participation levels in higher education are higher in the Islamic Republic of Iran (27%) and, to a lesser extent, in India (12%) than in the rest of the region.

Learning needs of young people and adults

Most countries in the region have yet to seriously address the challenging tasks that EFA goal 3 entails: meeting the diverse learning needs of young people and adults through lifelong learning programmes and skill acquisition.

- In South and West Asia the immense unmet need for such programmes reflects the past experiences of millions of youth who never attended school or who dropped out and never acquired basic skills, and more than 390 million adults who have been denied the right to literacy. Given the understandable pressure to extend the cycle of basic education and expand secondary education, there is a clear risk that the disparity between governments' commitments to formal and non-formal education will be further accentuated in coming years.
- Many governments give too little priority to the learning needs of youth and adults in their education strategies and policies. Inadequate public funding hampers provision and weak monitoring obscures learning deficits among adults. The fact that no quantitative targets were established at Dakar, apart from the main literacy target, contributes to a lack of urgency.
- Adult learning programmes are found in a myriad of formal, informal and non-formal settings. In South and West Asia non-formal education programmes differ in terms of objectives, target groups, content, pedagogy, scale and provider type. Many large-scale literacy programmes, often extending to life skills (e.g. in health and civic rights), livelihoods (income generation, farming) and/or equivalency education, are supported by international non-government organizations and bilateral and multilateral agencies, especially in poor countries such as Afghanistan and Nepal. In Nepal, non-formal provision is seen principally in terms of adult education, while Bangladesh takes a broader view, stressing flexibility and programme diversity to complement formal education.
- There is a strong case to be made for clarifying the purpose of lifelong learning provision, improving data flows and, critically, strengthening political commitment in this area. As a first step towards more effective monitoring, improved information is needed about how different stakeholders define adult learning needs, which groups are targeted, what types of skills are taught, how programmes are implemented and whether they are sustainable given current funding sources.

Adult literacy

Reading, writing and calculating are essential skills for living in today's world. Literacy and numeracy enhance self-esteem, contribute to empowerment and educational attainment, improve health, increase employment opportunities and lower child mortality. Despite these advantages for individuals and societies, literacy remains a neglected goal. Barriers to widespread literacy include insufficient access to quality education, weak support for young people exiting the school system, poor funding and administrative fragmentation of literacy programmes, and limited opportunities for adult learning. Many of these barriers disproportionately affect marginal and vulnerable groups, and exacerbate socio-economic inequalities.

- Adult illiteracy remains an enormous challenge in South and West Asia. In 2000–2006 some 393 million adults in the region – or more than half of the global total – continue to be denied the right to literacy; almost two-thirds are women. In absolute numbers the challenge of adult illiteracy is greatest in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. Unless governments in the region take urgent steps, the scale of the problem will have changed very little by 2015, when it is projected that 380 million adults will lack a minimum level of literacy and numeracy.
- Between 1985–1994 and 2000–2006, the regional adult literacy rate increased from 48% to 64%, although the current rate remains lower than that for all developing countries (79%). The range of adult literacy rates varies widely, from less than 30% in Afghanistan and between about 50% and 55% in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Pakistan to 65% in India and more than 90% in Sri Lanka and Maldives. On current trends, only Maldives will reach the adult literacy goal by 2015.
- Improving women's literacy is especially crucial for progress on the literacy goal, and also for EFA targets such as gender equality. Relative to other regions gender disparities in adult literacy are greatest in South and West Asia (with a GPI of 0.71 in 2000–2006). Despite some improvement over time, there is a pressing need to address women's literacy needs, particularly in Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan, where gender disparities in adult literacy are greatest.
- In addition to gender, disparities in adult literacy revolve around other markers of disadvantage: poverty, residence, caste, ethnicity, language and age. In general, illiteracy rates are highest in the countries with the greatest poverty. The link between poverty and illiteracy is observed both among Indian states and also at the household level, with the literacy rates of the poorest households substantially lower than those of the wealthiest. In Pakistan regional disparities in adult literacy rates vary from 72% in the Islamabad Capital Territory to only 44% in rural Balochistan and Sindh. Dalit caste groups in Nepal have significantly lower adult literacy rates than the rest of the population.

- Achieving EFA implies paying sustained attention to youth and adult literacy needs through diverse and flexible literacy programmes. It also means developing the literate environment – in other words, promoting the availability and use of multilingual written materials and new technology, which encourage literacy acquisition, a reading culture, improved literacy retention and access to information.

Gender parity and equality

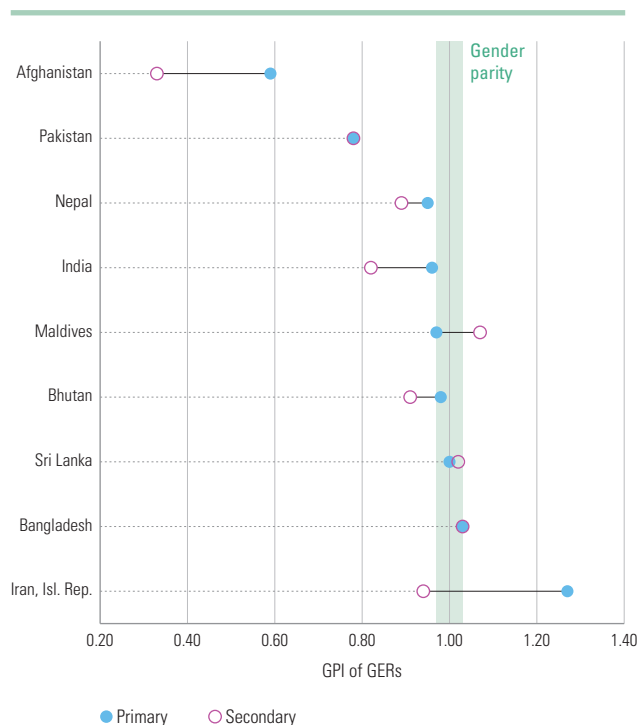
The Dakar Framework sets out a two-part gender equity agenda: first, to achieve gender parity in school participation and second, to improve gender equality in educational opportunities and outcomes.

- In South and West Asia important progress has been made towards gender parity in primary and secondary education since 1999, but most countries still have a long way to go (Figure 3). In fact, only Bangladesh and Sri Lanka had achieved the EFA gender parity goal (defined as a GPI of GER ranging from 0.97 to 1.03) by 2006.
- Although most countries in the region have yet to achieve gender parity in primary education, disparities between boys and girls have declined significantly: the GPI of the primary GER rose from 0.84 in 1999 to 0.95 in 2006. Especially impressive is the reduction of gender disparities in Bhutan, India and Nepal, which have achieved or are close to achieving gender parity in primary education. Significant challenges remain for Afghanistan (GPI of 0.59) and Pakistan (0.78). In the Islamic Republic of Iran, many more girls than boys were enrolled in primary schools (GPI of 1.27).⁴
- Trends in gender disparities in access to grade 1 of primary education broadly mirror those for enrolment. They have significantly improved in the region: the GPI of the gross intake rate went from 0.85 in 1999 to 0.94 in 2006. Some countries reported spectacular progress. For example, the GPI of Nepal increased by 30%, enabling the country to achieve gender parity in intake levels in 2006.
- In South and West Asia girls are less likely to repeat grades in primary education.⁵ In Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Pakistan, girls are less likely to drop out than boys and more likely to successfully complete the primary school cycle. The reverse is true in India.
- Gender disparities in secondary schools existed throughout the region in 2006 except in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Disparities were more prevalent in secondary education than in primary education, with disparities favouring boys

4. The high gender disparity in favour of girls in the Islamic Republic of Iran is due to the inclusion in primary enrolment data of literacy programmes for adults, where learners are mostly women.

5. For example, even in Afghanistan, which had fewer than seventy girls per hundred boys entering primary school in 2005, the percentage of primary school repeaters was 14% among girls but 18% for boys.

Figure 3: Gender disparities in primary and secondary gross enrolment ratios, 2006



in Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal and Pakistan, and girls in Maldives. Reducing gender disparities is an important challenge in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which had secondary GPIs of 0.33 and 0.78, respectively, in 2006. Bhutan, India and Nepal have registered rapid progress, largely due to increased primary enrolment and completion for girls, rising average incomes and falling poverty rates. Public policy has also played a key role.⁶

- Since 1999, growing numbers of women have been participating in tertiary education, resulting in a marked reduction in gender disparities. The regional GPI for tertiary education increased from 0.64 in 1999 to 0.76 in 2006. Large gender disparities still favour men in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal (GPIs below 0.70), while more women than men are enrolled in tertiary institutions in the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- Within countries there is a strong association between poverty and gender inequalities in education. These disparities are inversely related to wealth: they increase for girls born into the poorest households, with the disadvantage being greater in secondary than in primary education. Indeed, gender differences in primary NERs tend to be wider for poorer households in countries such as India and Nepal that also have relatively low levels

6. In Bangladesh, which has transformed patterns of gender disparity within a decade or so, the creation of financial incentives for girls' education, particularly in secondary education, has been critical.

of school attendance. For example, in India the GPI of the primary net attendance rate in 2006 was only 0.66 for the poorest quintile, whereas girls in the richest 20% of households had achieved gender parity. The gap was even more striking at secondary level, with the GPI about 0.50 for the bottom quintile compared with an average value of 0.96 for the richest quintile.

- Poverty often interacts with other markers of disadvantage – for example, being born into a group that is indigenous, a linguistic minority, of low caste or geographically isolated – thereby magnifying gender disparities. For example, India's caste system significantly affects school participation among girls. Among girls aged 7-14 belonging to scheduled castes or tribes, 37% do not attend school, compared with 26% of girls from the majority Hindu group. In Pakistan, girls in urban areas and from the highest income group are almost as likely as their counterparts to attend school or complete five primary grades. By contrast, one girl per three boys attends school among the poorest rural households.
 - Cultural attitudes and practices that promote early marriage, enforce the seclusion of young girls or attach more value to boy's education are all barriers to gender equity. In Nepal, 40% of girls are married by age 15 – a clear barrier to school completion. Distance to school can also have a impact: in Pakistan, having a public school in a village increases the probability that girls aged 10 to 14 will be enrolled. Overcoming these inequalities requires gender-sensitive public policy and governance initiatives such as removing fees and providing incentives for girls to be in school. It also implies removing cultural barriers to equity, which requires long-term provision of good-quality public education and strong commitments by political leaders, backed by legislation enforcing the equal rights of girls.
 - Reducing gender disparities in formal education does not automatically translate into gender equality in educational opportunities and outcomes. Girls and boys achieve different outcomes not just in overall performance but also by subject. Education systems and classroom practices partly explain these differences, but such school-based factors interact with wider social, cultural and economic forces that influence expectations, aspirations and performances along gender lines. Four themes emerge from a compilation of recent research and assessments:
 - *Girls continue to outperform boys in reading literacy and language arts:* This effect holds across a diverse group of countries, including those with significant gender disparities in school participation. In the PIRLS 2006 assessment girls scored higher on the combined reading literacy scale than did boys in almost all participating countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran.
 - *Girls are catching up with boys in mathematics at all grades in both primary and secondary education.*
- Increasingly, girls are performing in mathematics at levels equal to, or even above, those of boys. This is also true in the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the TIMSS 2003 assessment showed. While boys were outperforming girls significantly in the 1995 survey, their advantage disappeared over time.
- *While boys tend to maintain an advantage in science, the gap is often small.* Again in the Islamic Republic of Iran, TIMSS 2003 results showed differences significantly in favour of girls in grade 4 while no difference was reported in grade 8.
 - *Girls and boys favour different subjects in tertiary education:* Despite the increase in female participation in tertiary education, some subject areas remain male domains. In South and West Asia, the median share of females enrolled in science was 40% in 2006, falling to 24% in engineering. By contrast, women are much more represented in fields long considered 'feminine', such as education, humanities and the arts. This is particularly the case in countries such as the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. Recent studies indicate complex socialization processes influence gender differences in choice of subject areas. These include poor career counselling, lack of role models, negatives attitudes from families, fear of mathematics and fear of being in the minority.
 - Social conditioning and gender stereotyping can limit ambition and create self-fulfilling expectations of disparities in outcomes. Recent research underlines a strong association between the degree of gender equality in society and the size of gender gaps in mathematics achievement. Teacher attitudes and practices that translate into different treatments of boys and girls can also affect cognitive development and reinforce gender stereotyping. So can gender biases in textbooks. In India, for example, an average primary textbook with 115-130 pages carries 80-100 illustrations, over half of them depicting men and boys, 28% neutral objects, 14% mixed and only 6% showing women and girls. Men occupy spaces that are conventionally seen as public and outdoor assignments that project them in stronger roles like policemen, engineers, lawyers, professors, pilots and mechanics. While unrefined examples of sexism have largely disappeared, progress towards eliminating gender bias in textbooks is very slow.
 - Female teachers can serve as role models for young girls, potentially countering gender stereotypes. In South and West Asia, female teachers tend to be more represented in lower levels of education while the reverse is true at higher levels. They also tend to be clustered in urban schools. A recent survey in eleven middle-income countries shows that pupils in rural primary schools are more likely than urban pupils to be taught by male teachers. This is particularly the case in India. Rural girls thus have less chance of contact with female role models who might raise their expectations and self-confidence.

Quality of education

The ultimate aim of EFA is that children receive the basic skills they need to enrich their lives, expand their opportunities and participate in society. The quality of the education they receive – in terms of what they learn, under what conditions and the crucial role of teachers – is key.

Learning outcomes

- While international assessments consistently spark intense political debate, less attention is paid to the absolute level of learning, especially in developing countries. Recent national learning assessments reveal that many children in the region emerge from school with only the most basic skills. For example, a 2005 survey in Punjab, Pakistan, found that more than two-thirds of grade 3 students could not write a sentence in Urdu, and a similar percentage was unable to subtract three-digit numbers. In India, a 2007 survey found that fewer than half the children in grade 3 could read a text designed for grade 1 students; only 58% of students in grade 3 and 38% in grade 4 could subtract or divide.
- The deep learning deficits in the region are also confirmed by international assessments. PIRLS 2001 found that in the Islamic Republic of Iran, over 40% of grade 4 pupils read at or below the lowest level. Using items based on TIMSS, tests were administered to 6,000 ninth-grade students in the Indian states of Rajasthan and Orissa in 2005. Not only were average scores very low, with 30% to 40% of the children unable to reach a low international benchmark, but the score distribution was highly unequal: the difference between the top 5% and bottom 5% in both states was among the highest in the world.
- International assessments tend to understate the divide between developed and developing countries since they assess learning outcomes only among *schooled* children. The exclusion of out-of-school children in such assessments can distort national learning profiles. In rural India, for example, when out-of-school children were tested they were half as likely as in-school children to listen to and answer a subtraction problem.
- Disparities in learning outcomes are most pronounced *within* countries and exist at every level: between regions, communities, schools and classrooms. Disparities in learning achievements within a given country can be explained by three major factors: student background, the education system and school context.
 - **Student background.** Apart from inherent ability, student achievement is the product of social, economic and cultural circumstances, such as household income, parental education, gender, ethnicity, home language and other family characteristics. These student endowments significantly influence how much children actually learn and the extent of variation in learning outcomes.

- **Education system.** The organization of the education system includes the mix of students, grade promotion, ability grouping, multigrade teaching and school-leaving exams, to name a few. Whereas policies such as extended ECCE provision can increase equity, others, such as highly selective academic streams, can lead to greater disparities.

- **School context.** An effective school learning environment relies on basic infrastructure, professional leadership, motivated teachers, sufficient instructional time⁷ and learning materials, nourished children ready to learn and the use of performance-enhancing monitoring and evaluation. Yet many essential resources, such as electricity, seats, desks, textbooks and libraries, are scarce in the region. In India and Sri Lanka, one-third or more of students attend schools with insufficient toilets. Both countries also suffer an acute shortage of seating. Half or more of school heads in Sri Lanka said their schools needed complete rebuilding or some classrooms needed major repairs. Nearly half of students in Sri Lanka attend schools with no libraries. In many countries some students have to walk great distances to school and arrive with an empty stomach.

- In many developing countries key school resources are unequally distributed between urban and rural areas. Poor children are more likely to attend inadequately equipped schools, which exacerbates other inequalities. Clearly, governance decisions concerning school infrastructure, classroom processes, and the recruitment, deployment and effectiveness of teachers, as well as the student body composition, matter a great deal for learning.

Teachers

For students to perform well, an adequate supply of well-trained and motivated teachers, and reasonable pupil/teacher ratios (PTRs) are needed. Teachers, and the ways they are recruited, trained and deployed among schools, play an important role in improving student learning and reducing disparities.

- The primary school teaching staff in South and West Asia increased by 13% between 1999 and 2006, and now stands at 4.9 million. On current trends teacher recruitment will have to increase by more than 70% by 2015 as an estimated 3.6 million new primary teachers will be needed, mainly to fill posts left by retirement and other departures.
- There is a broad consensus that classes should have no more than forty students per teacher (a PTR of 40:1) for a quality learning environment. South and West Asia had an

7. Significant disparities in instructional time are reported. An in-depth study of Bangladesh's government primary schools and registered non-government primary schools found large disparities in annual lesson time. The bottom 10% of government schools provided fewer than 500 lesson hours per year in grades 3, 4 and 5, whereas the top 10% provided more than 860; the equivalent range at the non-government schools was 470 to 700 hours.

average primary PTR of 40:1 in 2006 but this was up from 37:1 in 1999. The supply of new teachers has failed to keep pace with increases in primary school enrolment. Some countries suffer an acute shortage of teachers. In Afghanistan, for example, the national primary PTR exceeded 80:1 in 2006 and in Bangladesh the ratio was 50:1. In Bhutan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Maldives and Sri Lanka, by contrast, PTRs were considerably below the regional average. PTRs in Afghanistan and India have increased since 1999.

- Trained teachers are in short supply in many countries. In primary education, the median share of adequately trained teachers was 68% in 2006. The percentage of trained teachers ranged from less than 40% in Afghanistan and Nepal to over 85% in Bhutan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan.
- Excessive PTRs, shortages of trained teachers and questions about teachers' skills point to wide-ranging governance problems. Teacher shortages often result from inadequate investment in education and questionable incentive structures for teacher recruitment and retention. At primary level in particular, teacher training is often fragmented and incomplete – in some cases, non-existent.
- National PTRs often mask large disparities within countries, again influenced by location, income and type of school. In Nepal, the PTR in the central region, Dhanusa, was 82:1 in 2005 – double the national average. In Bangladesh a 2004 survey of 10 of the 493 *upazilas* (subdistricts) found ratios ranging from 36:1 to 93:1. While urban PTRs tend to be higher than in rural areas, untrained teachers are often concentrated in poor rural areas.⁸ PTRs also depend on whether schools are publicly funded.⁹ Because children from poorer households are more likely to attend government schools, unequal PTRs both reflect and reinforce wider inequalities.
- Excessive PTRs and shortages of trained teachers are only part of the problem. Other factors affecting the quality of teaching and learning include teacher absenteeism,¹⁰ low teacher morale related to poor salaries and working conditions, and the effect of HIV/AIDS on teacher mortality rates.

8. In India most untrained or undertrained teachers are concentrated in rural areas and cater for the poorest and most deprived children.

9. In Bangladesh government schools had average ratios of 64:1 while non-government schools had ratios of 40:1. Wealthier children often attend schools with better PTRs and a greater proportion of trained teachers than their poorer counterparts.

10. In a recent study, teacher absenteeism rates in primary school averaged 27% in India. Data suggest that teacher absenteeism is more pronounced in public schools, schools with poorer infrastructure, rural areas, poor states and schools serving children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. A recent study put the cost of absenteeism in India at around US\$2 billion per year.

The EFA Development Index

The EFA Development Index (EDI) is a composite measure that captures overall progress. Ideally, it should include all six EFA goals, but due to serious data constraints, it currently focuses only on the four most easily quantified goals, attaching equal weight to each: UPE, adult literacy, gender parity and equality, and quality, each proxied by one indicator.¹¹

For the school year ending in 2006, EDI values could be calculated for six of the nine countries in the region (Table 1).

- One country – Maldives – was close to achieving EDI, with a value of 0.96. Its position had improved since the previous Report with significant progress in the total primary NER.
- No countries were in the intermediate position (0.80-0.94); the Islamic Republic of Iran and Maldives fell into this category in the 2008 Report.
- Five of the six countries covered in the region – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan – were far from achieving EFA as a whole, with EDI values below 0.80. With the exception of Bangladesh and India, where participation of primary school-age children is relatively high (total primary NER well above 90%), these low-EDI countries face multiple challenges: primary-school participation is low, adult illiteracy and gender disparities and inequalities in education are pervasive, and education quality is poor, indicating the need for a significant improvement across the EFA spectrum.
- Only for Bangladesh and Nepal was it possible to examine changes in the EDI between 1999 and 2006. Progress was substantial in Nepal, where the EDI increased by over 22%, but more modest in Bangladesh, where the index rose by 3.7%. Nepal's progress has occurred on all four of the quantifiable EFA goals, especially in relation to school participation and retention.

Table 1: Mean distance from the four EFA goals

EFA achieved (EDI between 0.97 and 1.00)	Close to EFA (EDI between 0.95 and 0.96)
None	Maldives
Intermediate position (EDI between 0.80 and 0.94)	Far from EFA (EDI below 0.80)
None	India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan

11. UPE (goal 2) is proxied by the total primary NER (includes children of primary school age who are enrolled in either primary or in secondary education); adult literacy (goal 4) is proxied by the literacy rate of those aged 15 and above; gender parity and equality (goal 5) is proxied by the gender-specific EFA index (GEI), which is an average of the GPIs for primary and secondary GERs and for the adult literacy rate; and quality of education (goal 6) is proxied by the survival rate to grade 5. The EDI value for a given country is an arithmetic mean of the four proxy indicators. It falls between 0 and 1, with 1 representing full EFA achievement.

Overall EFA achievement: inequalities within counties remain the rule

The EDI provides a snapshot based on national averages. But progress towards EFA, as the word 'all' implies, should be shared equally across the whole of society. One drawback of the standard EDI is that it does not capture variation based on wealth and others indicators of disadvantage. To address this shortcoming, an EFA Inequality Index for Income Groups (EIIIG) was constructed for thirty-five developing countries, including three of the nine South and West Asian countries (Bangladesh, India and Nepal), using household survey data.¹²

- The EIIIG shows large disparities in overall EFA achievement between income groups. The disparities are greater in Nepal than in the two other countries, with the EIIIG varying from 0.61 for the poorest quintile to 0.93 for the richest group, a ratio of 1.5:1. Bangladesh and India, with higher overall EFA achievement, also have fewer inequalities, with ratios of the poorest to the richest at 1.2 and 1.4, respectively.
- Progress towards overall EFA achievement has benefited the poorest in those three countries with data. The EIIIG ratio of the richest to poorest population quintile decreased 14% or more in India and Nepal.
- Overall EFA achievement is greater in urban than in rural areas, whatever the wealth group. Rural residents are particularly disadvantaged in India and Nepal, while in Bangladesh the urban poor seem to be more disadvantaged.

Raising quality and strengthening equity: why governance matters

Education governance is not an abstract concept. It affects whether children have access to well-resourced schools that are responsive to local needs. It is also concerned with ensuring that teachers are trained and motivated, and that teachers and schools are accountable to parents and communities for improving learning outcomes. Education governance is about how policies are formulated, priorities identified, resources allocated, and reforms implemented and monitored.

Governance reform is a prominent part of the EFA agenda. The Dakar Framework for Action set out broad principles, which include creating responsive, accountable and participatory education systems. The widely held conviction is that moving decision-making away from remote government agencies and making the process more localized and transparent will make education service providers more responsive to the needs and concerns of the poor. However, experience in both the developed and developing world point to highly variable results. Two key findings emerge. First, there is no blueprint for good governance: each country has to develop its own national and local solutions to governance problems. Second, governments across the world have attached insufficient weight to equity in their design of governance reforms. There is an urgent need to ensure that the interests of the poor, the marginalized and the vulnerable are placed firmly at the centre of the governance agenda.

This Report focuses on four areas which highlight important currents in governance reform.

Financing education for equity

Additional funding is needed if the world is to achieve the Dakar goals. But increasing funding is part of a broader set of education policy challenges. Countries also need to improve efficiency and develop strategies addressing inequalities in education finance if EFA is to be achieved.

- In many countries, corruption is a major source of inefficiency and inequity – the former because it means more public money provides fewer inputs, the latter because the costs of corruption invariably fall most heavily on the poor. Monitoring the use of funds through the *tracking of public expenditure* can help reduce corruption. In Bangladesh such tracking found little leakage in the teacher payment system, some leakage in textbook expenditure and a misallocation of stipend payments due to exaggerated attendance figures. Some 10% of households reported making informal payments to get their children in the primary school stipend programme.

12. The EIIIG uses a different set of indicators to provide a measure similar to the EDI, showing distribution of overall EFA achievement within countries by wealth and by rural/urban location. The EIIIG differs from the EDI in three main ways. The total primary net attendance rate is used rather than the total primary NER. As many household surveys do not include literacy rates, this EIIIG component is based on the proportion of 15- to 25-year-olds with five or more years of education. Finally, the survival rate for the EIIIG is defined as the proportion of 17- to 27-year-olds who report having at least five years of education among those that reported having at least one year of education.

- Public spending on education has the potential to redress inequalities but often reinforces them instead. Governments have developed various approaches aimed at making spending more equitable, including providing *school grants* and devising *formula funding* where allocations are adjusted according to need. However, outcomes have been mixed.
- *Financial decentralization* can exacerbate the gaps between rich and poor areas. Unless central governments retain a strong role in redistributing financial resources from richer to poorer areas, the financing gaps in education are likely to widen.

Choice, competition and voice: school governance reform and EFA

School governance reforms aim to strengthen the voice of the poor and increase their choices by transferring responsibility to communities, parents and private providers. An overarching lesson from experience with these reforms is that they are not a substitute for government's responsibility to ensure that the public education system is of good quality.

- *School-based management* describes a range of reforms that aim to give teachers, parents and communities more autonomy over decision-making in schools. In some cases, these reforms have improved learning achievements and strengthened equity. More widely, though, there is limited evidence of improvement in either learning outcomes or teaching practices. In Nepal, a school improvement plan is a condition for the release of government block grants, but funds are very limited. The underfinancing of many schools has led to parents being asked for the funds to recruit teachers and meet other basic needs.
- Encouraging the *participation of parents and communities in decision-making* can make schools more responsive to local needs. In India the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme aims to empower village education committees, which consist of parents, the school principal and the local government head, to monitor school performance. However, studies find that local power structures associated with poverty and social inequality limit the influence of the poor and marginalized.
- Expanding school choice is widely viewed as an incentive for schools to improve their performance. Some governments use *vouchers* and other instruments to facilitate transfers from public to private providers of education, or *contract out the management of government schools* to non-state providers. However, these reforms have not unambiguously raised achievement standards. Often they have widened inequalities.
- *Low-fee private schools* are changing the education landscape in many developing countries, including India and Pakistan. Their rapid but uneven growth – often with the support of international donors – is a symptom of failure

in the availability or quality of government schools. In parts of India and Pakistan, children enrolled in low-fee private schools perform better, on average, than those in government schools, once adjustments are made for socio-economic status and other variables. This does not mean government provision is necessarily worse than private provision, or that the quality of private schools reaches an acceptable standard. In Pakistan, the top-performing public-sector providers outperform private schools. The real problem: there are many more poorly performing government schools, in which learning outcomes are considerably lower than in the worst private schools. Moreover, low-fee private schools risk widening the gap between those who can afford to pay and those who cannot. In Hyderabad, India, a city with a fast-growing market for low-fee private primary schools, it is estimated that a family living on the minimum wage would have to spend roughly one-quarter of its income to put three children through such a school. In many countries low-fee private schools currently operate as a governance-free zone. Public-private partnerships offer one regulatory option, whereby governments provide financial subsidies to support private schools – Pakistan is an example. Whatever the course of public-private partnership projects, the majority of children from poor households in Pakistan rely on government provision – and will continue to do so. Currently 60,000 children benefit from public-private partnership programmes. This is in a country with 2.7 million boys and 4.1 million girls out of school.

Strengthening teacher governance and monitoring

Many school systems fail to provide an education that meets even the most basic standards for quality and equity. To address this, attention needs to be paid to teacher recruitment, deployment and motivation, together with effective use of information from learning assessments and school supervision.

- From one perspective, *teacher salaries* are viewed as crowding out spending on learning materials and other aspects of education provision. From an alternative perspective, they are seen as too low, even near or below the poverty line in some South and West Asian countries, with obvious implications for teacher motivation and standards.
- Hiring *contract teachers* can help address the twin challenges of teacher shortages and high absenteeism. In India, the hiring of contract teachers, begun in the 1990s, has expanded rapidly since 2002 to reach underserved villages and rural schools, particularly in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Contract teachers are paid one-fifth to one-half of the salaries of civil service teachers. Overall, relying on contract teachers can weaken quality by lowering the standard of the teaching staff or reducing overall teacher morale.

- Teacher deployment is often inequitable within countries, which can exacerbate inequality in learning. In Pakistan, for example, lack of transport, security problems and poor housing in remote rural areas hinder equitable deployment of teachers, especially women. In Afghanistan, while teacher supply has increased, teacher deployment remains a problem. The government seeks to redress the imbalance of teacher provision by improving and assuring the compensation of teachers working in community schools in outlying areas. Prioritizing the *training of teachers from under-represented groups*, together with local recruitment, can make a difference.
- Some governments see *performance-related pay* as a strategy to improve teacher performance, including by reducing teacher absenteeism. In India a small-scale experiment combined performance-related pay with the close monitoring of teachers and found absenteeism reduced and student test scores raised. However, in other instances such intervention sometimes had perverse effects – for example, teachers disproportionately focusing on the best-performing students.
- Using information from *learning assessments to monitor* quality standards and equity is one of the keys to improving learning outcomes. Increasingly, information from learning assessments is being used to identify problems and inform policy, with encouraging results. In Sri Lanka, for example, national learning assessments have been used to establish minimum learning standards against which pupils' achievements are monitored.
- *School supervision* is an essential aspect of monitoring, not only to oversee teacher and school performance but also to identify and support needed quality improvements.

An integrated approach to education and poverty reduction

Education planning is an important indicator of political commitment to equity. In Sri Lanka, for example, the Education Sector Development Framework for 2006–2010 tackles inequality by developing equity-based strategies to improve school access and quality. These include: targeting resources to disadvantaged schools, setting clear targets for reducing disparities, deploying trained teachers to difficult schools and expanding the number of special education centres and programmes for street children.

Sustained progress towards EFA depends also on the effective integration of education planning within wider poverty reduction strategies, for an obvious reason: poverty, poor nutrition and ill health are formidable barriers to success in education.

- In many countries *poverty reduction strategy papers* (PRSPs) are failing to make the link between education and poverty reduction, with a weak link to the EFA agenda, limited

consideration for equity in target-setting, a disconnect with broader governance reform and poor integration of cross-sectoral approaches. Positive examples include Bangladesh, which links education to labour market progress and nutritional improvement, and Afghanistan, where both the PSRP and education plan address sensitive conflict issues.

- *Social protection programmes* are making a strong contribution to education by addressing problems in health, nutrition and child labour. In Pakistan social protection initiatives such as microfinance, public works, pensions and various social safety nets seek to reduce the financial vulnerability faced by many marginalized households.
- Political commitment together with *consultation processes* that provide opportunities for civil society organizations to participate in policy discussions are crucial. The challenge is to extend participation to make sure the voices of the poor and vulnerable are heard.

Financing education

National financing

- Low-income countries tend to invest the smallest proportion of GNP in education. In South and West Asia, countries' median public expenditure on education was only 3.3% of their national income in 2006, the lowest level of all developing regions. The share of GNP devoted to education was on the low side in Pakistan and Bangladesh (2.7% or less), higher in Bhutan (7.2%) and Maldives (8.3%).
- In South and West Asia about 15% of total government expenditure was devoted to education, this being close to the median for all developing countries (16%). This measure of a government's commitment to education ranges from low levels in India (11%) and Pakistan (12%) to higher levels in Bhutan (17%) and the Islamic Republic of Iran (19%). Since 1999, the shares have increased in Nepal, but declined in Bangladesh and India.
- There are huge gaps in per-student spending between developed and developing countries. In 2006, average per-student expenditure in primary school was US\$5,100 in developed countries (in constant dollars), only about US\$120 in Bangladesh and Nepal, and about US\$925 in the Islamic Republic of Iran. South and West Asia was home to 28% of the world's 5- to 25-year-olds but accounted for just 7% of global spending on public education.
- Spending on teachers dominates education budgets, especially in poorer countries. In India, for example, 80% of the primary recurrent budget goes to teacher salaries, while only a small percentage goes to textbooks and other teaching and learning materials. The large share of teacher

remuneration in education financing is not, as is sometimes assumed, an indicator that teachers themselves are overpaid: many have salary levels close to the poverty line. Rather it is an indication that the primary education sector is under-resourced.

International aid

- While the main responsibility for financing basic education lies with governments, external aid can make a difference. In some countries, international aid has facilitated the abolition of primary school tuition fees, leading to a large expansion of primary school enrolment. In Bangladesh aid has improved gender parity by supporting stipends for girls in secondary education and, more recently, for girls from poor families in primary schools. In Nepal aid has helped reduce the number of out-of-school children by supporting teacher recruitment, school construction and incentives for low-caste children.
- External aid to education is an important source of finance for EFA in most countries in South and West Asia. Countries in the region received an annual average of almost US\$1.1 billion in aid to education over 2005 and 2006, of which about half (US\$526 million) was allocated to the basic education level.
- In 2005–2006 about 11% of total aid to education worldwide went to South and West Asia, a figure that was slightly lower than in 1999 (12%).
- On average, aid to basic education per primary school-age child in South and West Asia amounted to only US\$3 in 2005–2006. Aid allocations to individual low-income countries varied considerably: while India and the Islamic Republic of Iran and Nepal received less than US\$1 of aid to basic education per primary school-age child, it was above US\$20 in Afghanistan, Bhutan and Maldives.
- How aid is delivered is as important as how much aid is delivered. Several countries in the region have in recent years seen a shift from many individual aid projects to aid to the implementation of national sector or subsector programmes. While the shift has been far from easy, it can yield positive results. These include greater sector coherence, better oversight of donor activities and increased financial flexibility.

Acronyms and definitions

ECCE: early childhood care and education. Programmes that, in addition to providing children with care, offer a structured and purposeful set of learning activities either in a formal institution (pre primary or ISCED 0) or as part of a non-formal child development programme. ECCE programmes are normally designed for children from age 3 and include organized learning activities that constitute, on average, the equivalent of at least 2 hours per day and 100 days per year.

GPI: gender parity index. Ratio of female to male values (or male to female, in certain cases) of a given indicator. A GPI of 1 indicates parity between sexes; a GPI above or below 1 indicates a disparity in favour of one sex over the other.

GER: gross enrolment ratio. Total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education. For the tertiary level, the population used is that of the five-year age group following on from the secondary school leaving age. The GER can exceed 100% due to late entry or/and repetition.

GNP: gross national product. Gross domestic product plus net receipts of income from abroad. As these receipts may be positive or negative, GNP may be greater or smaller than GDP. This latter indicator is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy, including distributive trades and transport, plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products.

NER: net enrolment ratio. Enrolment of the official age group for a given level of education, expressed as a percentage of the population in that age group.

PIRLS: Progress in Reading Literacy Study.

PTR: pupil/teacher ratio. Average number of pupils per teacher at a specific level of education, based on headcounts for both pupils and teachers.

TIMSS: Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.

UPE: Universal primary education.

Table 2: South and West Asia, selected education indicators

Country or territory	Total population (000)	Compulsory education (age group)	EFA Development Index (EDI)	Adult literacy rate (15 and over)				Early childhood care and education			
				1985–1994 ¹		2000–2006 ¹		Child survival and well-being		Pre-primary education	
				Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	Under-5 mortality rate (‰)	Moderate and severe stunting (%)	GER	
										1999	2006
2006	2006	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	2005–2010	1996–2006 ¹	Total (%)	Total (%)		
South and West Asia											
Afghanistan	26 088	6-15	...	...	...	28	0.29	235	54	...	0.8
Bangladesh	155 991	6-10	0.753	35	0.58	52	0.81	69	43	17	10
Bhutan	649	6-16	0.777	...	...	54	0.61	65	40	0.9	2
India	1 151 751	6-14	0.794	48	0.55	65	0.70	79	48	18	39
Iran, Islamic Republic of	70 270	6-10	...	66	0.76	84	0.88	35	15	13	53
Maldives	300	6-12	0.959	96	1.00	97	1.00	42	25	54	82
Nepal	27 641	5-9	0.738	33	0.35	55	0.61	72	49	11	27
Pakistan	160 943	5-9	0.652	...	...	54	0.59	95	37	...	52
Sri Lanka	19 207	5-13	...	...	...	91	0.96	13	14	...	...
Sum				Weighted average				Weighted average		Weighted average	
South and West Asia	1 612 841	...	...	48	0.57	64	0.71	83	...	21	39
Developing countries	5 284 165	...	...	68	0.77	79	0.85	81	32	27	36
World	6 578 149	...	...	76	0.85	84	0.89	74	31	33	41

Table 2 (continued)

Country or territory	Secondary education								Tertiary education	
	GER in lower secondary		GER in upper secondary		GER in total secondary				GER	
	2006		2006		1999		2006		2006	
	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)
South and West Asia										
Afghanistan	25	0.35	12	0.28	...	...	19	0.33	1	0.28
Bangladesh	60	1.10	31	0.94	45	1.01	44	1.03	6	0.53
Bhutan	59	0.97	29	0.70	37	0.81	49	0.91	6	0.59
India	71	0.88	41	0.75	44	0.71	54	0.82	12	0.72
Iran, Islamic Republic of	86	0.91	77	0.96	78	0.93	81	0.94	27	1.11
Maldives	124	1.13	...	...	43	1.07	83	1.07	–	–
Nepal	66	0.89	24	0.87	34	0.70	43	0.89	6	0.40
Pakistan	42	0.76	21	0.80	...	...	30	0.78	5	0.85
Sri Lanka	103	1.05	73	0.97	...	...	87	1.02	...	...
Weighted average					Weighted average				Weighted average	
South and West Asia	66	0.89	39	0.80	45	0.75	51	0.85	11	0.76
Developing countries	75	0.94	46	0.93	52	0.89	60	0.94	17	0.93
World	78	0.95	53	0.95	60	0.92	66	0.95	25	1.06

Data underlined are for 2003. Data in italics are for 2004. Data in bold italics are for 2005. Data in bold are for 2007 or 2006 for survival rate to last grade.

1. Data are for the most recent year available during the period specified.

2. Data reflect the actual number of children not enrolled at all, derived from the age-specific enrolment ratios of primary school age children, which measure the proportion of those who are enrolled in either primary or secondary school (total primary NER).

3. Based on headcounts of pupils and teachers.

Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009, statistical tables; UNESCO Institute for Statistics; CRS online database (OECD-DAC, 2008).

Primary education										Country or territory
NER total (%)		GPI of GER (F/M)		Out-of-school children ² 2006 (000)	Survival rate to last grade total (%)		% of trained teachers 2006	Pupil/teacher ratio ³		
1999	2006	1999	2006		1999	2005		1999	2006	
South and West Asia										
...	...	0.08	0.59	...	...	...	36	36	83	Afghanistan
83	89	0.99	1.03	1 371	65	65	48	56	51	Bangladesh
56	79	0.85	0.98	20	81	84	92	42	29	Bhutan
...	89	0.84	0.96	7 208	62	73	...	35	40	India
82	94	0.95	1.27	391	...	...	100	27	19	Iran, Islamic Republic of
98	97	1.01	0.97	0.9	...	...	68	24	16	Maldives
65	79	0.77	0.95	702	58	79	31	39	40	Nepal
...	66	...	0.78	6 821	...	70	85	...	39	Pakistan
...	97	...	1.00	51	...	...	...	...	22	Sri Lanka
Weighted average		Weighted average		Sum	Median		Weighted average			
75	86	0.84	0.95	18 203	...	73	68	37	40	South and West Asia
81	85	0.91	0.94	71 911	...	81	85	27	28	Developing countries
82	86	0.92	0.95	75 177	...	88	...	25	25	World

Education finance				Country or territory
Total public expenditure on education as % of GNP		Total aid to basic education (constant 2006 US\$ millions)	Total aid to basic education per primary school-age child (constant 2006 US\$)	
1999	2006	2005–2006 annual average	2005–2006 annual average	
South and West Asia				
...	...	143	33	Afghanistan
2.3	2.6	101	6	Bangladesh
...	7.2	2	21	Bhutan
4.5	3.3	47	0.4	India
4.5	5.2	1	0.2	Iran, Islamic Republic of
...	8.3	2	32	Maldives
2.9	<u>3.2</u>	18	5	Nepal
2.6	2.7	190	10	Pakistan
...	...	24	16	Sri Lanka
Median		Sum	Weighted average	
2.9	3.3	527	3	South and West Asia
4.5	4.4	3 595	6	Developing countries
4.5	4.9	4 376	8	World

Regional overview: South and West Asia



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