



FIXING THE BROKEN PROMISE OF EDUCATION FOR ALL

Findings from the Global Initiative
on Out-of-School Children

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

UNESCO
INSTITUTE
for
STATISTICS

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UNESCO Institute for Statistics

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is the statistical office of UNESCO and is the UN depository for global statistics in the fields of education, science and technology, culture, and communication. The Institute is the official source of data used to monitor progress towards Education for All and related targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

The UIS education database is the most comprehensive in the world covering a wide range of indicators—from girls' enrolment in primary school to the mobility of university students. It is updated three times each year based on results of the UIS annual education survey, which is conducted in more than 200 countries and territories. Established in 1999, the Institute serves Member States and the UN system, as well as inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, research institutes, universities and citizens interested in high-quality data. Our central goal is to improve the opportunities and living conditions of children and adults around the world by producing the data needed for effective policies and interventions.

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UNICEF promotes the rights and wellbeing of every child, in everything we do. Together with our partners, we work in 190 countries and territories to translate that commitment into practical action, focusing special effort on reaching the most vulnerable and excluded children, to the benefit of all children, everywhere.

UNICEF is a vital part of international efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015. UNICEF's Education Section provides policy and programming expertise on the ground for the Out-of-School Children Initiative. It is involved in advancing education in countries around the world and is a global leader in advocating for equity in education and improvements in learning outcomes. Among its contributions is serving as the secretariat for the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). UNICEF is also on the forefront of promoting inclusion of Education for All goals in the post-2015 development agenda.

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Download the data in this report

This report uses DataLinks, which allow you to download Excel files with the data presented in most of the figures and statistical tables. In the electronic version of this report, click on the link beside the DataLink icon. For the print copy, type the link starting with <http://dx.doi.org> into your Internet browser.

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Foreword

Education represents the hopes, dreams and aspirations of children, families, communities and nations around the world—the most reliable route out of poverty and a critical pathway towards healthier, more productive citizens and stronger societies. Not surprisingly, when people are asked to list their priorities, education tops survey after survey, poll after poll.

There is consensus at virtually every level, from the poorest family in the most remote village to the global policy leaders who are shaping the world's future development goals: education matters. This consensus has been translated into concrete action, propelling millions of children once denied an education into the classroom. In the 15 years since the launch of the Millennium Development Goals—which set the target for every child to complete a full course of primary education by 2015—the latest data show that the number of primary school-age out-of-school children has dropped by 42%, and for girls by 47%, despite rapid population growth.

Why, then, are there still 58 million children, roughly between the ages of 6 and 11, out of school globally? Each and every one of these children is a stark reminder of the broken promise to achieve universal primary education by the original deadline of 2015.

Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All, a report produced by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and UNICEF, could not be more timely. As the international community renews its commitment to advance every child's right to education, it explores why global progress has stalled since the early 2000s, when millions of additional children poured into the world's classrooms, and provides the data and analysis needed to move forward and reach every child excluded from education.

With its rich combination of data and analysis, this report provides a nuanced assessment of why some children never make it into the classroom at all, why some children start going to school far later than others, and why some children are more likely than their peers to drop out before they complete their schooling. It reminds us—if any reminder were needed—of the critical need for good data to inform the educational policies that can reduce the barriers that continue to stand between children and their fundamental right to an education.

This report sets out some of those policies and strategies. They include a deeper focus on improving the quality of education so that children will be more likely to go to school and *stay* in school if the education on offer is fit for purpose. And, given the alarmingly high number of adolescents out of school—63 million worldwide in 2012—it advocates for universal *secondary* education, drawing from and building on the lessons learned since 2000 on universal primary education.

Finally, this report shows the children behind the numbers. The boy who pushes a cart each day in a Kyrgyzstan bazaar to help feed his family. The girl pulled out of school in Yemen and married off against her will when still a child. The child in Sri Lanka, humiliated at school for lacking proper shoes, who drops out altogether rather than be demoted to a lower grade. The Namibian child with an undiagnosed hearing impairment who struggles at school. The Syrian refugee child turned away from one over-burdened school after another.

As the international community renews and expands its commitments as part of the post-2015 development agenda, we must focus on these children, and the millions of others struggling to realise their right to an education—and to fulfil their dreams for a better future. By working together and promoting greater investment, we can and must dismantle the barriers that stand in their way, one by one—and in doing so, deliver on our global promise of education for every child.



Irina Bokova
UNESCO Director-General



Anthony Lake
UNICEF Executive Director



Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

Harish, a 16-year-old boy from Polonnaruwa, explained that he was sometimes punished for coming to school without proper shoes; but his family could not afford new ones. He was not good in his studies and the principal wanted to demote him to a lower grade. However, as he was 14 years old at the time, he was reluctant to be in a lower grade and so dropped out.

OOSCI Country Study on Sri Lanka
(UNICEF and UIS, 2013a)

The numbers are out, the data have been analysed and the conclusions are clear: despite substantial gains in school enrolment over the past 15 years, the world has missed the goal of universal primary education by 2015. The failure to deliver on what seemed to be such a realistic and achievable goal represents a broken promise to millions of children who continue to be denied their fundamental right to a primary education.

It is true that remarkable progress has been made on primary enrolment, particularly in the early 2000s, spurred in large part by the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All goals. As a result, the number of out-of-school children of primary school age worldwide fell by 42% between 2000 and 2012. However, the report *Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All: Findings from the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children* confirms that progress has left millions of children unreached, progress has not been equitable and progress has stalled.

Progress on the rate and number of out-of-school children has stalled since 2007

9% of primary school-age children and 17% of adolescents of lower secondary school age are excluded from education

Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All draws on government-backed national studies from a diverse group of countries participating in the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children, launched in 2010 and led by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and UNICEF. These reports have marshalled a wide range of data sources—both quantitative and qualitative—to reveal crucial information on the scale and magnitude of this challenge and provide detailed analysis of the barriers to education and potential policy solutions. For many countries, participation in this initiative was an unparalleled opportunity to shine a light on children who have been voiceless and invisible, and to show the human faces behind the numbers.

KEY FINDINGS

The report finds that despite the progress that has been made on primary enrolment, 58 million children of primary school age (aged roughly 6 to 11 years) are out of school worldwide (UIS and EFA GMR, 2014). If current trends continue, two-fifths of these children—or 15 million girls and 10 million boys—are unlikely to ever set foot in a classroom. Indeed, most

of the 30 million children who are out of school in sub-Saharan Africa will never go to school at all.

While primary education has long been viewed as essential for a child's full development, lower secondary education is also increasingly recognised as the foundation for the acquisition of the skills needed for a healthy and productive life and access to decent work. There is clear consensus within the international community to make universal secondary education a key goal in the post-2015 agenda. Yet here too, the report finds a lack of progress, with 63 million adolescents of lower secondary school age out of school—5 million more than children of primary school age, even though there are twice as many primary school-age children worldwide.

What's more, while access to education expanded considerably at the beginning of the 2000s, progress has stalled, with virtually no change in either the global rate or number of out-of-school children since

2007. The global primary out-of-school rate has now stagnated at around 9%—roughly 60 million children—for the past seven years, while the rate for children of lower secondary school age continues to hover at almost 18% (see **Figure E1**). Across both of these age groups, girls are still more likely to be out of school than boys.

The state of play

- 58 million children of primary school age were out of school in 2012. Of these children:
 - > 23% attended school in the past but left;
 - > 34% are likely to enter school in the future; and
 - > 43% are likely to never enter school.
 - 63 million adolescents of lower secondary school age were out of school.
-

One-third of all out-of-school children of primary school age live in West and Central Africa, the



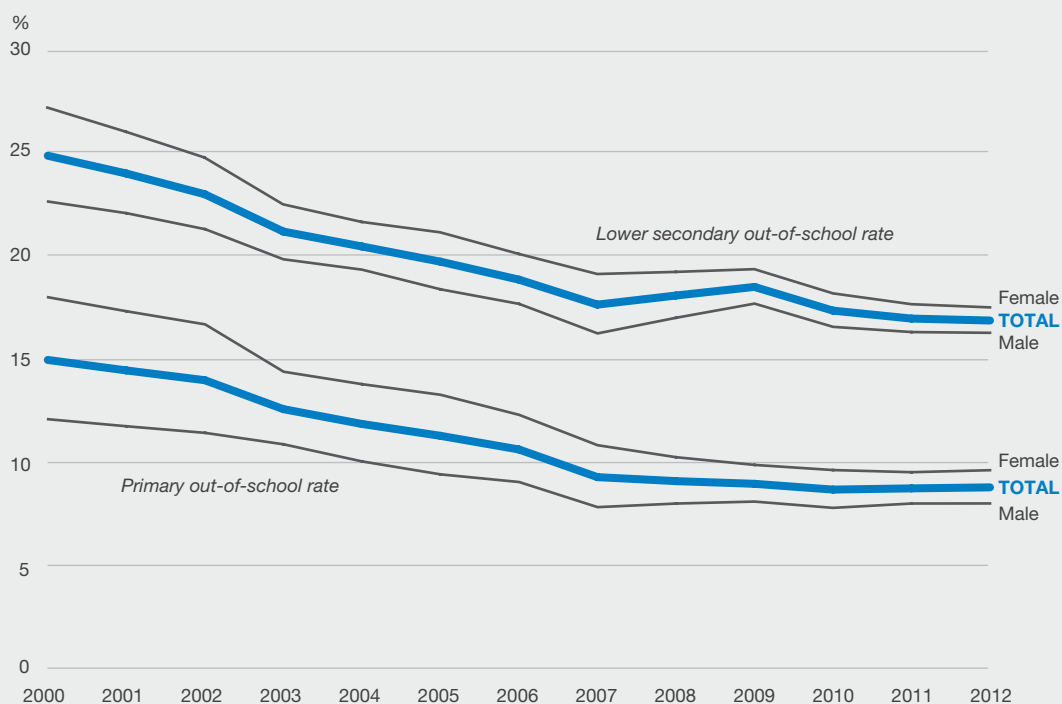
region with the highest out-of-school rate. Here, more than one in four children (31% of all girls and 23% of all boys) are not in school, far more than in any other region. In Eastern and Southern Africa and in South Asia, another 11 million and 10 million children, respectively, are out of school. In relative terms, however, South Asia was faring much better than the sub-Saharan regions because 94% of its primary school-age children were in school, compared to 85% of children in Eastern and Southern Africa and 73% in West and Central Africa. Out-of-school rates were lowest (ranging from 4% to 6%) in: South Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean (6%), in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) and East Asia and the Pacific (5%) and in Western Europe, North America and Australasia (4%).

The global number of out-of-school adolescents is similar to the global number of out-of-school children, even though there were nearly twice as many

children of primary school age in 2012 (650 million) as lower secondary school-age adolescents (374 million) (see **Table E1**). While adolescents are far fewer in number, they are nearly twice as likely to be out of school as children of primary school age (17% compared to 9%). More than 40% of all out-of-school adolescents live in South Asia and one-third in sub-Saharan Africa. Though South Asia had a higher number of out-of-school adolescents, West and Central Africa had the highest lower secondary out-of-school rate in 2012 (40%), followed by Eastern and Southern Africa (27%) and South Asia (26%). In the Middle East and North Africa, 12% of all adolescents of lower secondary school age were not in school. Similar to the primary out-of-school rate, the lowest percentages of out-of-school adolescents were found in Western Europe, North America and Australasia (3%) and in the CEE/CIS region (5%).

The reasons for non-attendance are varied, complex and often interlinked, but the report finds one common thread among these barriers: education

Figure E1. Global out-of-school rate for children of primary and lower secondary school age, 2000-2012



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, August 2014

DataLink: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15220/2014/ed/sd/7/f2.1>

Table E1. Out-of-school children and adolescents of primary and lower secondary school age, 2012

Region	Out-of-school children of primary school age						Out-of-school adolescents of lower secondary school age					
	%			Number (in millions)			%			Number (in millions)		
	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F
W. EUROPE/N. AMERICA/AUSTRALASIA	3.5	3.6	3.4	2.2	1.2	1.1	2.7	2.6	2.8	1.0	0.5	0.5
LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN	6.3	6.5	6.1	3.8	2.0	1.8	7.5	7.7	7.3	2.8	1.5	1.3
CEE/CIS	4.7	4.7	4.8	1.0	0.5	0.5	5.2	5.1	5.5	1.2	0.6	0.6
EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC	4.6	4.6	4.6	6.9	3.6	3.2	8.4	8.6	8.2	7.4	4.0	3.4
SOUTH ASIA	5.8	5.7	5.9	9.8	5.1	4.8	26.4	26.3	26.4	26.3	13.7	12.6
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	9.3	7.6	11.1	4.3	1.8	2.5	11.7	9.4	14.1	2.9	1.2	1.7
EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA	15.1	13.6	16.6	11.0	5.0	6.0	26.9	24.2	29.5	8.5	3.8	4.6
WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA	27.1	23.1	31.2	18.8	8.1	10.7	39.7	37.0	42.4	12.5	5.9	6.6
WORLD	8.9	8.1	9.7	57.8	27.3	30.5	16.8	16.2	17.5	62.9	31.3	31.6

Notes: The data refer to the regional classification used by UNICEF. The category 'Western Europe, North America and Australasia' is not an official UNICEF region, but it is used in this report to group all countries not belonging to other UNICEF regions. It includes countries in which UNICEF does not operate. They are primarily high- and upper-middle-income countries located in Australasia, Europe and North America.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, August 2014

systems and the environment that surrounds them often put particular children at a disadvantage. As a result, progress has not been equitable: the most disadvantaged children continue to be marginalised despite efforts to achieve education for all.

THE CHALLENGES

Faltering global progress towards universal primary education has concealed significant variations among countries. Some countries still have a long way to travel before they approach universal primary enrolment and completion (see **Figure E2** based on the UNESCO *eAtlas of Out-of-School Children* available at <http://on.unesco.org/oosc-map>). At the global level, just a handful of countries—many of them characterised by instability, conflict and extreme poverty—account for one-half of all out-of-school children. Yet, despite needing proportionally more support, they are the countries that have the greatest difficulty in accessing external expertise and financial support. Countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria that are home to around 11 million primary school-age out-of-school children have received disproportionately little external support.

A similar picture can be seen at the regional level, with a relatively small number of countries accounting

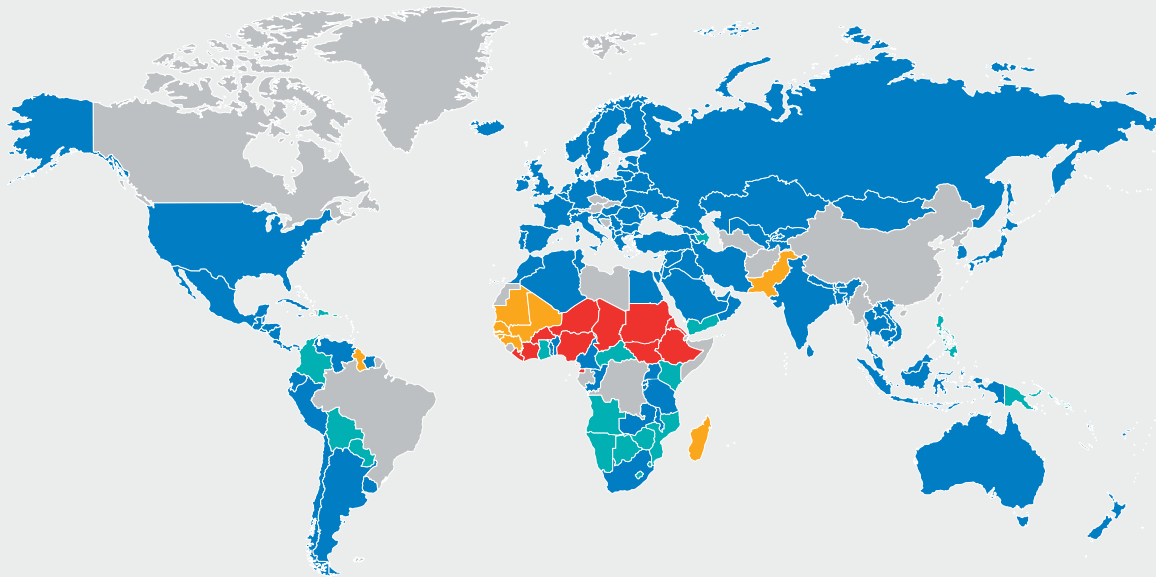
for a disproportionately large percentage of children out of school (see **Figure E3**). Two countries, Sudan and Yemen, account for three-quarters of the children out of school in the Middle East and North Africa. Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Nigeria account for the same proportion in West and Central Africa. Household survey data indicate that Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania account for about one-half of out-of-school children in Eastern and Southern Africa. In South Asia, Pakistan alone accounts for more than one-half of the out-of-school children in the region.

Other countries have made such impressive progress in expanding access to education that they are now in the 'final mile' of their journey towards universal primary education. In these countries, it is the most disadvantaged children—the so-called 'last 10%'—who have not yet been reached. These countries face a different set of challenges. Indeed, they may be increasingly turning their attention to pre-primary and secondary education before finishing the task on primary education and ensuring a fundamental right of every child.

The hardest to reach out-of-school children require more complex and often costly policy responses. While these children might represent only a small

Figure E2. Percentage of out-of-school children of primary school age

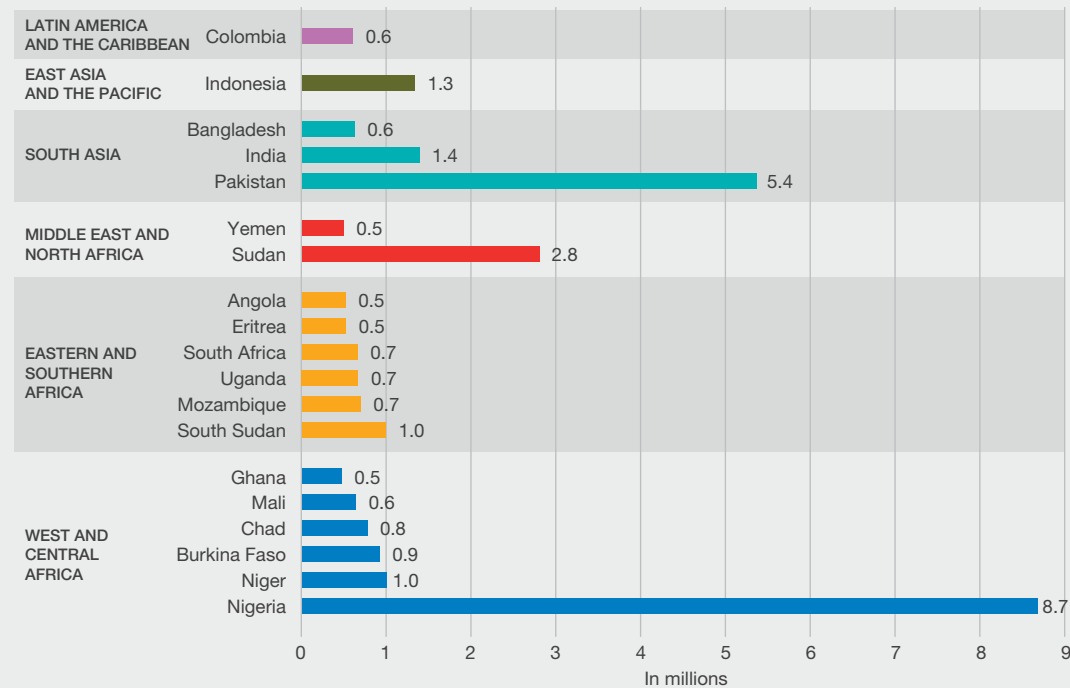
■ Less than 10%
 ■ 10%-19.9%
 ■ 20%-29.9%
 ■ 30% or more
 ■ No data



Note: Data refer to the latest year available between 2002 and 2012.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, August 2014 (<http://on.unesco.org/oosc-map>)

Figure E3. Selected countries with more than 0.5 million out-of-school children of primary school age by region, 2012 or most recent year available



Notes: Data for Ghana refer to 2013; data for Angola, Chad, India, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda refer to 2011; data for Bangladesh and Nigeria refer to 2010.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, August 2014 DataLink: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15220/2014/ed/sd/7/f2.4>

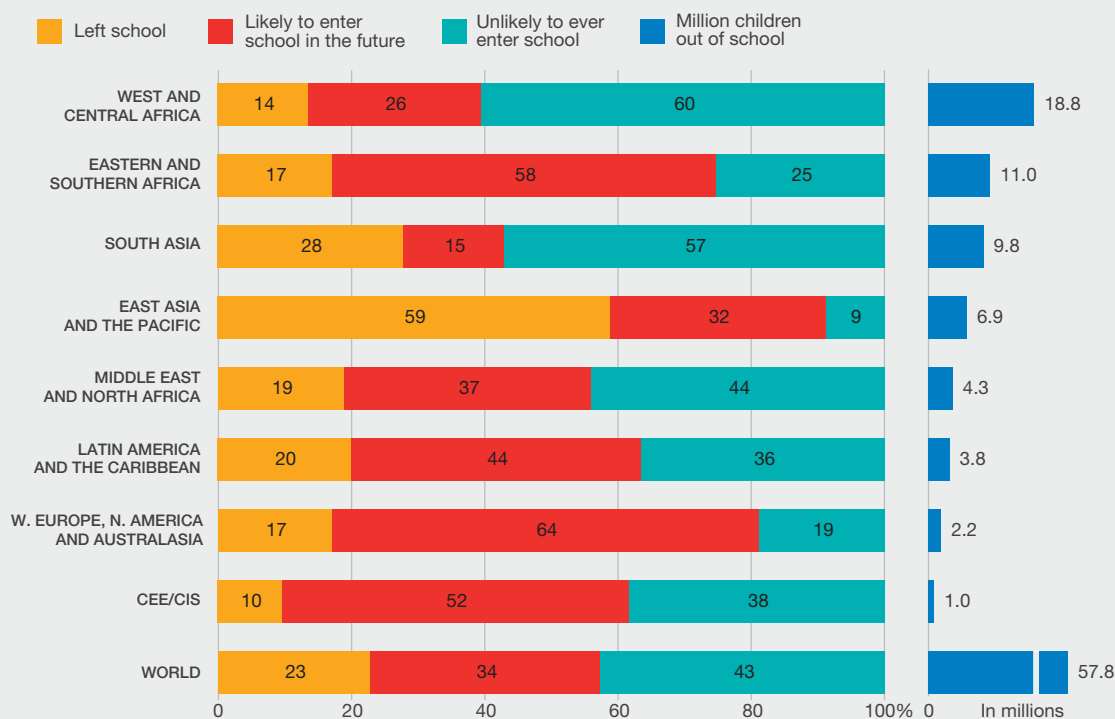
percentage of the total child population, their numbers can still be large. In Brazil, for example, an out-of-school rate of only 2.4% in 2009 still means that over 730,000 children of primary and lower secondary school age remain excluded from school (UNICEF and UIS, 2012).

The report underscores the importance of identifying not only which children are out of school and where they live, but whether they have ever been to school and if they are likely to do so in the future (see **Figure E4**). The kind of educational programmes and support needed in countries like Nigeria and Pakistan—where most out-of-school children will never enter a classroom—are very different from those in countries like India or Indonesia, where most of these children started school but left before completing primary education. In other countries, such as Bolivia, Cambodia and Ethiopia, most of the children who are currently out of school will start late

but may face a greater risk of dropping out because they are over-age students.

A deeper look at the data also reveals the extent to which inequalities in wealth, for example, or location can further marginalise children out of school. In many countries, out-of-school rates are significantly higher among children from the poorest, rural households than among those from wealthier, urban families. But the real depth of this disparity becomes even more apparent when we consider the data on school exposure for these different groups. A wealthy, urban child who is out of school today can be expected to start school at some point, even if he or she leaves early. By contrast, a poor child living in a rural area often has little chance of ever setting foot in a classroom. For example in Nigeria, two-thirds of primary school-age children in the poorest households are out of school, and of them, almost 90% will probably never enrol (UNICEF and

Figure E4. School exposure of out-of-school children of primary school age by region, 2012



Notes: The data refer to the regional classification used by UNICEF. The category 'Western Europe, North America and Australasia' is not an official UNICEF region, but it is used in this report to group all countries not belonging to other UNICEF regions. It includes countries in which UNICEF does not operate. They are primarily high- and upper-middle-income countries located in Australasia, Europe and North America.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, August 2014  **DataLink:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.15220/2014/ed/sd/7/f2.5>

UIS, 2012). In contrast, only 5% of the richest children were out of school and most are expected to enter school in the future. To visualise the extent of these disparities, this report is accompanied by an online interactive data exploration tool presenting the most recent data from countries participating in the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children (see <http://on.unesco.org/oosci-global>).

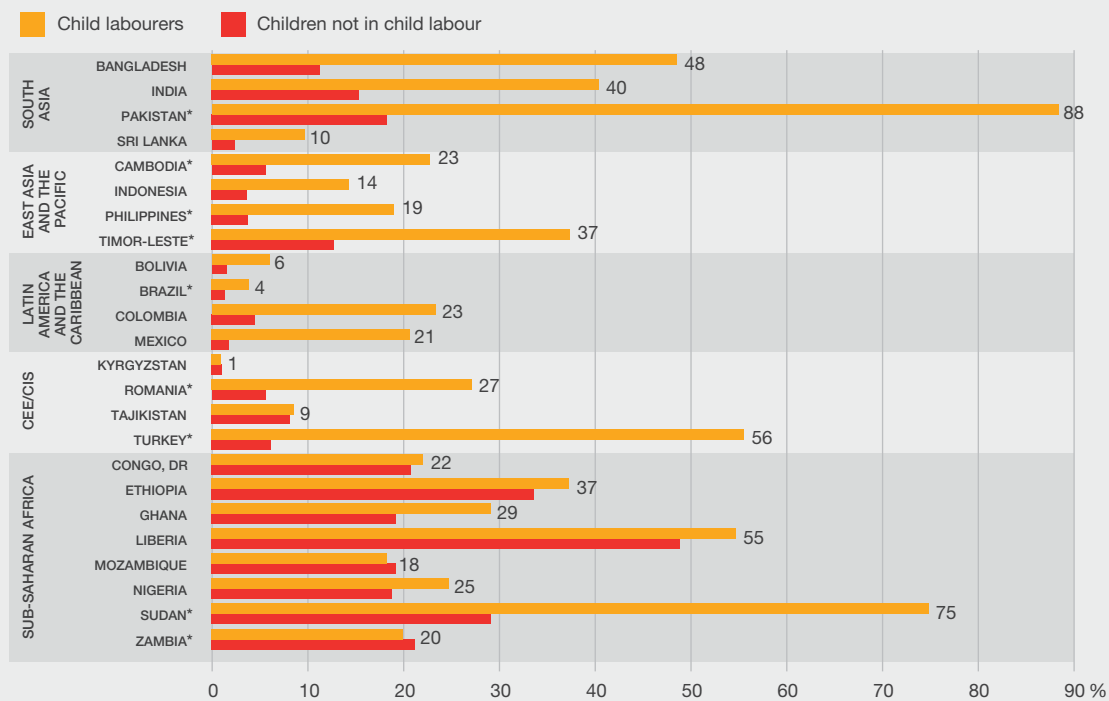
Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All looks beyond the numbers to explore the specific barriers that deny children their chance of an education. First, it highlights the situation of children in conflict-affected countries, who account for just 20% of the world's children of primary school age but 50% of the world's out-of-school children. Second, it finds that entrenched gender roles often determine whether or not a child enrolls—and

Box E1. Explore the data

The hardest to reach children are still out of school. They are poor, rural and often girls. But the situation is different in every country. The UIS interactive data explorer illustrates the multiple and overlapping barriers to education in the dozens of countries that participated in the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children. Learn more about the circumstances that unfairly exclude these invisible and voiceless children. <http://on.unesco.org/oosci-global>

More data are available in the UNESCO eAtlas on Out-of-School Children: <http://on.unesco.org/oosc-map>

Figure E5. Percentage of children aged 7 to 14 years who are out of school, by child labour status, selected countries



Notes: * Denotes child labour statistics which vary from the international definition of child labour due to limitations of the household survey or census used. Data for Pakistan, Sudan and Timor-Leste cover children aged 10-14 years, for Turkey they cover 6-14 years. Data for Cambodia, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania and Zambia do not include information about hours spent in household chores: the definition of child labour in these countries is based on hours in employment only. Data for Sudan do not include information about hours spent in employment and household chores, the definition of child labour is based on involvement in employment only. Data for Brazil use the international definition, although Brazilian national legislation does not allow light work for children aged 12-14 years.

Sources: *Understanding Children's Work* calculations based on Bangladesh Labour Force Survey, 2005-2006; Bolivia Encuesta de Trabajo Infantil (SIMPOC), 2008; Brazil Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios, 2011; Cambodia Labour Force and Child Labour Survey (SIMPOC), 2012; Colombia GEIH: Módulo de Trabajo Infantil, 2012; DR Congo MICS, 2010; Ethiopia DHS, 2011; Ghana MICS, 2006; India DHS, 2005-2006; Indonesia Child Labour Survey (SIMPOC), 2009; Kyrgyzstan Child Labour Survey, 2007; Liberia DHS, 2007; Mexico Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo: Módulo de Trabajo Infantil, 2011; Mozambique MICS, 2008; Nigeria MICS, 2011; Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2007-2008; Philippines Labour Force Survey (SIMPOC), 2001; Romania Child Labour Curve (SIMPOC), 2000; Sri Lanka Child Activity Survey (SIMPOC), 1999; Sudan Fifth Population and Housing Census, 2008; Tajikistan MICS, 2005; Timor-Leste Survey of Living Standards, 2007; Turkey Child Labor Survey (SIMPOC), 2006; Zambia Labour Force Survey, 2008

DataLink: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15220/2014/ed/sd/7/f3.5>



stays—in school. Third, a family's reliance on child labour may well compete with that family's hopes for the education of their children (see **Figure E5**). Fourth, too many children are sidelined by education that is delivered in a language they neither speak nor understand. And finally, children with disabilities face a multitude of barriers—from an overall lack of inclusive education to classrooms that are simply inaccessible—that stop them claiming their right to an education. The problems arise from the way in which various barriers work in combination to delay or curtail children's education, or to prevent their enrolment entirely.

The report analyses the availability and quality of data in countries participating in the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children and finds that the ability to respond to the complex barriers to universal education is constrained by serious data gaps. National studies found that crucial information was missing or of low quality for many of the most marginalised children, reinforcing the need for improvements in how (and what) data are collected and how the data are used to inform policy. As things stand, the cross-sector nature of the barriers and responses around out-of-school children means that data collection, reporting and, by

extension, policymaking for this group too often lack the sustained, coordinated commitment needed to reach all children.

FIXING THE BROKEN PROMISE

“There are many reasons [why children are out of school]. First and foremost, financial reasons: most Congolese parents are poor, even those who do work earn little and the salary is paid when the employer decides to give it. It's difficult to manage; with the salary you pay the rent, education and medical expenses, transportation and more. Parents say: I can't pay for it all; I have to choose one or two children [to attend school]... the others must wait.”

**Educator, Democratic Republic of the Congo
(UNICEF and UIS, 2013b)**

To fix the broken promise, countries that still have large populations of out-of-school children need to balance targeted interventions to reach the most marginalised children with broader system-wide reforms of education. In countries such as Eritrea, Nigeria and South Sudan, targeted interventions alone cannot compensate for weak education

systems. The emphasis has to be on investments to strengthen and expand these systems and to ensure a sufficient number of schools that children can attend without direct or indirect costs, combined with a sharp focus on inclusion and the quality of education.

In countries in the final mile, however, there is an urgent need for specially-targeted efforts to overcome the particular barriers that keep the hardest-to-reach children out of school. Children in countries like Brazil, Sri Lanka and Turkey will not be reached simply by ‘business as usual’ approaches that expand existing education systems still further. Instead, there needs to be a shift towards greater equity in education by moving away from systems that allocate resources uniformly towards a more targeted approach to direct resources according to actual needs. This shift is essential to ensure that all children have equitable opportunities for education.

Across the globe, household poverty is linked to the most persistent barriers to education. High direct and indirect costs of education prevent children from realising their right to education. The report outlines a set of essential system-wide interventions to improve the availability, affordability and quality of education for all children. It also recognises how poverty acts as a cross-cutting barrier which intensifies other sources of disadvantage. The double disadvantage of poverty features prominently in measures needed to overcome five barriers to education for all.

Simenda was struggling to cope at secondary school in rural Namibia until his hearing impairment was diagnosed. His teachers were briefed on supportive strategies to help him in class, such as allowing him to sit wherever he could hear and checking that he was following the lesson. After two terms, his results in class tests had substantially improved—to the eighth highest result in a class of around 30 pupils.

OOSCI regional report for Eastern and Southern Africa (UNICEF and UIS, 2014)

Most countries need a package of three policy priorities: broad investment to strengthen and expand education systems, a sharp focus on inclusion and the quality of the education on offer, and targeted interventions for the children who are the very hardest to reach

- **Conflict.** A three-pronged approach is needed to ensure that a good quality education is positioned as part of wider social reforms to prevent conflict, enable schooling to continue during conflict, and ensure that post-conflict education reforms support the economic and social recovery that can prevent a re-ignition of violence.
- **Gender discrimination.** The priority is to ensure that even the most vulnerable and disadvantaged girl has access to a school close to home—a school that meets her most basic needs for safety, privacy and cleanliness, that delivers the best possible education and that values her presence and her potential.
- **Child labour.** Child labour must be reduced in order to increase school attendance. Given the strong links between poverty and child work, removing the direct and indirect costs associated with education is the most effective way to reduce child labour. More flexible and responsive education systems and improved learning environments are needed to attract working children into the classroom and keep them there.
- **Language challenges.** Education programmes based on children’s home languages have higher levels of participation, success and enjoyment (as well as parental involvement) and lower levels of repetition and drop-out, especially among girls. Schools that work in languages children can understand allow pupils to participate and demonstrate what they know and encourage the involvement of their families.

- Social, institutional and environmental barriers linked to **disability**. The education of children with disabilities hinges on the removal of the many barriers that come between them and the chance of an education, from the lack of physical access to classrooms to the stigma that keeps them hidden away at home. It also requires the provision of appropriate support and an understanding of their functioning and needs, all backed by robust and comparable data.

To put it simply, ‘build it and they will come’ optimism will not pull the world’s 121 million out-of-school children and adolescents into education unless policymakers enact specific interventions to address the barriers that they face.

Whether expanding education systems, targeting the most marginalised children or combining both responses, policymakers will need to find significant amounts of additional resources. *Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All* does not attempt to present a global dollar figure for the resources needed to deliver universal primary education. Rather, it follows the approach of the Global Initiative

on Out-of-School Children that focuses on analysis tailored to the local context. The report describes two innovative costing strategies to inform national decisionmaking on out-of-school children. The application of innovative equity-focused costing analysis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo provides a reality check on the scale of resources needed to get every out-of-school child in this one country into the classroom: \$111 million each year — equivalent to one-quarter of the Democratic Republic of the Congo’s total public spending on education in 2011. As well as calling for greater expenditure overall, the report calls for more spending on targeted interventions that have proven their value. It argues that the price is well worth paying, given the long-term benefits for the economic and social well-being of every nation.

Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All confirms the urgent need to revitalise the momentum that has been lost for out-of-school children. It does so at the very moment that new goals and targets are being finalised by the international community, arguing that out-of-school children need to be at the heart of the world’s new development framework.

Box E2. Filling the data gap

To reach children who are out of school, a clearer picture is needed of who they are, where they are and exactly why they are not in the classroom. A comprehensive evidence base is the bedrock for effective policies to enrol more children in school and to support them in the successful completion of a full cycle of high-quality basic education.

One practical way to pinpoint the children who are out of school is to make better use of the data sources that already exist. A major finding of the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children is that household surveys are an under-used resource, providing information on the profiles of out-of-school children by sex, location, household wealth, education of the parents and other personal and household characteristics. At present, however, such surveys are rarely utilised by national ministries of education. Greater cross-sector collaboration could enhance access to, and analysis of, this rich source of data for education policymaking. Ministry of education staff should be consulted during household survey design and analysis to ensure that the questions asked and the data collected on education are accurate and useful.

Administrative data, with their relatively complete coverage of all students in all schools, have great potential for zooming in on, for example, areas with high rates of over-age students or students who drop out before completing basic education. Recent improvements in education data management information systems mean that administrative data can be used to identify out-of-school children.

One of the main outcomes of the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children has been the greater use of both data sources for analysing the situation of out-of-school children. This has in turn prompted a great deal of reflection and action at the national and international levels to improve coverage, accuracy and use of data on out-of-school children.



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ALL IN SCHOOL

Out-of-School Children Initiative

UNICEF AND UNESCO INSTITUTE FOR STATISTICS

Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All, published by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and UNICEF, presents the latest statistical evidence from administrative records and household surveys to better identify children who are out of school and the reasons for their exclusion from education. It aims to inform the policies needed to reach these children and finally deliver the promise of Education for All.

Based on a series of national and regional studies and policy analysis by leading experts, the report explains why better data and cross-sector collaboration are fundamental to the design of effective interventions to overcome the barriers facing out-of-school children and adolescents. While highlighting the way forward for system-wide policies to improve educational quality and affordability, the report also presents the information needed for targeted approaches to address the compounding effects of disadvantage faced by children caught up in armed conflict, girls, working children, children with disabilities, or members of ethnic or linguistic minorities.

This report presents a roadmap to improve the data, research and policies needed to catalyse action for out-of-school children as the world embarks on a new development agenda for education.



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