

TEACHING  
AND LEARNING:  
*Achieving quality for all*

Education for All

Gender Summary



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



# TEACHING AND LEARNING:

*Achieving quality for all*

## **Gender Summary**

Learning conditions: At a primary school in a poor area of Antofagasta, Chile, learning has improved since the city and private foundations joined forces to improve infrastructure



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# Key Messages

## Education for All goals

- There were 31 million girls out of school in 2011, of whom 55% are expected never to enrol.
- Reflecting years of poor education quality and unmet learning needs, 493 million women are illiterate, accounting for almost two-thirds of the world's 774 million illiterate adults.
- Only 60% of countries had achieved parity in primary education in 2011; only 38% of countries had achieved parity in secondary education. Among low income countries, just 20% had achieved gender parity at the primary level, 10% at the lower secondary level and 8% at the upper secondary level.
- By 2015, many countries will still not have reached gender parity. On current trends, it is projected that 70% of countries will have achieved parity in primary education, and 56% of countries will have achieved parity in lower secondary education.
- The interaction between gender and poverty is a potent source of exclusion. The poorest girls are being left behind in education progress. On average, if recent trends continue, universal primary completion in sub-Saharan Africa will only be achieved in 2069 for all poorest boys and in 2086 for all poorest girls.

## Supporting teachers to end the learning crisis

- Despite recent advances in girls' education, a generation of young women has been left behind. Over 100 million young women living in low and lower middle income countries are unable to read a single sentence.
- Worldwide, girls who already face disadvantage and discrimination are much less likely to be taught by good teachers.
- In some contexts, more female teachers must be recruited, especially in rural areas, to attract girls to school and improve their learning outcomes. Yet women teachers are particularly lacking in countries with wide gender disparity in enrolment.
- Teachers, both female and male, need training to understand and recognize their own attitudes, perceptions and expectations regarding gender, so that their interactions with pupils do not harm girls' and boys' learning experiences and achievement.
- Women teachers are less likely than men to work in disadvantaged areas, and should be provided with incentives, such as safe housing, to move to such areas and hence help bridge the gender gap in learning. Alternatively, local recruitment can also ensure that poor, rural girls receive the benefits of being taught by a female teacher.
- An appropriate way of motivating teachers is to offer an attractive career path that rewards teacher effectiveness. When teachers have to acquire additional qualifications in order to be promoted, this limits the chances of those working in rural areas, especially women, who have fewer opportunities to study.
- Better teacher governance is vital to ensure that teachers are held accountable for their presence, actions and behaviour. Strategies to prevent and respond to teacher misconduct, including gender-based violence, require advocacy and support from school leadership, teachers and their unions, as well as parents and their communities.
- Teachers need the support of innovative, inclusive curriculum and assessment strategies that pay particular attention to the needs of girls who are at risk of not learning.

## Education transforms lives

- Globally, women are paid less than men for comparable work. However, the higher the level of education, the smaller the gender wage gap.
- If all women in sub-Saharan Africa completed primary education, the maternal mortality ratio would fall by 70%, from 500 to 150 deaths per 100,000 births.
- By altering attitudes, education of women – as well as that of men – leads to political changes, including the more democratic representation of women.
- If all girls had secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, child marriage would fall by 64%, from almost 2.9 million to just over 1 million.



Tough conditions: At a primary school in Baqir Shah, a village in Sindh, Pakistan, classes take place outside because the buildings collapsed years ago.

# Part 1

# Monitoring progress

**Table 1: Progress towards gender parity by EFA goal**

Selected indicator		1999		2011		
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
Goal 1	Pre-primary gross enrolment ratio (%)	World	33	32	50	50
		LICs	11	10	17	17
Goal 2	Adjusted primary net enrolment ratio (%)	World	87	80	92	90
		LICs	63	56	84	80
	Out-of-school children (million)	World	45.0	62.4	26.6	30.6
		LICs	18.1	21.2	9.7	11.6
Goal 3	Secondary gross enrolment ratio (%)	World	62	56	72	69
		LICs	33	27	46	41
	Out-of-school adolescents (000)	World	46.5	54.7	35.1	34.3
		LICs	9.8	11.3	9.0	9.4
Goal 4	Adult literacy rate (15+) (%)	World	82	69	89	80
		LICs	60	41	69	54
	Youth literacy rate (15-24) (%)	World	88	79	92	87
		LICs	67	53	77	69
Goal 5	Primary gender parity index	World	0.92		0.97	
		LICs	0.86		0.95	
	Secondary gender parity index	World	0.91		0.97	
		LICs	0.83		0.88	
Goal 6	Share of female teaching staff, primary (%)	World	58		63	
		LICs	38		44	
	Share of female teaching staff, secondary (%)	World	53		52	
		LICs	30		30	

Notes: LIC - low income countries.

Gender parity is reached when the gender parity index is between 0.97 and 1.03.

For literacy rates, progress is reported for the periods 1985 - 1994 (left column) and 2005-2011 (right column).

# towards the EFA goals

## Introduction

More children than ever are going to school. But with the deadline for the Education for All goals less than two years away, it is clear that not a single goal will be achieved globally by 2015. This in large part because the disadvantaged have been left behind, including millions of girls and young women who will have been let down by the signatories of the Dakar Framework for Action.

New analysis for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report vividly underlines the fact that girls and young women, especially those from the poorest families, have continued to be denied opportunities for education over the past decade. Unless special efforts are urgently taken to extend educational opportunities to the marginalized, the poorest countries may take several generations to achieve universal completion of primary and lower secondary education, according to new analysis for this Report – and within these countries the poorest girls will be the last to fully enjoy the right to education. In sub-Saharan Africa, if recent trends continue, the richest boys will achieve universal primary completion in 2021, the poorest boys will do in 2069 but the poorest girls will not catch up until 2086 – and will only achieve universal lower secondary school completion in 2111.

Although it is now a certainty that the EFA goals will not be met by the 2015, it is not too late to accelerate progress in the final stages. And it is vital to put in place a robust global post-2015 education framework to tackle unfinished business while addressing new challenges. Post-2015 education goals will only be achieved if they are accompanied by clear, measurable targets with indicators tracking disadvantaged groups to ensure that no one is left behind.

Analysis for this report shows the opportunities lost from neglecting girls' and women's education. Equitable access to at least a full course of quality basic education has positive effects on a wide range of fundamental

economic, health, social and political issues. But the international community and national governments have so far failed to sufficiently recognize and exploit education's considerable power as a catalyst for other development goals. As a result, education has been slipping down the global agenda and some donors have moved funds elsewhere, at the very time when education's wider benefits are sorely needed to help countries get back on track to reach other development goals. Education's power to accelerate the achievement of wider goals needs to be much better recognized in the post-2015 development framework.

This is particularly the case in the context of the learning crisis whose scale is presented in this report. To solve that crisis, all children must have teachers who are trained, motivated and enjoy teaching, who can identify and support weak learners, and who are backed by well-managed education systems. But worldwide, children who already face disadvantage and discrimination, also because of their gender, are much less likely to be taught by good teachers. The key to ending the learning crisis is to recruit the best teacher candidates, give them appropriate training, deploy them where they are needed most and give them incentives to make a long-term commitment to teaching.

## Progress towards gender parity and equality

Gender parity – equal enrolment for girls and boys – is just the first step towards the EFA goal of full gender equality in education: a schooling environment that is free of discrimination and provides equal opportunities for boys and girls to realize their potential. Other starting points towards gender equality include making sure the school environment is safe, improving facilities to provide, for example, separate latrines for girls and boys, training teachers in gender sensitivity, achieving gender balance among teachers and rewriting curricula and textbooks to remove gender stereotypes.

At the pre-primary level, gender parity had already been achieved in 1999 and has been maintained since, but enrolment levels remain low for both boys and girls in many parts of the world. The importance of parity at primary and secondary levels was underlined when it was singled out in the EFA framework as a target to be achieved by 2005, but that early deadline was missed. Although there has been progress since, the goal of getting equal numbers of girls and boys into school remains elusive, with girls still less likely to enroll in many countries.

### Girls are more likely to miss out on primary education

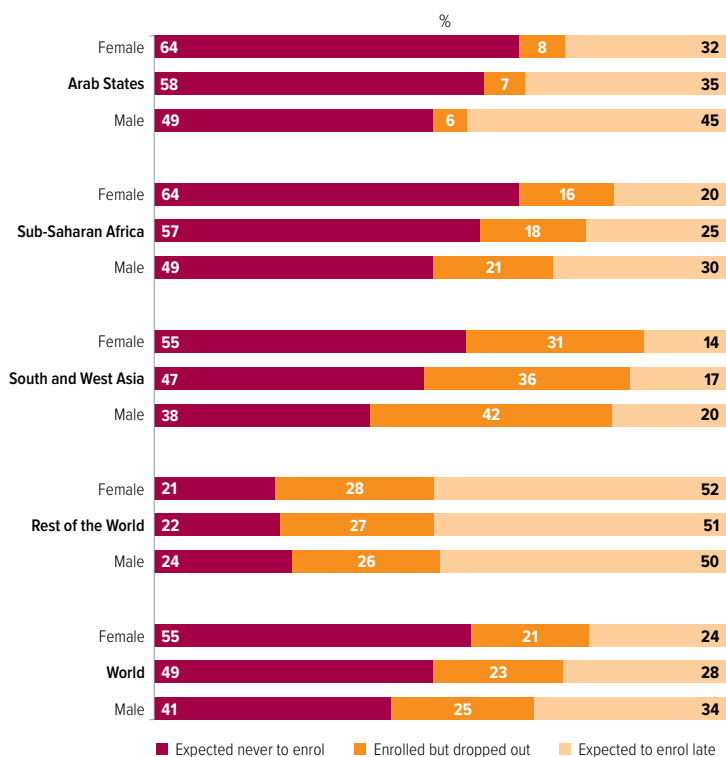
The gap that must be bridged before parity is achieved is reflected in the fact that girls make up about 54% of the global population of 57 million children who were out of school in 2011. In the Arab States the share of girls out of school is 60%, unchanged since 1999. In South and West Asia, by contrast, the share of girls in the out-of-school population fell steadily from 64% in 1999 to 57% in 2011.

One of the biggest disappointments since the EFA goals were established in 2000 is that 55% of the 31 million girls currently out of school are expected never even to make it to school. The percentage is considerably higher in the Arab States and sub-Saharan Africa, where almost two in three out-of-school girls are expected never to go to school. The remainder is split almost equally between girls who enrolled but dropped out and those who are expected to enter school but will be older than the official primary school age, and so are more likely to eventually drop out (Figure 1). Girls miss out on school for a variety of reasons, including inherited disadvantages such as poverty, ethnicity, or living in a rural area or a slum, which are more likely to keep girls out of school than boys.

Gender disparities remain in 40% of the countries with data. Of these, disparity is at the expense of girls in more than 80% of cases. South and West Asia is home to four of the ten countries with the highest gender disparities globally. Two of these have very high disparities at the expense of girls: Afghanistan, with 71 girls in school for every 100 boys, and Pakistan, with 82 girls for every 100 boys. Two other countries in the region have high disparities at the expense of boys: Bangladesh, with 94 boys for every 100 girls, and Nepal, with 92 boys for every 100 girls.

Of the 31 countries with fewer than 90 girls for every 100 boys enrolled in 1999, only about half had managed to exit that group by 2011. Others, such as Cameroon and the Central African Republic, made very slow progress and still have extreme gender disparities. Some countries have made rapid progress towards parity in enrolment, such as Burkina Faso and Senegal, but overall enrolment has remained among the world's lowest and the goal of ensuring as many girls as boys complete primary school is even more elusive (Box 1).

**Figure 1: More than half of girls out of school are expected never to enrol**  
Distribution of out-of-school children by school exposure, gender and region, 2011



Source: UIS database.

### Box 1: In some sub-Saharan African countries, progress is too slow in ensuring the poorest girls complete primary school

Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region with the largest number of countries having severe gender disparity in access to primary education. Even where there has been progress in gender parity since 1999, this has not necessarily meant getting more children into school, let alone improving equality in completion or learning achievement.

Burkina Faso and the Central African Republic started from the same level of extreme gender disparity, with around 70 girls enrolled for every 100 boys. There was no progress in the Central African Republic, which now has the world's second highest level of gender disparity. Burkina Faso has made fast progress towards parity, reaching 95 girls for every 100 boys in 2012, although it still has the world's seventh lowest gross enrolment ratio (Figure 2).

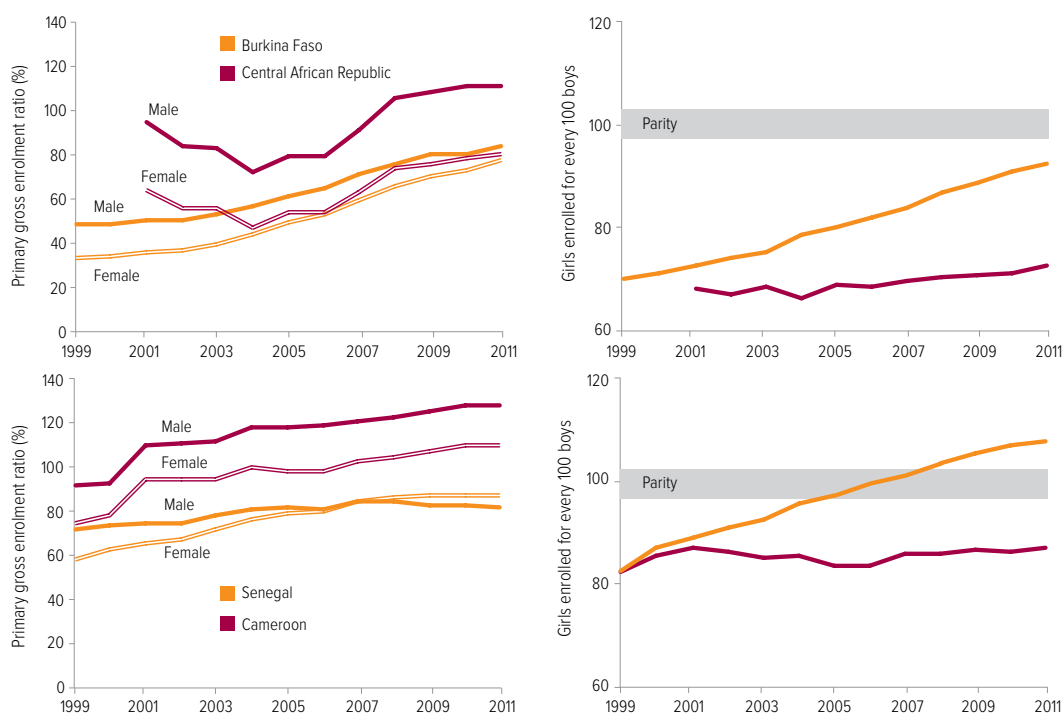
Cameroon and Senegal also started from similar levels of severe primary gender disparity, with around 80 girls enrolled

for every 100 boys. Cameroon's disparity remained largely unchanged. But its enrolment levels rose continuously throughout the decade. Senegal made fast progress and reached parity in 2006. However, it still has the ninth lowest primary gross enrolment ratio in the world.

In terms of primary completion, however, much higher levels of gender disparity remain in all four countries, as household survey data reveal.

In Burkina Faso, the gender gap in completion remains wide, with 34% of boys and 24% of girls completing primary education in 2010. The gap is narrow among the poorest because so few reach this stage: in 2010, just 11% of boys and 7% of girls completed primary school, only a slight increase from 1998. Greater progress in completion is evident in Senegal, but the gender gap among poor children has widened. In 2005, there was very little difference in poor

**Figure 2: A move towards gender parity does not always mean access for all**  
Primary gross enrolment ratio by gender and gender parity index, 1999–2011



Source: UIS database.

boys' and girls' completion rates, which were very low, but in 2010, 20% of boys completed while only 12% of girls did (Figure 3).

In Cameroon, the improvement in overall completion rates did not filter down to the poorest girls, who were even less likely to complete primary school in 2011 than in 1998. As a result, the gap in enrolment widened from 10 percentage points to 20 percentage points over the period. In the Central African Republic, conflict contributed to a slight reduction in completion rates for both boys and girls, in the population on average as well as for the poorest boys and girls. As a result, by 2006, only 3% of girls were completing primary school.

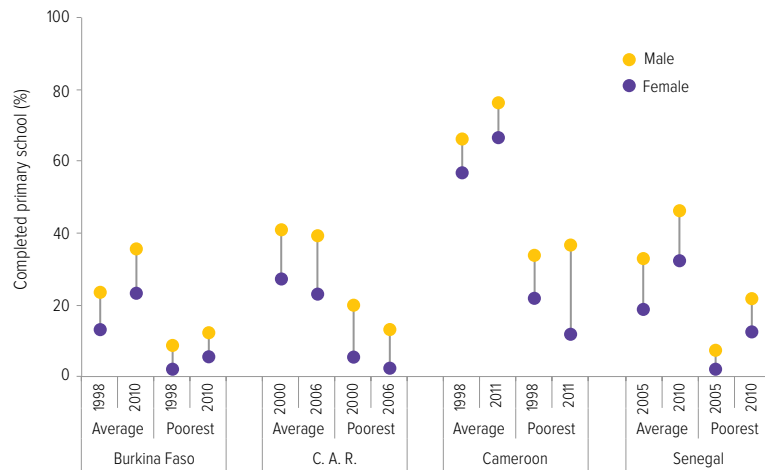
What boys and girls learn in school is a better measure of equality than how many girls and boys are completing school.

In the 2006/07 round of the PASEC survey, both Burkina Faso and Senegal had a considerable gender gap in learning outcomes of grade 5 students. In Burkina Faso, 45% of boys and 39% of girls passed the low benchmark in reading, while 53% of boys and 45% of girls passed the low benchmark in mathematics. The gap was almost twice as large in rural areas.

At first sight, it appears that countries such as Burkina Faso and Senegal have made strong progress towards eliminating gender gaps in enrolment. However, even in these countries, policies need to be put in place to ensure that all children, regardless of their gender, both stay in school and learn.

Sources: Burkina Faso Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy (1999); Kazianga et al. (2012).

**Figure 3: The poorest girls have the least chance of completing primary education**  
Primary school completion rate by gender, national average and poorest 20% of households



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

## In secondary education, most extreme cases of inequality still afflict girls

In secondary education, gender parity trends vary by region, income group and level. Among countries with data, 38% have achieved parity in enrolment in secondary education. By level, 42% of countries are at parity in lower secondary education and 22% in upper secondary education. In two-thirds of the countries with gender disparity in lower secondary education, it is at the expense of girls. But this is the case in less than half the countries with gender disparity in upper secondary education.

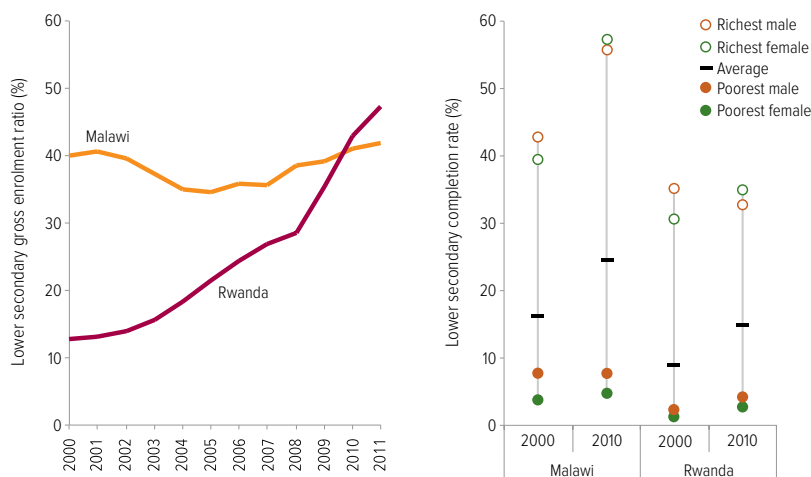
The most extreme cases of inequality in secondary education continue to afflict girls. Of the 30 countries with fewer than 90 girls for every 100 boys, 18 are in sub-Saharan Africa. Extreme examples from other regions include Afghanistan and Yemen, despite improvements over the decade. In Afghanistan, no girls were in secondary school in 1999. By 2011, the female gross enrolment ratio had risen to 34%, increasing the gender parity index to 0.55. In Yemen, the female gross enrolment ratio increased from 21% in 1999 to 35% in 2011, resulting in an improvement in the gender parity index from 0.37 to 0.63.

Although many countries in sub-Saharan Africa have expanded access to lower secondary school, the poorest girls, in particular, appear not to be benefiting from current policies. Education data from the education ministries in Rwanda and Malawi show the divergent paths countries can take (Figure 4). Rwanda has carried out a major expansion of lower secondary schooling, with the gross enrolment ratio quadrupling in about 10 years to reach 47% in 2011, overtaking Malawi, where the ratio hovered around 40% for most of the decade. Information collected from households, however, shows that completion rates remain low – and highly inequitable – in both countries, with fewer than 5% of poor, rural girls completing lower secondary school.

In other regions, there have been some notable successes towards parity in secondary education, as in Turkey. However, parity is but a first step, while issues of gender equality remain (Box 2).

**Figure 4: Completion of lower secondary school remains elusive for most poor adolescent girls in Malawi and Rwanda**

Lower secondary gross enrolment ratios and completion rates, Malawi and Rwanda, 2000–2010



Note: The completion rate has been calculated for people aged 18 to 22.

Sources: Gross enrolment ratio: UIS database; Completion rate: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations (2013), based on Demographic and Health Survey data.



**Box 2: Challenges in improving access to secondary education for girls in Iraq and Turkey**

Iraq and Turkey have moved at different speeds towards gender parity in secondary education. Turkey has made greater progress. In 1999, 87% of boys made it to lower secondary school, compared with 65% of girls. By the end of the decade, this large gap had been almost closed. Gender inequalities remain in upper secondary education but they also narrowed rapidly over the last decade (Figure 5).

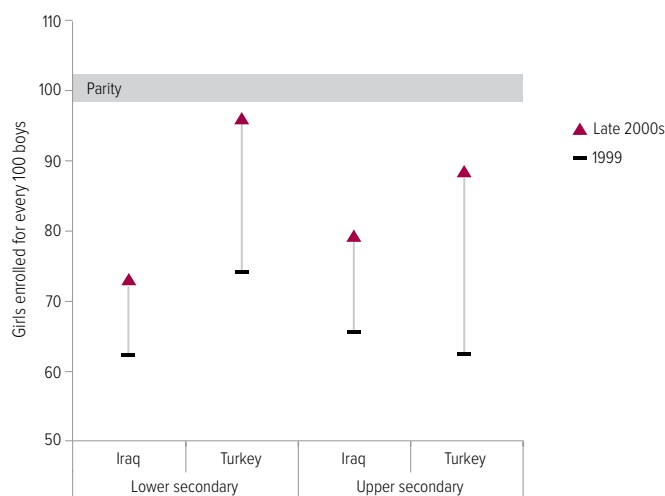
The turning point was the extension of compulsory education from five to eight years in 1997, accompanied by a range of strategies aimed at widening access. A conditional cash transfer programme that provided a larger benefit for girls than for boys also helped close the enrolment gap.

Nevertheless, despite overall progress, problems remain. Girls in rural areas are more disadvantaged and some differences by region have been not only deep but also persistent: in the poor predominantly Kurdish provinces of Siirt, Mus and Bitlis, just 60 girls are enrolled in secondary school for every 100 boys, with little change in recent years.

There is continuing commitment to eliminate the remaining disparities: the 2010–2014 strategic plan of the Ministry of National Education aims to lower the gender gap in secondary education enrolment from 8.9% to less than 2%. An amendment to the Education Law introduced in April 2012 that extended compulsory education from 8

**Figure 5: Iraq and Turkey show that fast progress towards gender parity in secondary education is possible**

Gender parity index of the secondary education gross enrolment ratio, Iraq, 1999–2007, and Turkey, 1999–2011



Source: UIS database.

to 12 years might help further close the gap at the upper secondary level.

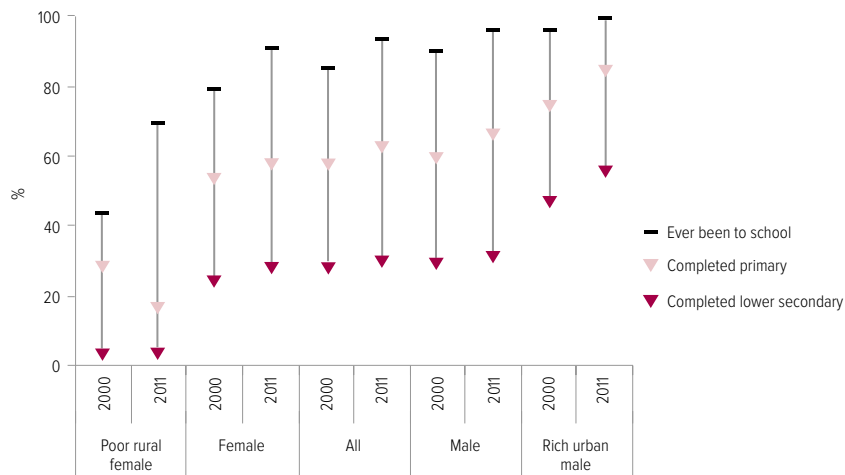
But there is no room for complacency. The continuing very low participation of women in the labour force and their marginalization in the labour market could deter young girls from completing secondary school. More generally, traditional perceptions of gender roles that permeate society filter down to schools. These are issues that neighbouring countries aspiring to gender equality in education need to contend with.

In Iraq, not only has progress towards gender parity been slower, but poor, rural girls have not benefited. The lower

secondary completion rate was 58% for rich urban boys and just 3% for poor rural girls in 2011. Safety remains an issue for girls' schooling, particularly in areas of major instability and insecurity (Figure 6).

Sources: Turkey Ministry of National Education (2009, 2013); Ucan (2013); World Bank (2012b).

**Figure 6: Poor Iraqi girls living in rural areas are far less likely to complete lower secondary school**  
Percentage who have ever been to school, completed primary, and completed lower secondary school, by gender, location and wealth, 2000 and 2011



Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report team analysis (2013), based on the 2000 and 2011 Iraq Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys.

### Gender disparities differ by income group

Comparisons by income group show that low income countries differ from middle and high income countries in terms of gender participation in education. Just 20% of low income countries have achieved gender parity at the primary level, 10% at the lower secondary level and 8% at the upper secondary level. In Burundi, while parity in primary education has been achieved, only 77 girls are enrolled for every 100 boys in lower secondary education, and only 62 girls for every 100 boys in upper secondary education.

By contrast, in middle and high income countries, where parity has been achieved in a higher percentage of countries, disparity is often at the expense of boys in lower and upper secondary education (Figure 7). In Honduras, while parity in primary education has been achieved, only 88 boys are enrolled for every 100 girls in lower secondary education and only 73 boys for every 100 girls in upper secondary education.

### How many countries are likely to reach gender parity by 2015?

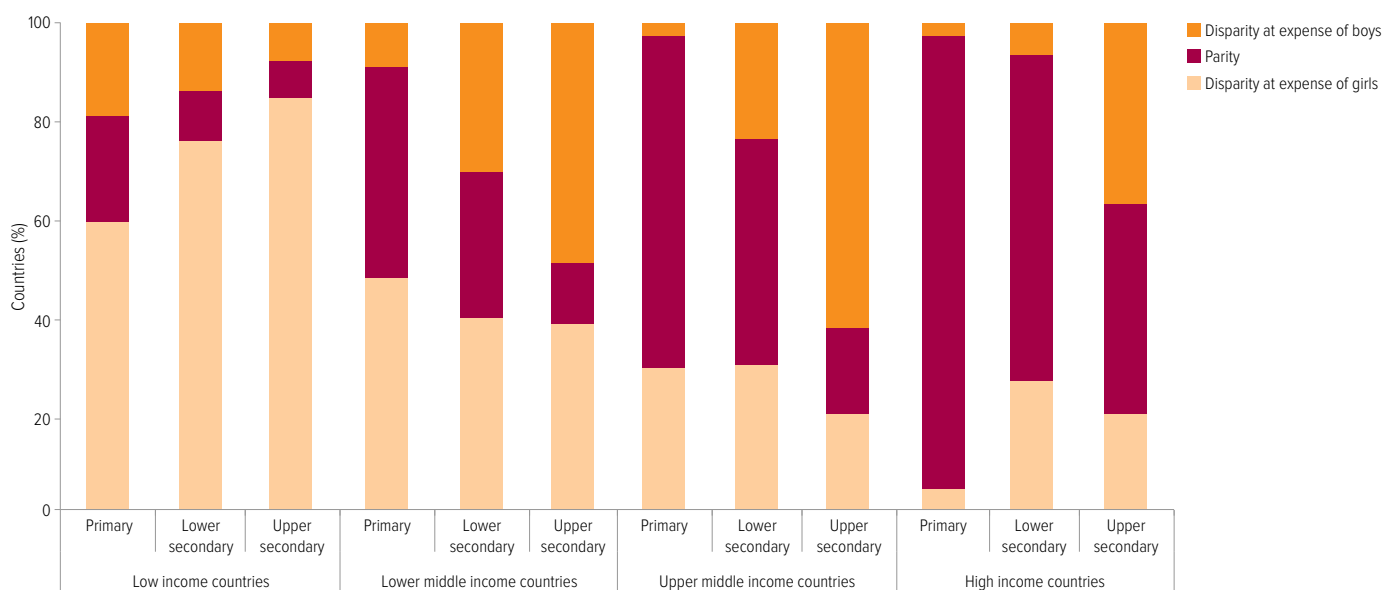
The Dakar Framework for Action established clear targets on gender parity, with a value of the gender parity index between 0.97 and 1.03 indicating parity. Values below 0.90 and above 1.11 demonstrate severe disparity.

At the primary education level, it is possible to make projections on gender parity to 2015 for 161 countries. Between 1999 and 2011, the number of countries that had reached the target increased from 91 to 101. It is projected that by 2015, 112 countries will have reached the goal and 14 will be close. However, 23 will be far from the target, and 12 will be very far from it. Of the 35 countries that will still be far or very far from the target, 19 are in sub-Saharan Africa. The number of countries furthest from the target, with severe disparity, fell from 31 in 1999 to 15 in 2011.

In assessing the performance of countries that have not achieved parity, it is important to

**Figure 7: Few low income countries have achieved gender parity at any education level**

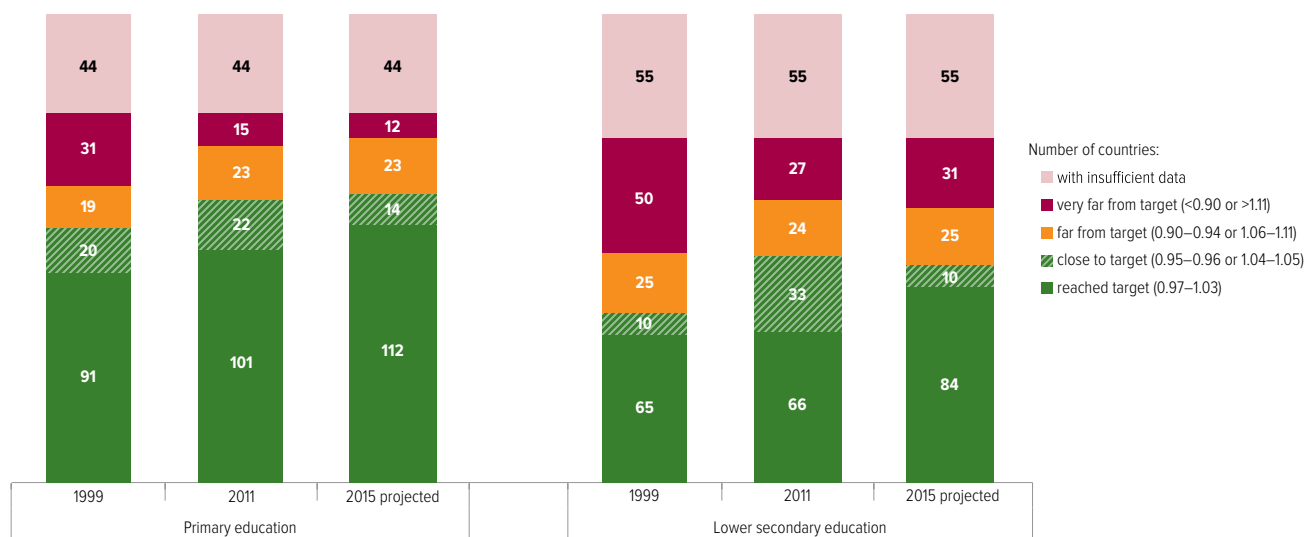
Countries with gender parity in enrolment ratios, by country income group, 2011



Source: UIS database.

**Figure 8: Despite progress towards gender parity in education, the goal will not be achieved by 2015**

Number of countries by level of gender parity index in primary and lower secondary education, 1999, 2011 and 2015 (projected)



Note: The analysis was conducted on the subset of countries for which a projection was possible; therefore, it covers fewer countries than those for which information is available for either 1999 or 2011. Source: Bruneforth (2013).

recognize how quickly they have moved towards the target. Of the countries that are not expected to reach or come close to the target, eight made strong progress nonetheless, increasing their gender parity index by at least 33% between 1999 and 2011. In Mozambique, the female gross enrolment ratio increased from 59% in 1999 to 105% in 2012, helping to bring about an increase of the gender parity index from 0.74 to 0.91.

At the lower secondary level, it is possible to make projections to 2015 for 150 countries. In 1999, 65 countries had achieved gender parity, increasing by only one, to 66, by 2011. But many came close to the target. It is, therefore, projected that by 2015, 84 of the 150 countries will have achieved the target and 10 will be close (Figure 8).

Among the 50 countries that were furthest from the target in 1999, in 38 the disparity was at the expense of girls. Of these 38 countries, 17 had moved out of this group by 2011. Although only two achieved parity, several came close despite having started from a gender parity index below 0.75. It is projected that by 2015, 31 countries will still be very far from the target, and in 22 of these the disparity will be at the expense of girls.

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

After 2015, unfinished business will remain across EFA goals. Analysis by the EFA Global Monitoring Report team shows that in many countries, the last mile to universal primary education will not be covered in this generation unless concerted efforts are taken to support the children who are the most disadvantaged, including girls. On recent trends, it may be only in the last quarter of this century that all of the poorest boys and girls in more than 20 countries will graduate from primary education – and only next century that they will all complete lower secondary education. It is vital to track progress towards education goals for the most disadvantaged groups after 2015, and to put policies in place that maintain and accelerate progress by redressing imbalances.

### When will all girls be completing primary school?

Progress towards universal primary education is often measured only using enrolment rates. Household survey data give a clearer picture of the percentage of young people who are not just entering but also completing primary

education – and whether this progress is shared across gender and disadvantaged groups. Disadvantaged groups face a harsh reality when it comes to primary completion. The period that will elapse between the achievement of universal primary completion among boys in urban areas and among girls in rural areas is projected to be wide: 39 years in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, 46 years in Yemen, 52 years in Ethiopia and 64 years in Guinea (Figure 9A).

The differences are even starker when looking at the projected achievement patterns by gender and family income (Figure 9B). While rich boys are expected to reach the goal by 2030 in 56 of the 74 countries, this is the case for poor girls in 7 countries. Even by 2060, universal primary completion will not have been achieved for poor girls in 24 of the 28 low income countries in the sample.

Lower middle income countries with large populations also face considerable challenges. In Nigeria, for example, rich boys already complete primary school, but it may be another three generations before poor girls do. In Pakistan, rich boys and girls are expected to complete primary school by 2020, but on recent trends poor boys will reach this fundamental target only in the late 2050s and poor girls just before the end of the century. In the Central African Republic, rich boys are expected to complete primary school by 2037 but poor girls only after 2100.

### *When will all girls be completing lower secondary school?*

Post-2015 global education goals are widely expected to include universal lower secondary completion by 2030. Based on current trends, there will be considerable distance to travel after 2015, especially for poor girls. The gap between better-performing and worse-performing groups is likely to be even wider for achieving universal lower secondary completion than for achieving universal primary completion.

Indeed, in 44 of the 74 countries analysed, there is at least a 50-year gap between all the richest boys completing lower secondary school and all the poorest girls doing so. In low

income countries, the average gap is 63 years (Figure 10).

In Honduras, it is projected that the target will be achieved in the 2030s for the richest boys and girls but almost 100 years later among the poorest boys and girls. In 2011/12, 84% of the richest but only 10% of the poorest boys and girls completed lower secondary school (Honduras Ministry of Health et al., 2013). In Niger, the gap in achievement between the most and least advantaged groups will also span a century, with a massive gender gap: all the poorest girls are projected to be completing lower secondary school almost half a century after all the poorest boys if current trends continue.

### *How long will it take to achieve universal completion in sub-Saharan Africa?*

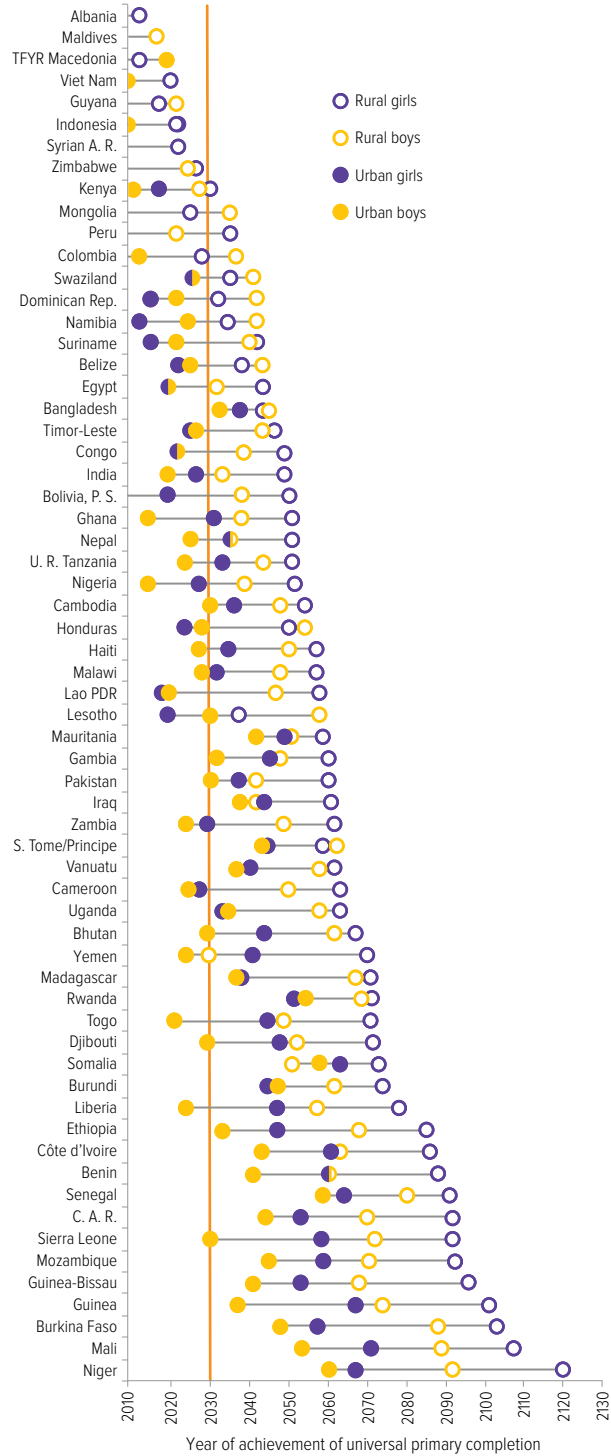
Available data for primary and lower secondary completion cover more than four-fifths of the population in sub-Saharan Africa, so it is possible to project average achievement rates for different population groups for the entire region (Figure 11).

On average, if recent trends continue, the region will not achieve universal primary completion until 2052, more than 35 years after the Dakar target and two decades after the likely target date for the post-2015 goals. While boys are expected to reach the target by 2046, on average, the richest boys are expected to achieve it in 2021 – before the post-2015 target – but the poorest boys only by 2069. Girls are further behind: on average they will reach it by 2057, with rich girls getting to zero by 2029. The poorest girls will, however, only reach the target by 2086.

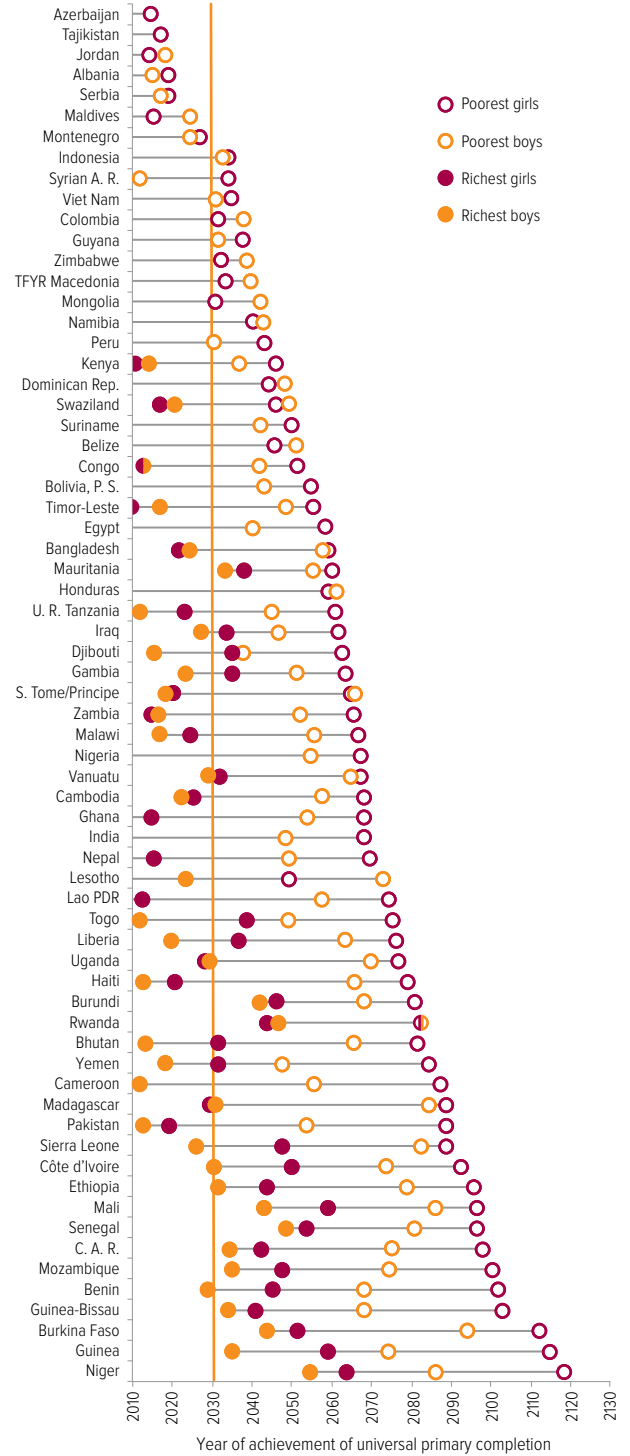
On average, if recent trends continue, lower secondary school completion will be achieved in 2069 in sub-Saharan Africa, several decades after the target dates currently under discussion. Girls will achieve universal lower secondary completion by 2075, on average. Girls from the richest fifth of the population will reach the target by 2051, but girls from the poorest fifth of families are currently projected to achieve it only by 2111.

**Figure 9: On recent trends, universal primary completion will not be achieved by the poorest girls in some countries for at least another two generations**  
 Projected year of achieving a primary completion rate in excess of 97%, selected countries

A. By gender and location

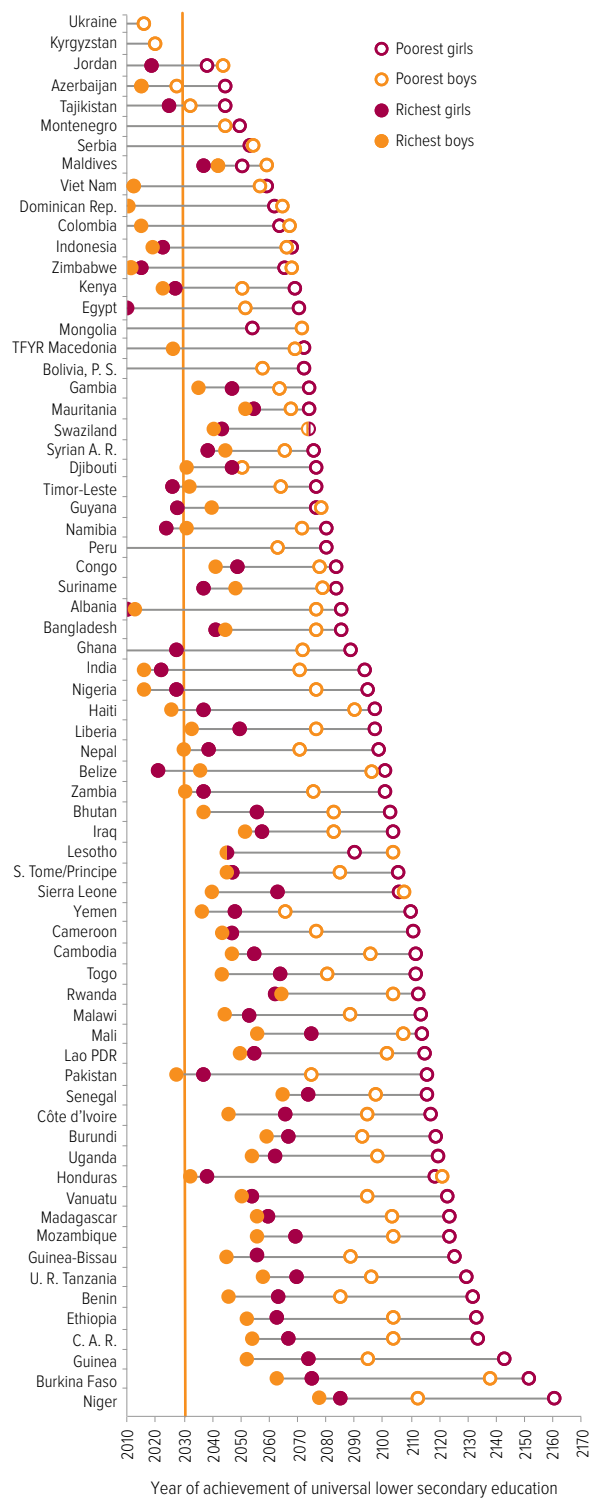


B. By gender and wealth



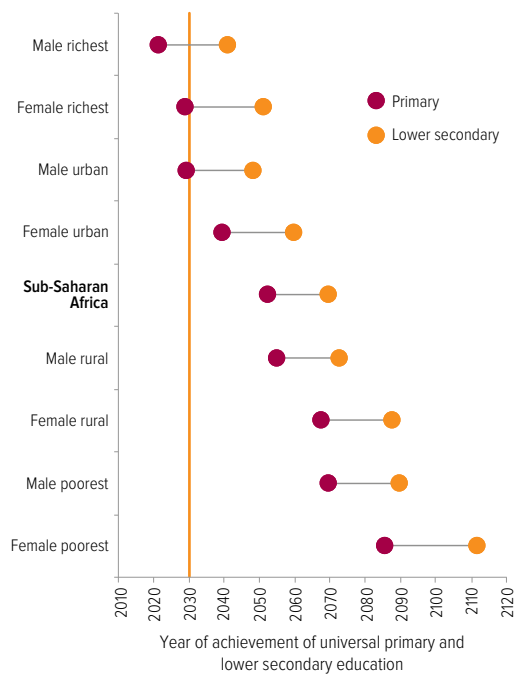
Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report team analysis (2013), based on Lange (2013).

**Figure 10: Achieving universal lower secondary education for girls will require more concerted efforts**  
 Projected year of achieving a lower secondary completion rate in excess of 97%, by gender and wealth, selected countries



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

**Figure 11: The achievement of universal primary education for the poorest women lies at the end of this century in sub-Saharan Africa**  
 Projected year of achieving primary and lower secondary completion in excess of 97%, by population group, sub-Saharan Africa



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



Local knowledge: In Escola Canadá, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a teacher uses a corn cake recipe traditional to the area to explain quantities in a mathematics class



# Part 2 Education transforms lives

Education lights every stage of the journey to a better life, especially for girls and women. As well as boosting their own chances of escaping poverty, getting jobs, staying healthy and participating fully in society, educating girls and young women has a marked impact on the health of their children and accelerates their countries' transition to stable population growth, with lower birth and death rates. Moreover, educating girls and women contributes to broader social goals that are increasingly being recognized as vital elements of the post-2015 framework: building foundations for democracy and empowering women to make life choices that improve their welfare.

The evidence assembled here underlines the imperative that good quality education must be made accessible to girls and women, regardless of their income, their ethnicity, where they live, whether they are disabled, and of other factors that can compound their gender disadvantage. At a minimum, girls need access to both primary and lower secondary education. And access alone is not enough: the education that girls receive needs to be of good quality so that they actually learn the basic literacy and numeracy skills that are necessary to acquire further skills. Education's unique potential to boost wider development goals can only be fully realized if education is equitable.

## Education reduces poverty and boosts jobs

Education is a key way of tackling poverty for women, and makes it more likely for them not just to be employed, but also to hold jobs that are more secure and provide good working conditions and decent pay.

## Education offers poor women a route to a better life

For poor women, education is one of the most powerful routes to a better future, helping them escape from working poverty and preventing poverty from being passed on to the next generation.

The main way education can help women escape working poverty and increase their economic security is by raising incomes. Education enables women in paid formal employment to earn higher wages, and offers better livelihoods for those who work in rural areas.

It is not just time in school, but skills acquired that count. Improved literacy can have a particularly strong effect on women's earnings, suggesting that investing in women's education can pay dividends. In Pakistan, working women with a high level of literacy skills earned 95% more than women with weak or no literacy skills, whereas the differential was only 33% among men (Aslam et al., 2012).

Children whose parents have little or no schooling are more likely to be poorly educated themselves. This is one of the ways poverty is perpetuated across generations, so raising education levels is key to breaking the cycle of chronic poverty. The right policies can ensure that the benefits are passed on equitably. New analysis for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report, based on 142 Demographic and Health Surveys from 56 countries between 1990 and 2009, looks at how parental education affects the number of years of education attained by household members aged 15 to 18. For each additional year of mother's education, the average child attained an extra 0.32 years, and for girls the benefit was slightly larger (Bhalotra et al., 2013b).

## Education increases women's chances of participating in the labour force

As countries develop, education becomes a passport for women to enter the labour force. When society becomes more accepting of women's formal employment, women with more education are in a stronger position to get paid work (Gaddis and Klasen, 2012). By enabling women's participation in the labour market, education contributes to their empowerment and to their country's prosperity (Kabeer, 2012).

In middle income countries in Latin America, such as Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador and Mexico, the proportion of women in paid employment increases sharply as women's education level rises, according to analysis of labour force survey data for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report (Infographic: Job search). In Mexico, while 39% of women with primary education are employed, the proportion rises to 48% of those with secondary education. Education plays a much stronger role in determining women's engagement in the labour force than it does for men in these Latin American countries.

In poorer countries, cultural factors and a lack of affordable child care facilities and transport continue to prevent women from taking paid jobs. In India and Pakistan, for example, women are less likely to be counted as participating in the labour market whether they have been to school or not.

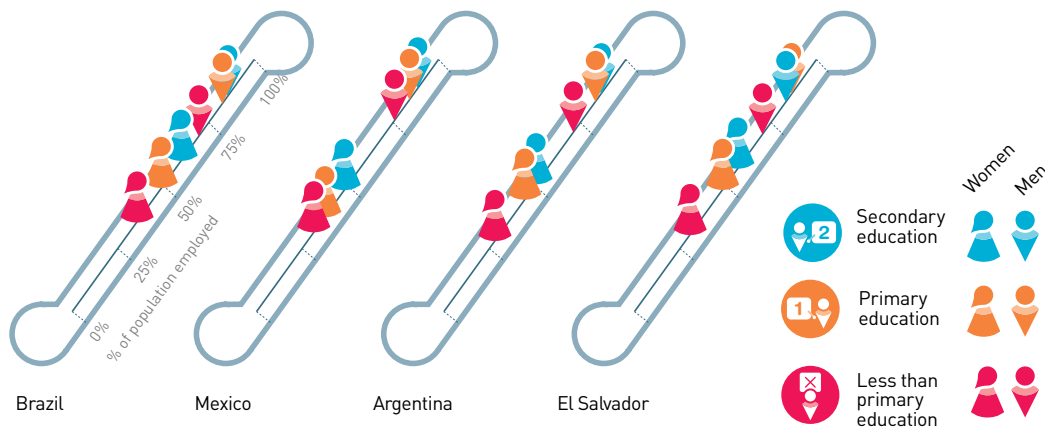
Women are kept out of the labour force not only by cultural stigma associated with taking paid employment but also by social expectations related to family size and household chores, which mean they often put in long hours in work that is less visible to policy-makers, particularly in poorer countries (Bloom et al., 2009).

## Education closes gender wage gaps

Globally, women are paid less than men for comparable work. Even though this gap has been narrowing in some parts of the world, it remains a cause for concern (OECD, 2012). The higher the level of education, the lower the gap, even in countries where discrimination in the labour force means gender differences remain entrenched, as analysis of gender wage gaps in 64 countries shows. Education makes a

## JOB SEARCH

Educated men and women are more likely to find work



Source: Understanding Children's Work (2013).

particular difference in the Arab States, where women with secondary education earn 87% of the wages of men, compared with 60% for those with primary education (Ñopo et al., 2011).

In sub-Saharan Africa, men earn twice as much as women on average, but education has a strong effect on closing the earnings gap. In Ghana, among those with no education, men earn 57% more than women, but the gap shrinks to 24% among those with primary education and 16% with secondary education (Kolev and Sirven, 2010).

These regional patterns are confirmed by analysis for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report of data from nine countries in diverse settings. In Argentina and Jordan, for instance, among people with primary education, women earn around half the average wage of men, while among those with secondary education, women earn around two-thirds of men's wages (Infographic: Wage gaps).

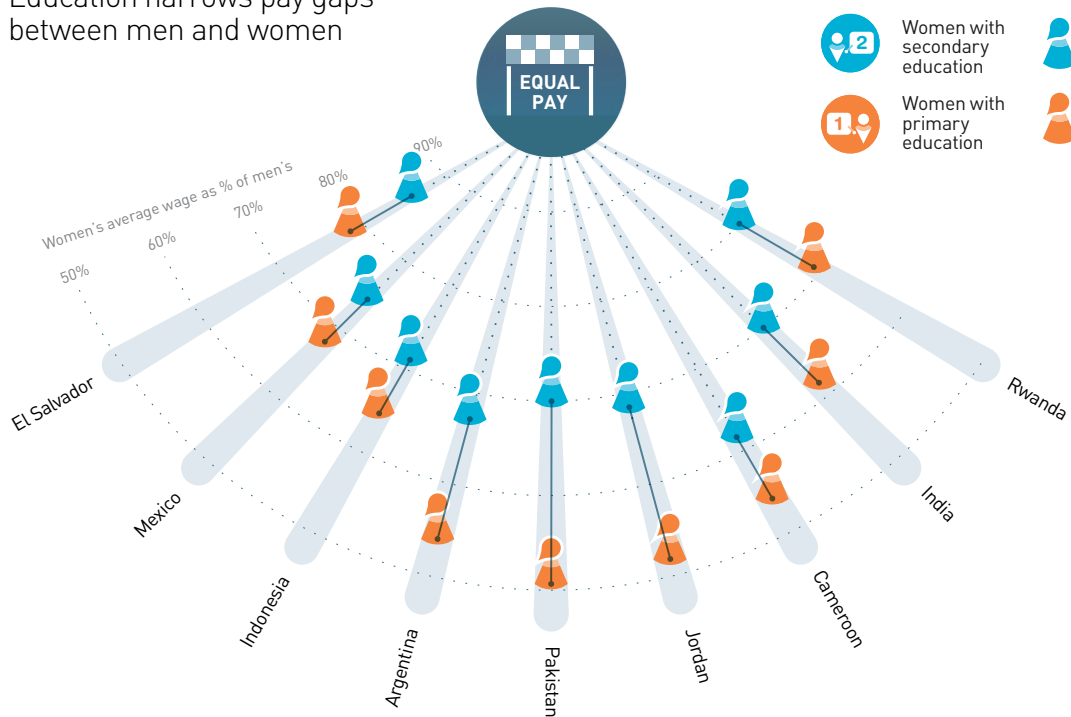
## Education improves health for women and their children

Education is one of the most powerful ways of improving women's health – and of making sure the benefits are passed on to their children. It saves the lives of millions of mothers and children, helps prevent and contain disease, and is an essential element of efforts to reduce malnutrition. But this key role is seldom appreciated. Policy-makers focusing on women's health often neglect the fact that education should be regarded as a vital health intervention in itself – and that without it, other health interventions may not be as effective.

The complementarity between education and health also works in the other direction: women who are healthier are more likely to be better educated. Even taking these links into account, education consistently increases women's chances of leading a healthy life.

### WAGE GAPS

Education narrows pay gaps between men and women



Source: Understanding Children's Work (2013).

Globally there has been significant progress towards the health targets laid out in the MDGs – reducing child mortality (goal 4), reducing maternal mortality (goal 5) and combating AIDS, malaria and other diseases (goal 6), as well as reducing hunger, which is part of the core goal on poverty reduction (goal 1). As this section shows, education has contributed to these advances. But more could have been achieved if education's power had been better tapped.

### **Mothers' education has saved millions of children's lives**

There are few more dramatic illustrations of the power of education than the estimate that 2.1 million lives of children under 5 were saved between 1990 and 2009 because of improvements in the education of women of reproductive age. That is more than half the total of 4 million lives saved by reducing child mortality during the period. By contrast, economic growth accounted for less than 10% of the total (Gakidou et al., 2010).

Such progress pales beside the remaining challenge, however. In 2012, 6.6 million children under 5 died, of whom 5.7 million were in low and lower middle income countries (Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, 2013). Many of these deaths could have been avoided through prevention and treatment measures such as making sure that there is a skilled attendant at birth, that children receive basic immunizations – which also help protect against pneumonia – and that oral rehydration treatment is given for diarrhoea (Infographic: Educated mothers, healthy children). Not only are most of these measures cheap and effective, but all are more likely to be taken when mothers are educated.

### ***Extending girls' education could save many more lives***

The scale of the impact that education – particularly of mothers – can have on child mortality is demonstrated by an analysis for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report of 139 Demographic and Health Surveys from 58 countries. If all women completed primary education, the under-5 mortality rate would fall by 15% in low and lower middle income countries, saving almost a million children's

lives every year. Secondary education has an even greater impact: if all women in these countries completed secondary education, the under-5 mortality rate would fall by 49% – an annual savings of 3 million lives (Infographic: Saving children's lives). Fathers' education has a smaller impact: if both women and men had secondary education, the under-5 mortality rate would fall by 54% in these countries.

To eliminate preventable child deaths by 2030 – which is likely to become a new global health target – urgent action is needed, and boosting secondary enrolment must be part of it. Over 9,000 children die every day in sub-Saharan Africa. The region has the lowest secondary enrolment rates in the world, and just 37% of girls are enrolled at this level. Ensuring that all girls achieve secondary education would mean 1.5 million more children surviving to their fifth birthday. In South and West Asia, the under-5 mortality rate would fall by 62% if all girls reached secondary school, saving 1.3 million lives.

Some of the countries with the highest child mortality rates and the lowest levels of education stand to reap the greatest benefits. In Burkina Faso, the under-5 mortality rate stood at 102 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2012, while the average for all low income countries was 82 deaths per 1,000 live births. The country's secondary gross enrolment ratio for girls is one of the world's lowest, just 25% in 2012. If all women completed primary school, child mortality would fall by 46%. If they all completed secondary school, it would fall by 76% (Gakidou, 2013).

### ***Literate mothers are more likely to seek support from a skilled birth attendant***

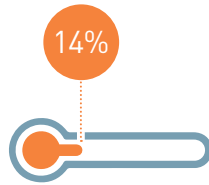
Analysis of the channels through which education saves children's lives reveals that mothers who are more educated are more likely to give birth with the help of a skilled birth attendant, which means their children are more likely to survive. Around 40% of all under-5 deaths occur within the first 28 days of life, the majority being due to complications during delivery (Liu et al., 2012). Yet there were no skilled birth attendants present in over half the 70 million births per year in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia in 2006–2010 (UNICEF, 2012a).

# EDUCATED MOTHERS, HEALTHY CHILDREN

Higher levels of education for mothers lead to improved child survival rates

## Pneumonia

One additional year of maternal education would decrease child deaths from pneumonia by:



Equivalent to:



160,000 lives saved per year

Maternal education reduces factors putting children at risk of pneumonia such as:

- 1 malnutrition and low birth weight
- 2 failing to carry out measles vaccination in the first 12 months
- 3 burning fuel that gives off harmful smoke

## Birth complications

A literate mother is on average:



more likely to seek support from a skilled birth attendant

## Diarrhoea

Reduction in diarrhoea in low and lower middle income countries if all mothers had primary education:



Reduction in diarrhoea if all mothers had secondary education:

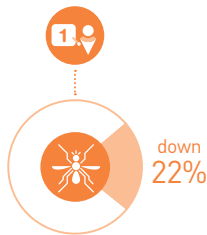


Educated mothers are more likely to:

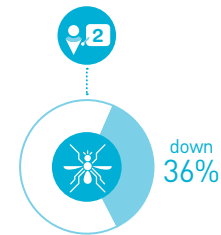
- 1 properly purify water
- 2 seek care from a health provider when a child has diarrhoea
- 3 administer rehydration solutions, increase fluids, and continue feeding

## Malaria

In areas of high transmission, the odds of children carrying malaria parasites is **22% lower** if their mothers have primary education than if their mothers have no education



In areas of high transmission, the odds of children carrying malaria parasites is **36% lower** if their mothers have secondary education than if their mothers have no education

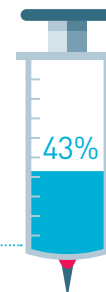


## Immunization

Increase in vaccination for diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough (DTP3) in low and lower middle income countries if all mothers had primary education:



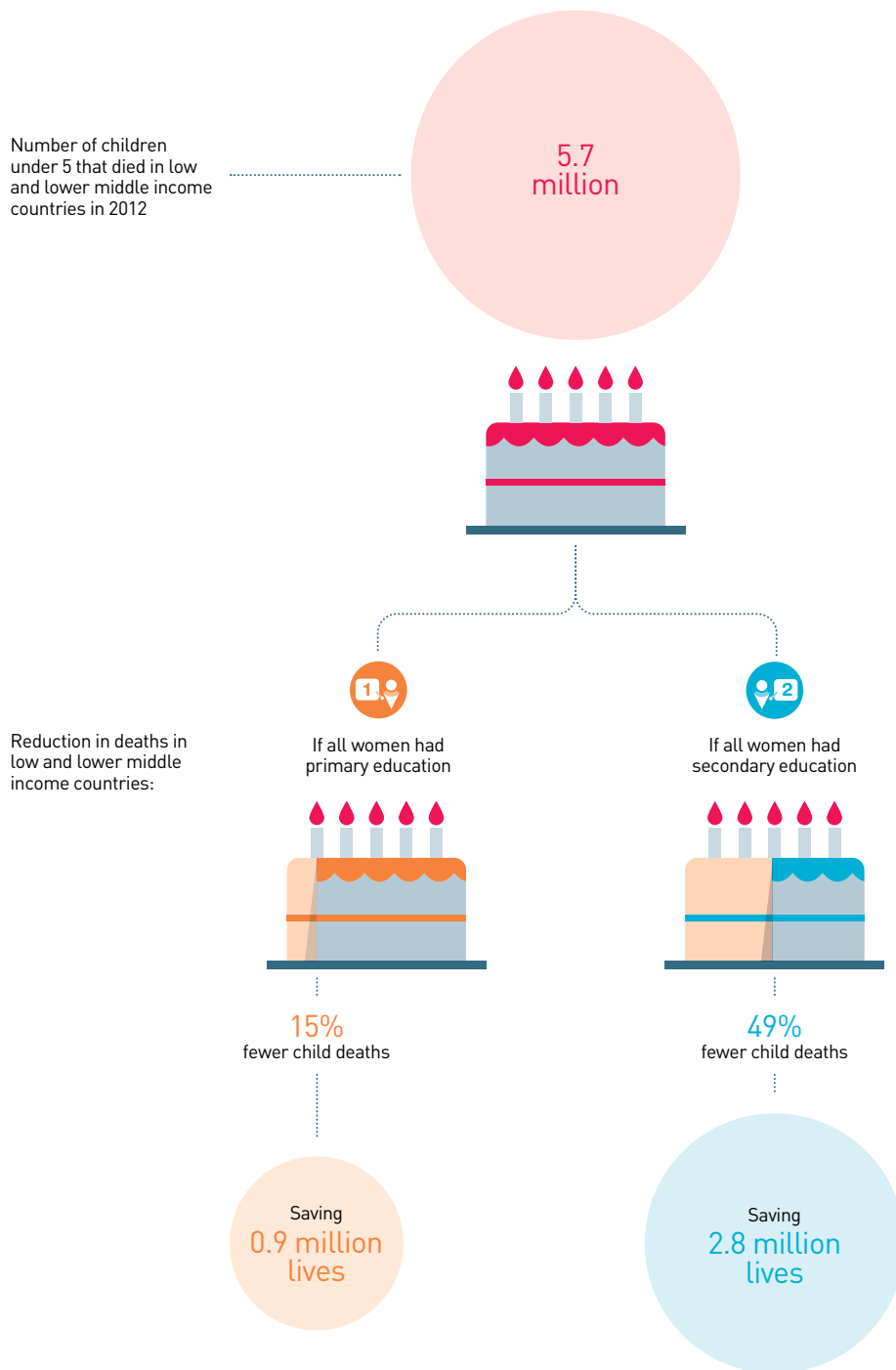
Increase in DTP3 vaccination if all mothers had secondary education:



Sources: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations (2013), based on Demographic and Health Survey data from 2005-2011; Fullman et al. (2013); Gakidou (2013).

# SAVING CHILDREN'S LIVES

A higher level of education reduces preventable child deaths



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

Across 57 countries, analysis of Demographic and Health Surveys for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report shows that a literate mother is, on average, 23% more likely to have a skilled attendant at birth.

### *Educated mothers ensure their children are vaccinated*

Since 2000, the GAVI Alliance has supported vaccination against preventable diseases for 370 million children in the world's poorest countries, saving an estimated 5.5 million lives (GAVI, 2013). This is a tremendous impact. There is a missing ingredient, however, in GAVI's strategy that would allow for its success to be transmitted across generations: investment in girls' education.

Analysis of data from Demographic and Health Surveys for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report shows that if all women in low and lower middle income countries completed primary education, the probability of a child receiving immunization against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough – a triple vaccination known as DTP3 – would increase by 10%. If they completed secondary education, it would increase by 43% (Gakidou, 2013).

### *Mothers' education helps avert pneumonia*

Pneumonia is the largest cause of child deaths, accounting for 1.1 million or 17% of the total worldwide. Many pneumonia deaths could be prevented through breastfeeding, adequate nutrition, vaccination, safe drinking water and basic sanitation – and several of these factors are influenced by maternal education. UNICEF identifies pneumonia as a 'disease of poverty' (UNICEF, 2012b, p. 17). But lowering poverty only reduces pneumonia if mothers' education is improved at the same time.

As little as one extra year of maternal education can lead to a 14% decrease in the pneumonia death rate – equivalent to 160,000 child lives saved every year – according to new analysis for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report based on estimates of under-5 pneumonia death rates from the Global Burden of Disease study in 137 countries between 1980 and 2010 (Gakidou, 2013).

### *Educating mothers helps prevent and treat childhood diarrhoea*

Diarrhoea is the fourth biggest child killer, accounting for 9% of child deaths, many of which should be easily preventable (Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, 2013). If all women completed secondary education, the reported incidence of diarrhoea would fall by 30% in low and lower middle income countries because better-educated mothers are more likely to take prevention and treatment measures.

In terms of prevention, education affects household decisions to purify water through filtering, boiling or other methods. In terms of treatment, an educated mother whose child has symptoms of diarrhoea is more likely to seek appropriate health care, and apply appropriate treatment. In low income countries, mothers who had completed primary school were 12% more likely than mothers with no education to take such action, according to analysis for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report based on Demographic and Health Surveys.

### *Education is a key way of saving mothers' lives*

A mother's education is just as crucial for her own health as it is for her offspring's. Greater investment in female education, particularly at lower secondary level, would have helped accelerate progress towards the fifth MDG, improving maternal mortality, one of the goals that is most off track.

Maternal mortality is defined as the death of a woman while pregnant, or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management, though not from accidental or incidental causes. Between 1990 and 2010, the number of such deaths worldwide almost halved. While this is impressive, the maternal mortality ratio – the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births – fell by only 3.1% per year on average, well below the annual decline of 5.5% required to achieve the fifth MDG.

Every day, almost 800 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Overall, 99% of maternal deaths

occur in developing countries. The maternal mortality ratio in these countries is 240 deaths per 100,000 live births, compared with 16 in developed countries. Over half the deaths are in sub-Saharan Africa and over a quarter in South Asia (WHO, 2012b).

Mothers die because of complications during pregnancy, such as pre-eclampsia, bleeding and infections, and because of unsafe abortion. Educated women are more likely to avoid these dangers by adopting simple and low cost practices to maintain hygiene, by reacting to symptoms such as bleeding or high blood pressure, by assessing how and where to have an abortion, by accepting treatment and by making sure a skilled attendant is present at birth.

If all women completed primary education, maternal mortality would fall from 210 to 71 deaths per 100,000 births, or by 66%. This would save the lives of 189,000 women every year. If all women in sub-Saharan Africa completed primary education, the maternal mortality ratio would fall from 500 to 150 deaths per 100,000 births, or by 70% (Infographic: A matter of life and death).

At least two-fifths of the effect of education is indirect: educated women are more likely to use public health care services, to have fewer children and not to give birth as teenagers – all factors that reduce maternal mortality. Across the 108 countries studied, 6 out of 100 births were among women aged 15 to 19. If the rate of teenage births were halved, the maternal mortality ratio would fall by more than a third (Bhalotra and Clarke, 2013).

### **Education plays a major role in containing disease among girls and women**

Infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, and parasitic diseases, such as malaria, pose some of the gravest threats to health of women and girls – but improving their education is a powerful way to help reduce their incidence. By looking at how specific health risks affect women – young and old – in different ways, it is possible to see how increasing girls' access to quality education can protect them from disease. This section examines in particular the way literacy can help women protect themselves from HIV/AIDS and how education combats

malaria by helping women correctly identify its cause, symptoms and treatment.

### *Literacy improves women's knowledge about HIV/AIDS*

Education provides a window of opportunity to increase awareness about HIV prevention among young women and so avert new infections among future generations. Education's role in HIV prevention is illustrated by an analysis of 26 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and 5 in South and West Asia for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report. It demonstrates the importance of literacy skills in improving people's knowledge of how HIV is transmitted. These countries account for around half of all new infections among adults. In sub-Saharan Africa, 91% of literate women know that HIV is not transmitted through sharing food, compared with 72% of those who are not literate. In South and West Asia, where the infection rate is still increasing in countries such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the gap in knowledge between those who are literate and those who are not is even wider: 81% of literate women know that HIV is not spread by sharing food, compared with 57% of those who are not literate.

An educated woman is more likely to be aware that she has a right to negotiate safer sex – to refuse sex or request condom use – if she knows that her partner has a sexually transmitted disease. In both South and West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, literate women are as much as 30 percentage points more likely to be aware of this right, compared with those who are not literate. In sub-Saharan Africa, two-thirds of literate women are aware of it, compared with only a third of illiterate or semi-literate women.

Knowing where to get tested for HIV is a first step to receiving treatment. Yet only 52% of illiterate or semi-literate women in sub-Saharan Africa, and 28% in South Asia, know where to get tested, compared with 85% and 51% of those who are literate.

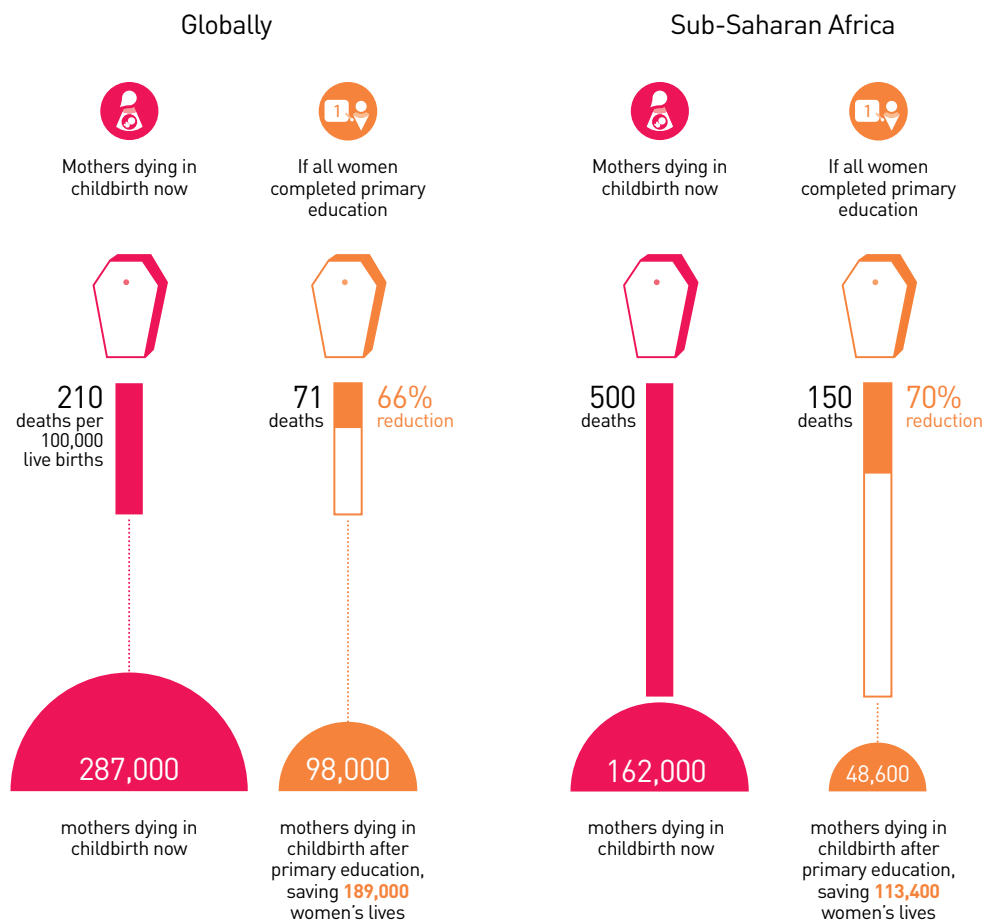
### *Education boosts treatment and prevention of malaria among girls and women*

Malaria is one of the world's deadliest but most preventable diseases. Education helps girls and women identify its cause and symptoms and



## A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

Educated mothers are less likely to die in childbirth



### Why does education reduce maternal deaths?

**Educated women are more likely to avoid complications during pregnancy, such as pre-eclampsia, bleeding and infections by:**

- ① adopting simple and low-cost practices to maintain hygiene
- ② reacting to symptoms such as bleeding or high blood pressure
- ③ making sure a skilled attendant is present at birth

**Educated women are more likely to:**

- ① use public health care services
- ② not give birth as teenagers
- ③ have fewer children

Note: Maternal mortality is defined as the death of a woman while pregnant, or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management, though not from accidental or incidental causes.

Sources: Bhalotra and Clarke (2013); WHO (2012b).

take steps to prevent and treat it. About half the world population is at risk of malaria. Those most at risk are children in Africa, where a child dies of malaria every minute.

Improved access to quality education for women cannot replace the need for investment in drugs and in bed nets treated with insecticide – one of the most cost-effective ways to prevent malaria – but it has a crucial role to play in complementing and promoting these measures.

The more schooling women have, the more likely they are to use bed nets, as studies have shown in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where a fifth of the world's malaria-related deaths occur. In an urban study of a group of pregnant women making an antenatal care visit, only a quarter reported having slept under a bed net the previous night. The odds of having used a net among women with at least secondary education were almost three times as high as those with less than secondary education (Pettifor et al., 2008).

Because women with more education are more likely to have taken preventive measures, they are less likely to contract malaria, even after household wealth is taken into account. In Cameroon, where the female secondary gross enrolment ratio was 47% in 2011, if all women had had secondary education, the incidence of malaria would have dropped from 28% to 19% (Gakidou, 2013).

Children of educated mothers are much less likely to contract malaria, as is shown by an analysis of Malaria Indicator Surveys in Angola, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. For example, the odds of children carrying malaria parasites was 44% lower if the mother had secondary education than if she had no education (Siri, 2012).

### **Hunger will not be eliminated without education of girls and women**

Malnutrition, the underlying cause in 45% of child deaths globally (Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, 2013), is not just about the availability of food. To eliminate malnutrition in the long term, education – especially education that empowers women – is

vital. Mothers who have been to school are more likely to ensure that their children receive the best nutrients to help them prevent or fight off ill health, even in families that are constrained financially. Educated mothers know more about appropriate health and hygiene practices at home, thereby ensuring their children are healthy enough to benefit fully from their food intake. And they have more power to allocate household resources so that children's nutrition needs are met.

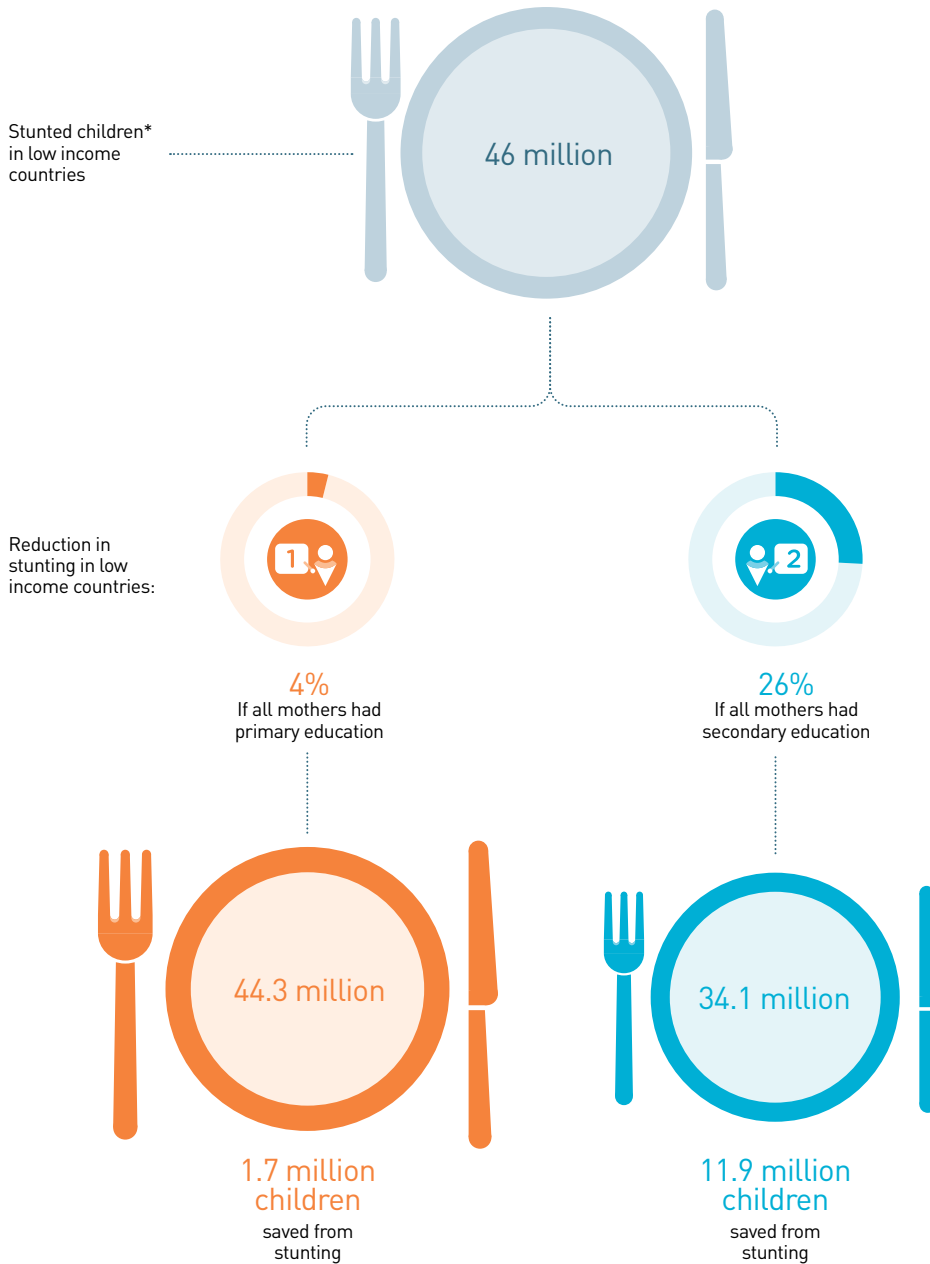
The global extent of chronic malnutrition is revealed by the fact that one in four children under the age of 5 suffers from moderate or severe stunting – that is, they are short for their age. Three-quarters of these children live in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The odds that a severely stunted child will die are four times higher than for a well-nourished child, while the odds that children who are severely wasted (underweight for their height) would die are nine times higher (Black et al., 2008). Chronic malnutrition affects children's brain development and their ability to learn. The link between malnutrition and cognitive development is also why early childhood care and education is the first goal in the Education for All framework.

Cross-country comparisons show that increasing the percentage of women who attend secondary school from 50% to 60% would result in a decline in the stunting rate by 1.3% after controlling for wealth, fertility and access to health services (Headey, 2013). The stunting rate in Bangladesh fell from 70% to 48% between 1994 and 2005. Over about the same period, the share of women with at least secondary education doubled. Education could explain more than a fifth of the reduction in stunting. If education's effect on fertility reduction were also taken into account, its influence would be even larger.

In low income countries, 46 million children suffer from stunting. If all women completed primary education, 1.7 million fewer children would be in this situation. The number rises to 11.9 million if all women complete secondary education, equivalent to 26% less children affected with stunting (Infographic: Education keeps hunger away). In South Asia, 20 million fewer children would be stunted if all mothers reached secondary education.

# EDUCATION KEEPS HUNGER AWAY

Mothers' education improves children's nutrition



\*Stunting is a manifestation of malnutrition in early childhood.

Sources: EFA Global Monitoring Report team analysis (2013), based on Demographic and Health Survey data from 2005-2011; UNICEF et al. (2013).

Detailed analysis within countries that has tracked children over time provides even stronger evidence that mothers' education improves child nutrition, even after taking into account other factors linked to better nutrition, such as mother's height, breastfeeding practices, water and sanitation, and household wealth. A study commissioned for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report showed that by age 1 – when adverse effects of malnutrition on life prospects are likely to be irreversible – infants whose mothers had reached lower secondary education were less likely to be stunted by 33% in Ethiopia, 48% in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India, 60% in Peru and 67% in Viet Nam, compared with those whose mothers had no education.

A key reason children of educated women are less likely to be stunted is that their mothers have more power to act for the benefit of their children. In rural India, mothers' education has been shown to improve their mobility and their ability to make decisions on seeking care when a child is sick – and infant children of women with such increased autonomy are taller for their age (Shroff et al., 2011).

Malnutrition is caused not only by having too little food to eat, but also by a lack of micronutrients in the diet. Maternal education is associated with a higher probability of children aged 6 to 23 months consuming food rich in micronutrients in 12 countries analysed for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report using Demographic and Health Surveys for 2009–2011.

## Education promotes healthy societies

Educating girls and women also has an indispensable role in strengthening the bonds that hold communities and societies together, notably through increasing political knowledge and empowering women. Education helps women overcome gender barriers causing low participation and activity in democratic processes, and encourages women to claim their rights and overcome discrimination.

## Education builds the foundations of democracy and good governance

Education helps women understand democracy, promotes the tolerance and trust that underpin it, and motivates women to participate in politics. Improving knowledge and instilling confidence in one's skills can improve women's access to essential democratic features, such as the justice system, to assert their rights.

*Education strengthens support for democracy.* In 17 Latin American countries, many of which have recently gone through democratic transitions, education of women boosts support for democracy or rejection of authoritarian alternatives, according to evidence from Latinobarómetro surveys. For instance, an increase in education level from primary to secondary raised support for democracy by eight percentage points among women, compared with five percentage points among men (Walker and Kehoe, 2013).

*Education promotes tolerance and social cohesion.* By altering attitudes, education of women – as well as that of men – leads eventually to political changes, such as more democratic representation of women. New research for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report shows the importance of equitable education on democratic development in India (Box 3).

*Education is essential for the justice system to function.* Problems can be particularly acute for women when their education levels are lower than men's. In Kenya, lack of knowledge about laws and dependence on male relatives for assistance and resources can prevent women from turning to the formal justice system, for example to resolve disputes such as property conflicts (International Development Law Organization, 2013).

### Box 3: In India, education boosts women's role in politics

India, the world's largest democracy, appears to suffer from voter bias. Over the last three decades, only about 4% of all candidates for state assembly elections were female, and any female candidate received only about 5% of overall votes. New analysis for this Report, which combined information on state assembly elections between 1980 and 2007 with information on literacy rates across 287 districts, shows that narrowing the gender literacy gap raises women's participation and competitiveness in politics. Average literacy over the period was 34% for women and 55% for men. It is estimated that raising the female literacy rate to 42% would increase the share of female candidates by 16%, the share of votes obtained by women candidates by 13% and female voter turnout by 4%.

Improving male literacy also has a positive impact on women's political participation, perhaps because literate men are more likely to vote for women candidates and, as party leaders, to field women candidates. Raising women's participation in politics is vital not only to achieve gender equality but also because evidence shows that women politicians tend to be both less corrupt and more proactive in representing the interests of children's well-being. Therefore, by stimulating increases in women's political engagement, investing in education improves democratic governance.

Sources: Afridi et al. (2013); Beaman et al. (2009, 2012); Bhalotra et al. (2013a); Brollo and Troiano (2013).

### Education empowers women to make life choices

Education is particularly powerful in helping women overcome unequal and oppressive social limits and expectations so they can make choices about their lives. The third MDG, on promoting gender equality and empowering women, acknowledges the central role of education in its inclusion of gender parity in primary and secondary education as a target. After 2015, it will be vital to build on the progress that has been made towards this target, as tackling gender discrimination in school unleashes education's power to help girls and women overcome broader discrimination.

Education empowers women to make choices that improve their own and their children's health and chances of survival and boosts women's work prospects.

Further, education empowers women to make choices that improve their welfare, including marrying later and having fewer children. When girls spend more years in school, they tend to marry later and have their first child later, but the effect of education goes beyond this to give girls and young women greater awareness of their rights and improve their confidence in their ability to make decisions that affect their lives (Box 4).

Education's influence on empowering women is particularly strong in countries where girls are likely to get married or give birth early and have a large number of children. Such empowerment not only benefits women's own choices, but also improves their health and that of their children, and benefits societies by bringing forward the demographic transition to a stable population with lower fertility and lower mortality.

### *Girls' education helps avert child marriage*

Around 2.9 million girls are married by the age of 15 in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, equivalent to one in eight girls in each region, according to new estimates from Demographic and Health Surveys for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report based on data for 20- to 24-year-olds. These shocking statistics mean millions of girls are robbed of their childhood and denied an education.

Ensuring that girls stay in school is one of the most effective ways to avert child marriage. If all girls had primary education in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, child marriage would fall by 14%, from almost 2.9 million to less than 2.5 million, and if they had secondary education it would fall by 64% to just over one million (Infographic: Learning lessens early marriages and births). Education's contribution is evident in the links between literacy and child marriage. While just 4% of literate girls are married by age 15 in sub-Saharan Africa, and 8% in South and West Asia, more than one in five of those who are not literate are married by this age in sub-Saharan Africa, and almost one in four in South and West Asia.

#### Box 4: Education gives women the power to claim their rights

Education gives women more power over their own lives in a variety of ways. As well as widening their choices, it can boost their confidence and perception of their freedom. It can also alter the perceptions of men and social barriers to their autonomy. One key aspect of this transformative power is women's freedom to choose a spouse in countries where arranged marriages are common. According to new analysis for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report, young women with at least secondary education are 30 percentage points more likely to have a say over their choice of spouse than women with no education in India and 15 percentage points more likely in Pakistan.

Education also influences young women's choice of family size. In Pakistan, while only 30% of women with no education believe they can have a say over the number of their children, the share increases to 52% among women with primary education and to 63% among women with lower secondary education.

The education level of a woman's spouse can also have a key role in her fertility choices. In India, the likelihood that the fertility preferences of a woman with primary education were taken into account rose from 65% for those whose husbands had no education to at least 85% for those whose husbands

had at least secondary education. Education also helps prevent the abhorrent practice of infanticide in India, where strong preferences over the sex of the child have been linked to millions of killings of children. While 84% of women with no education would prefer to have a boy if they could only have one child, only 50% of women with at least secondary education would have such a preference.

Further evidence of education's power to change attitudes comes from Sierra Leone, where the expansion of schooling opportunities in the aftermath of the civil war led to a steep increase in the amount of education completed by younger women. An additional year of schooling reduced women's tolerance of domestic violence from 36% to 26%.

Adult education can also make a key difference to women's choices. A literacy programme for women in the Indian state of Uttarakhand that provided continuing education and vocational training, covering issues such as alcoholism, village politics and community conflict resolution, led to a significant increase in the percentages of women who felt able to leave their house without permission (from 58% to 75%) and who participated in village council meetings (from 19% to 41%).

Sources: Aslam (2013); Kandpal et al. (2012); Mocan and Cannonier (2012).

Girls who make it to secondary school are much less likely to be locked into early marriage. In Ethiopia, while almost one in three women with no education were married by the age of 15 in 2011, among women with secondary education the share was just 9%.

#### *Girls' education reduces the chance of early birth*

Empowering girls and women also gives them more control over decisions about when to have their first child. As many as 3.4 million births occur before girls reach age 17 in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia. This corresponds to about one in seven young women in the two regions, according to estimates for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report using Demographic and Health Survey data for 20- to 24-year-olds. Giving birth so early is a major risk factor for maternal and child deaths.

One reason that girls with more years in school are less likely to give birth early is simply that girls who give birth drop out before they have a chance of more education. But staying in school longer also gives girls more confidence to make choices that prevent them from getting pregnant at a young age. In sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, early births would fall by 10%, from 3.4 million to 3.1 million, if all women had primary education. If all women had secondary education, early births would fall by 59%, to 1.4 million (Infographic: Learning lessens early marriages and births).

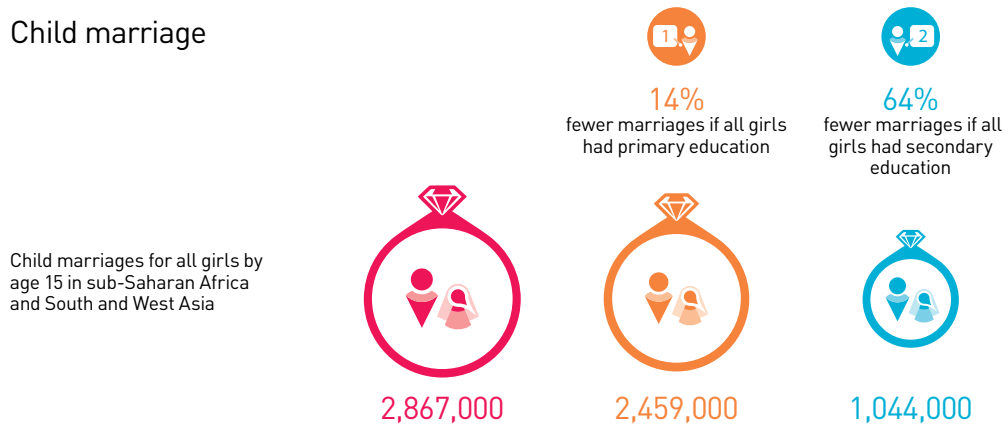
#### *Extending girls' education helps bring the demographic transition forward*

Women with more education tend to have fewer children, which benefits them, their families and society more generally. In some parts of the world, education has already been a key

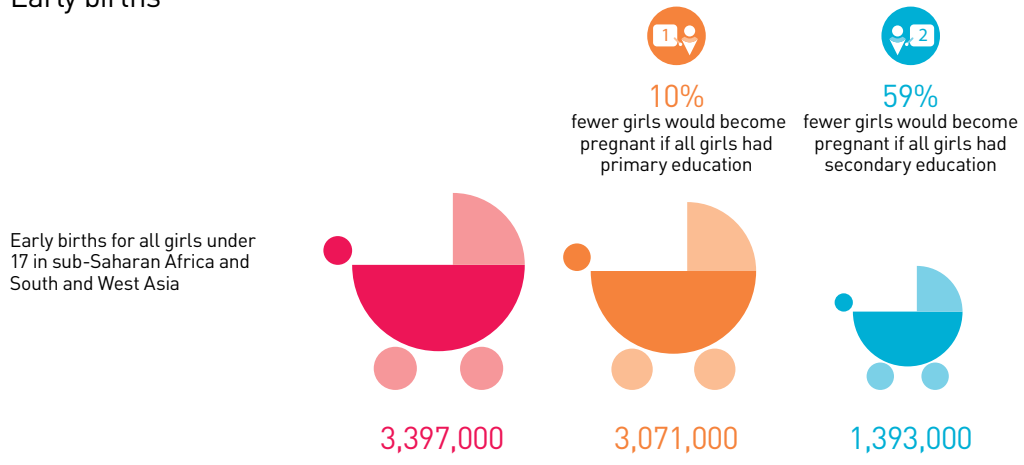
# LEARNING LESSENS EARLY MARRIAGES AND BIRTHS

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

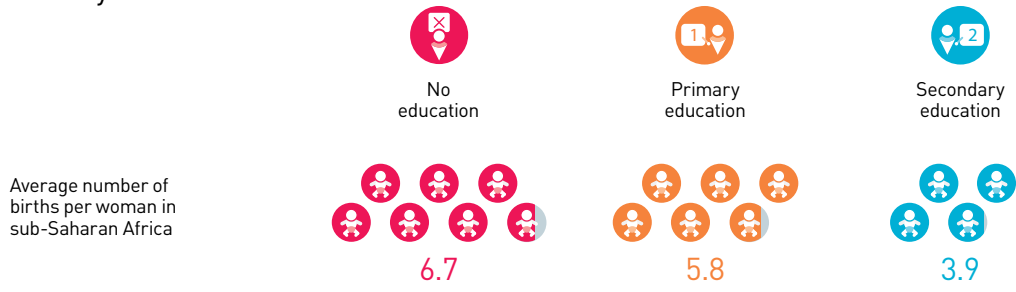
## Child marriage



## Early births



## Fertility rate\*



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

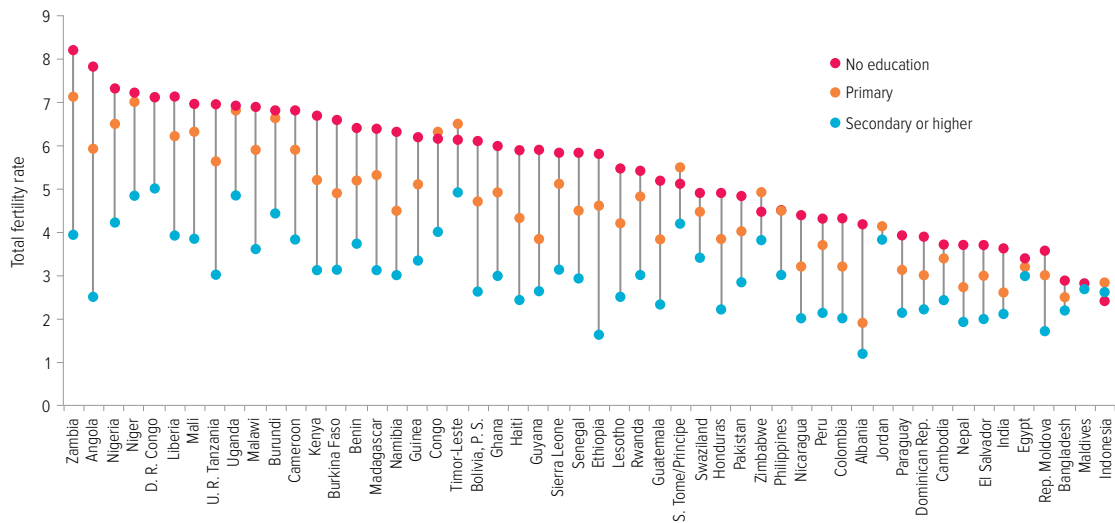
Sources: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations (2013), based on Demographic and Health Surveys; UNPD (2011).

factor in bringing forward the transition from high rates of birth and mortality to lower rates. Other parts of the world are lagging, however, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, where women have an average of 5.4 live births, compared with 2.7 in South Asia (UNPD, 2011). Women with no education in sub-Saharan Africa have 6.7 births, on average, while the number falls to 5.8 for those with primary education to 3.9 for those with secondary education. If all women in sub-Saharan Africa had primary education, the number of births would fall by 7%, from 31 million to 29 million, while if all women had secondary education, the number would fall by 37%, to 19 million.

Comparing total fertility rates by education level across countries shows that secondary education is of particular importance. For example, in the United Republic of Tanzania in 2010, the fertility rate of a woman with no education was 7 children, compared with 5.6 children for a woman with primary education and 3 children for a woman with secondary education or higher (Figure 12).

**Figure 12: Maternal education greatly reduces fertility rates**

Total fertility rate (number of live births per woman) by level of maternal education, selected countries, 2005–2011



Source: ICF International (2012).



## Part 3

# Supporting teachers to end the learning crisis

Quality education is at the heart of the Education for All goals, but 250 million children – many of them from disadvantaged backgrounds – are not learning even basic literacy and numeracy skills, let alone the further skills they need to get decent work and lead fulfilling lives. In a world of equal learning opportunity, what students could achieve in school would be determined by their ability and effort rather than their circumstances at birth. In reality, factors such as gender, poverty, ethnicity, disability and where a child is born weigh heavily on whether children go to school and, once there, learn.

To solve the learning crisis, all children – and especially girls – must have teachers who are trained, motivated and enjoy teaching, who can identify and support weak learners, and who are backed by well-managed education systems. Good teachers can close the gap between poor and good quality education by maximizing the benefits of learning in every classroom for every child. But worldwide, girls who already face disadvantage and discrimination – which are compounded by factors such as poverty, ethnicity, and disability and where they live – are much less likely to be taught by good teachers.

### The learning crisis hits the disadvantaged hardest

Estimates in the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report suggest that of the world's 650 million primary school age children, at least 250 million are not learning the basics in reading and mathematics, many of whom are girls.<sup>1</sup> Of these, almost 120 million have little or no experience of primary school, having not even reached grade 4. The remaining 130 million stay in primary school for at least four years but do not achieve the minimum benchmarks for learning.

### Poverty and geographic location exacerbate learning disparities for girls

While average figures on learning achievement provide an overall picture of the scale of the learning crisis, they can conceal large disparities within countries. Gender magnifies wealth disparities in learning outcomes for primary school age children. In Benin and Senegal, for example, rich boys perform better than rich girls. Being poor and female carries a double disadvantage. In Benin, around 60% of rich boys stay in school and attain basic numeracy skills, compared with only 6% of poor girls. In Kenya and Uganda, gender discrimination for girls occurs among the poorest households. Among the poorest households, 23% of Kenyan girls both complete primary education and achieve the basics, compared with 29% of boys. Such differences highlight the need to focus policies on eliminating gender gaps.

Learning disadvantages for poor girls can also be aggravated by geographic location. New analysis of Annual Status of Education Reports (ASERs) for rural India and Pakistan provides a stark illustration of how such disadvantages interact. In rural India, there are wide disparities between richer and poorer states, but even within richer states, the poorest girls perform at much lower levels. In the wealthier states of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, most rural children reached grade 5 in 2012. Among rich, rural children in these states, girls performed better than boys, with around two out of three girls able to perform a two-digit subtraction (Figure 13A). Yet despite Maharashtra's relative wealth, poor, rural girls there performed only slightly better than their counterparts in the poorer state of Madhya Pradesh.

1. The figure is an estimate based on information from several international and regional learning assessments. For further information on the methodology, see the technical note on the EFA Global Monitoring Report website.

Widespread poverty in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh reduces the chance that poor girls stay in school until grade 5. Once in school, though, poor girls have a lower chance of learning the basics: no more than one in five poor girls in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh are able to do basic mathematics.

The interaction between gender, geography, and poverty is a potent source of exclusion in Pakistan. Even in the wealthier Punjab province, only around half of poor girls of grade 5 age could do a simple subtraction, compared with more than 80% of rich boys. Girls from poor households in Balochistan face acute learning deficits – only around one-quarter achieved basic numeracy skills, while boys from rich households fared much better, approaching the average in Punjab (Figure 13B).

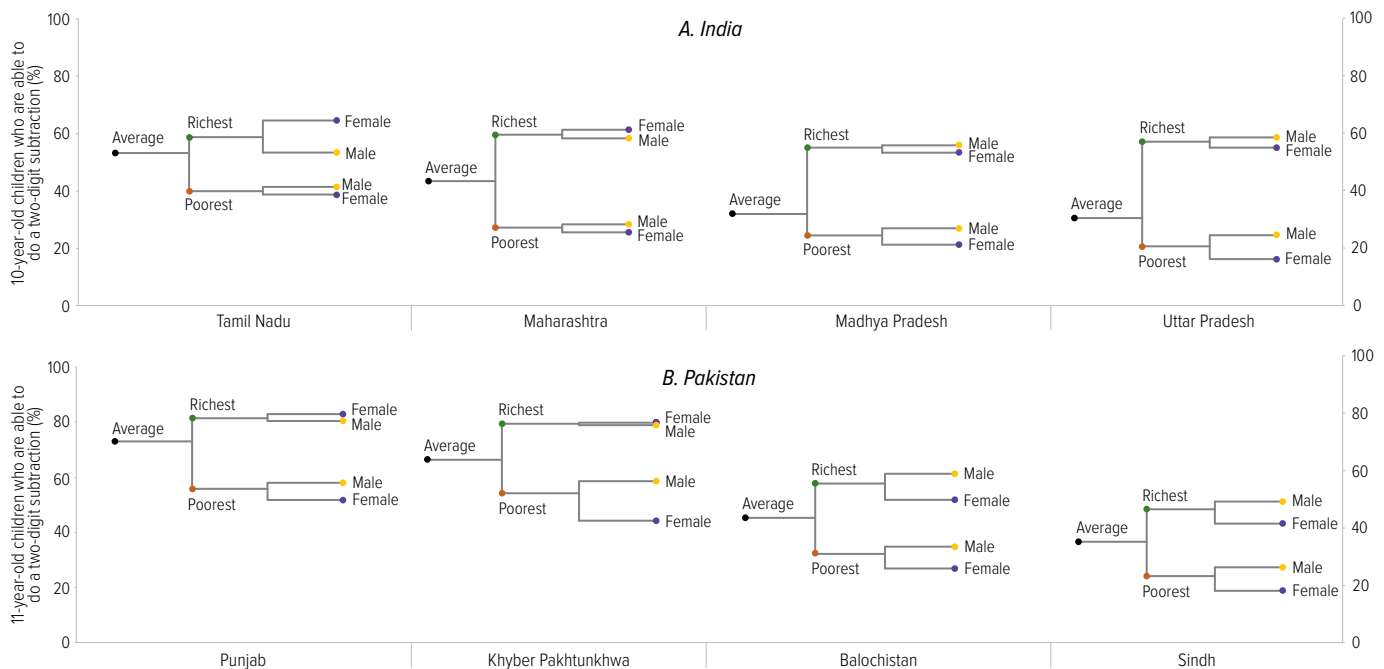
### Poor quality education leaves a legacy of illiteracy among young women

Despite recent advances in girls' education, a generation of women has been left behind: 493 million adult women are illiterate and account for almost two-thirds of the world's 774 million illiterate adults.

New analysis for the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report, based on testing young people's reading skills as part of Demographic and Health Surveys, finds that youth illiteracy is more widespread than often suggested. Around 175 million young people living in low and lower middle income countries are unable even to read all or part of a sentence: around 61%, or 107 million, of these are young women (Figure 14).

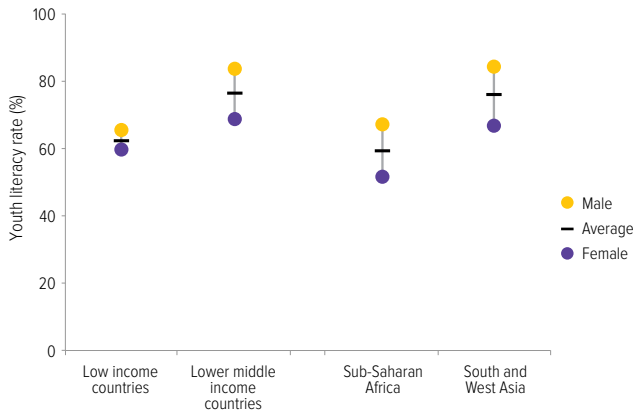
**Figure 13: In India and Pakistan, poor girls are least likely to be able to do basic calculations**

Percentage of all 10- and 11-year-olds able to do a two-digit subtraction, by gender and wealth, selected states/provinces of rural India and rural Pakistan, 2012



Notes: The analysis includes all children aged 10 (India) and 11 (Pakistan), whether in school or not. Richest/poorest refers to children in the bottom/top quartile of the ASER socio-economic status index. Sources: Analysis by the 2012 ASER India and ASER Pakistan survey teams.

**Figure 14: Half of young women in sub-Saharan Africa are illiterate**  
Youth literacy rate, by gender, selected regions and country income groups



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

Female youth illiteracy is widespread in sub-Saharan Africa, where about half of all young women are not able to read a sentence. West Africa is of particular concern, accounting for 35% of sub-Saharan Africa’s young population but 44% of its illiterate youth, a high proportion of whom are female. Young women are the least likely to be literate. Twelve West African countries are among the 20 countries with the world’s lowest female youth literacy rates, below 50% (Figure 15). In Mali, for example, only 17% of young women can read a sentence. The gender gap is particularly wide in South and West Asia, where two out of three of those who cannot read are young women.

**Poor young women are often most at risk of illiteracy...**

Among the poor, it is almost always young women who are most likely to get left behind, while both young men and women from rich households are likely to achieve basic literacy skills (Figure 16). In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, only 23% of poor young women aged 15 to 24 are able to read in everyday situations, compared with 64% of poor young men.

In some countries in western Africa, including Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, those aged 15 to 24 acquire very low levels of literacy skills, on average, and girls from both rich and poor households tend to be less literate. In Burkina

Faso, 72% of rich young men have basic literacy skills, compared with 54% of rich young women, but only 13% of poor men and 6% of poor women.

The gender gap among the poorest can move in the other direction, although this is generally the case among countries that are achieving higher levels of literacy overall and that have narrower gender gaps. In the Philippines, almost all young men and women from rich households have basic literacy skills, compared with 86% of poor young women and 72% of poor young men.

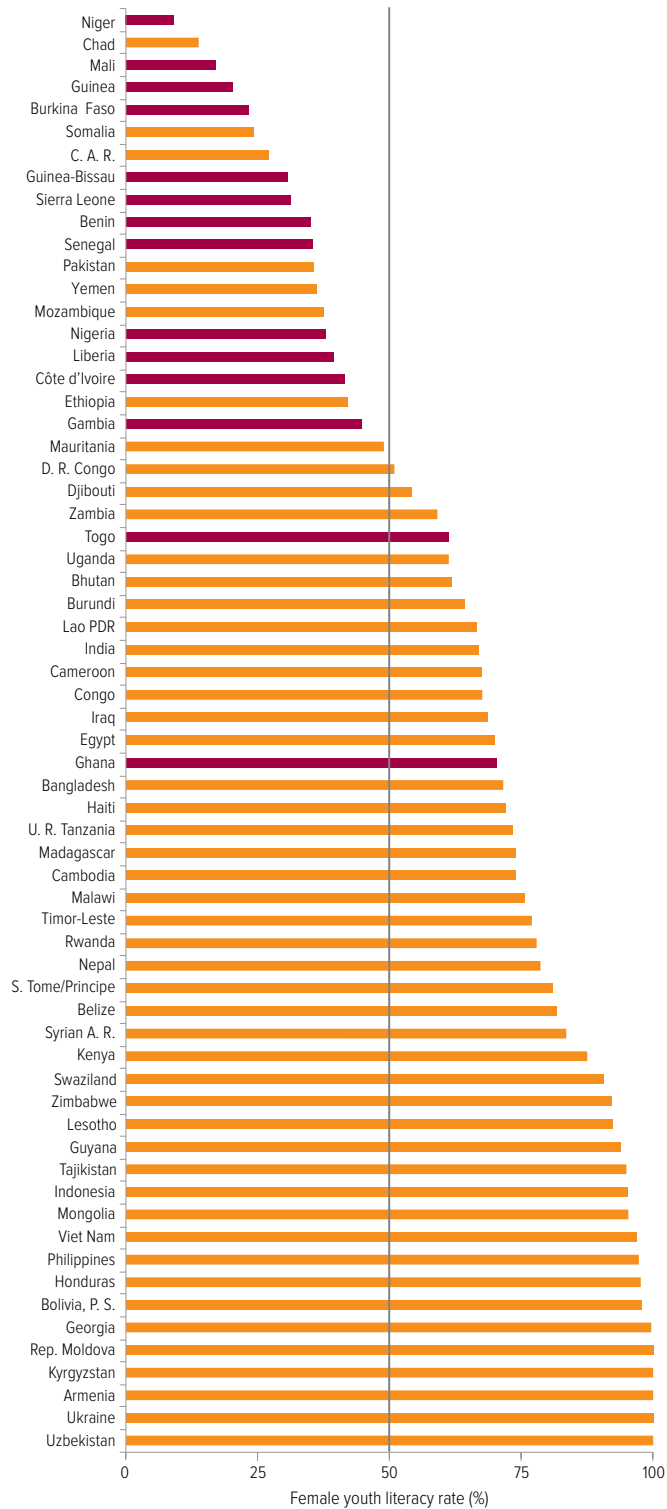
**... especially those in rural areas and from ethnic minorities**

Children’s level of learning varies widely depending on where they live, and this is mirrored in very poor levels of basic literacy skills among 15- to 24-year old women in rural areas. For instance, in Senegal, only 20% of rural young women were able to read in everyday situations in 2010, compared with 65% of urban young men. Low levels of literacy among rural young women in part reflect the legacy of the education systems and highlight the importance of ensuring that second-chance education programmes reach young women in underserved parts of the country (UNESCO, 2012).

Disadvantages in acquiring basic skills are further compounded by a combination of poverty, location and ethnicity. In Nigeria, only 2% of poor young women in the north-west can read, compared with 97% of rich young women in the south-east. In Indonesia, rich young women in Bali province have near-universal literacy skills, while just 60% of poor women in Papua province are literate (Figure 17).

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

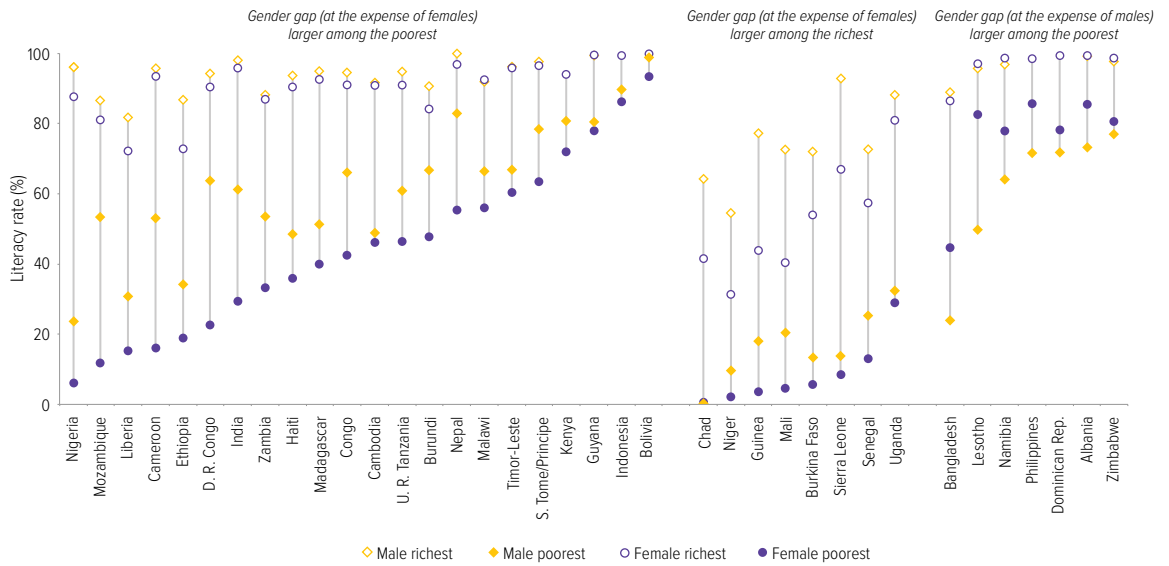
**Figure 15: In 12 West African countries, less than half of young women are literate**  
Female youth literacy rate, selected countries, 2004–2011



Notes: A purple bar signifies a country in West Africa. Data are unavailable for Cape Verde.

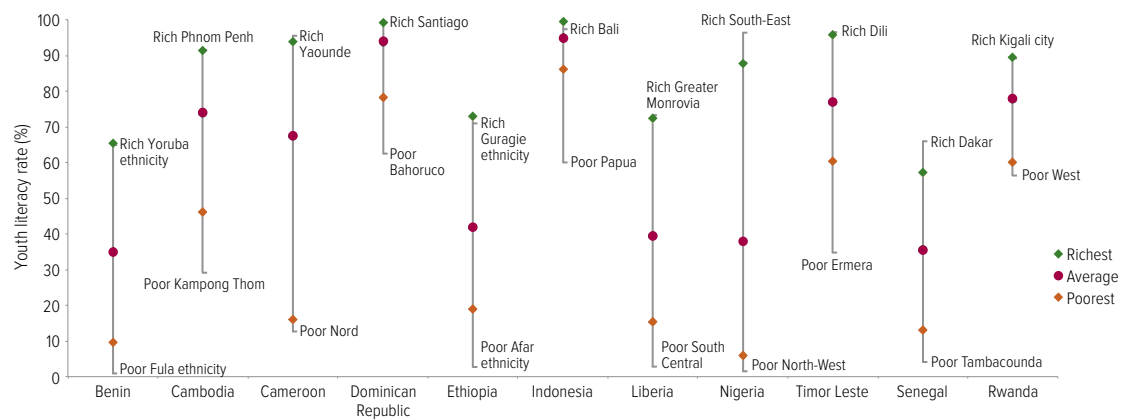
Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report team analysis (2013), based on Demographic and Health Survey data and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey data.

**Figure 16: The poorest young women are the most likely to be illiterate**  
Youth literacy rate, by gender and wealth, selected countries



Note: Richest/poorest refers to young people in the top/bottom quintile of the Demographic and Health Survey household wealth index.  
Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations (2013), based on Demographic and Health Survey data.

**Figure 17: Young women’s chances of learning depend on wealth, location and ethnicity**  
Female youth literacy rate, by wealth, location and ethnicity, selected countries



Note: Richest/poorest refers to young people in the top/bottom quintile of the Demographic and Health Survey household wealth index.  
Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations (2013), based on Demographic and Health Survey data.

## Quality education translates into literacy gains among disadvantaged young women

With the expansion of primary schooling over the past decade, the global youth literacy rate has improved. But success in improving literacy among marginalized young women varies widely among countries.

In Nepal, progress in improving youth literacy has benefited both young men and women, with most of the gains registered among the most disadvantaged groups, which started with very low levels of literacy. Poor young women and those living in rural areas witnessed by far the largest increase in literacy rates, with literacy among poor young women increasing from 20% in 2001 to 55% in 2011. As a result, the gap between the poorest and richest young women narrowed substantially over the decade, and the same held for men. In Ethiopia, literacy rates also increased substantially for both young men and women in rural areas, but stagnated in urban areas. Yet, the rural-urban divide persists: only 30% of young women in rural areas were literate in 2011, compared with about 80% of urban young women (Figure 18).

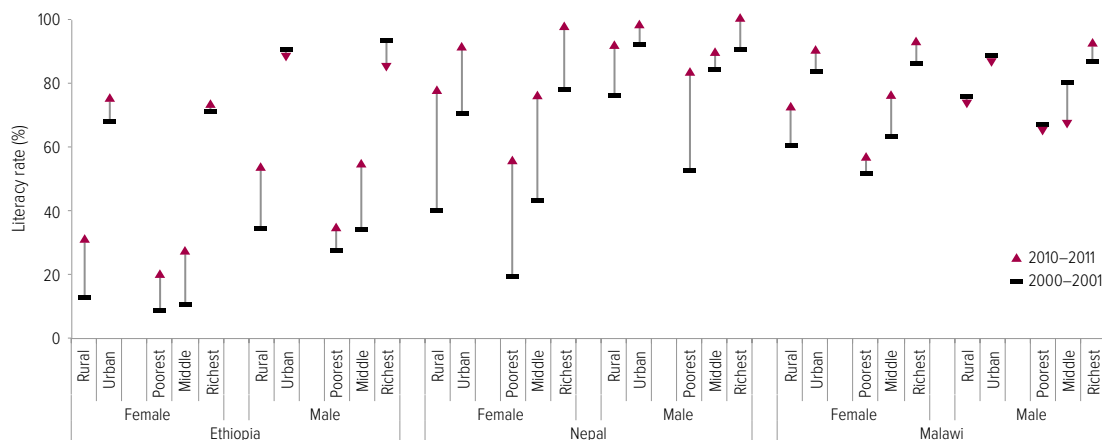
Progress over the decade was more modest in Malawi. While some gains were made among young women living in rural areas and those from middle income households, there was very little change for young men, whether rural or urban, rich or poor. The expansion in Malawi's education system has yet to improve literacy among young people because of the poor quality of schooling.

## Strategies for providing the best teachers for disadvantaged girls

To end the global learning crisis with regards to girls and young women, policy-makers need to give teachers every chance to put their motivation, energy, knowledge and skills acquired through training to work to maximize the learning potential of all children and young people, with special attention to disadvantaged groups. This section outlines four strategies that governments need to adopt, namely attract the best teachers, improve teacher education, allocate teachers to disadvantaged areas and provide the right incentives to retain teachers. It also identifies approaches to strengthen teacher governance to make sure these strategies are implemented effectively.

**Figure 18: Ethiopia and Nepal have made big strides toward literacy for disadvantaged young women**

Youth literacy rate, by gender, location and wealth, Ethiopia, Malawi and Nepal, 2000/01–2010/11



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

The quality of an education system is only as good as the quality of its teachers. It is crucial, therefore, for governments to ensure that girls and young women have the most able and most qualified teachers. That means attracting the right balance of good candidates, preparing them through comprehensive initial teacher education, and supporting them throughout their careers with ongoing training and guidance.

Even when all these criteria are fulfilled, however, learning outcomes remain widely unequal if the best teachers are not deployed to remote or poor areas. Unless governments ensure that teachers are fairly distributed, children who are already disadvantaged will fail to learn because of larger classes, high teacher turnover and a lack of qualified teachers.

**Strategy 1: Attract the best teachers**

Teaching often fails to attract the right balance of men and women, people with disabilities or from ethnic minorities, or disadvantaged backgrounds. Children who feel that their teachers have nothing in common with them or cannot communicate with them are less likely to engage fully in learning. Flexible policies for entry qualifications may be required to improve diversity of the teaching force.

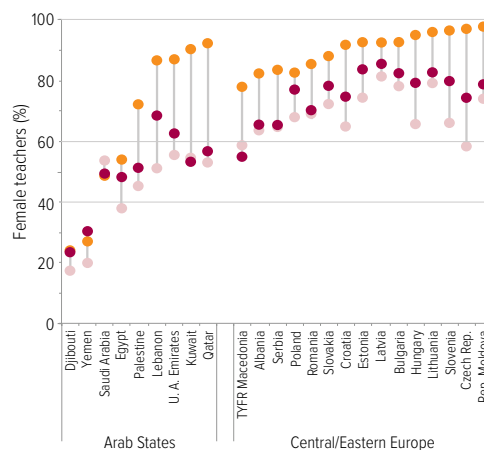
In some contexts, the presence of female teachers is crucial to attract girls to school and improve their learning outcomes. In Punjab province, Pakistan, girls’ standardized test scores were higher if they had a female teacher (Aslam and Kingdon, 2011). Increasing the proportion of female teachers in a district has been found to improve girls’ access to and achievement in education in 30 developing countries, especially in rural areas (Huisman and Smits, 2009a; 2009b).

The availability of male and female teachers is heavily unbalanced, however, between levels of education and between regions. Many factors limit the number of women recruited into teaching, particularly in disadvantaged areas. There may simply be not enough women educated enough to become teachers, especially in rural communities and among indigenous and minority populations.

In sub-Saharan Africa, which suffers from gender disparities in schooling at the expense of girls, the lack of female teachers in primary schools is even more acute at secondary school. Among the countries with data, female teachers make up less than 40% of the total teachers in 43% of countries at the primary level, in 72% of countries at the lower secondary level and in all countries at the upper secondary level. In Niger, the share of female teachers falls from 46% in primary school to 22% in lower secondary school and to 18% in upper secondary school. The same problem is encountered in South and West Asia: in Nepal, the share of female teachers falls from 42% in primary school to 27% in lower secondary school and to 16% in upper secondary school (Figure 19).

Women teachers are particularly lacking in countries with wide gender disparity in enrolment. In Djibouti and Eritrea, only about 8 girls were enrolled for every 10 boys in lower secondary school, with very limited progress since 2000. The percentage of female teachers remained at 25% in Djibouti over the period and 14% in Eritrea. By contrast, in Cambodia, where in 1999 the level of gender disparity in lower secondary enrolment was the seventh highest in the world with 53 girls enrolled for every 100 boys, gender parity had almost been achieved by 2011 and the share of female teachers had increased from 30% to 36%.

**Figure 19: The lack of female teachers is marked in**  
Percentage of female teachers, primary, lower and upper secondary



Sources: Annex, Statistical Table 8 (print) and 10B (web).

By contrast, in Latin America and the Caribbean, where more girls tend to be enrolled in school than boys, female teachers make up at least 60% of the total in 70% of countries at the lower secondary level. In Suriname, where there are 91 boys for every 100 girls enrolled, 75% of lower secondary education teachers are female.

People should enter the profession having received a good education themselves. They need to have completed at least secondary schooling of appropriate quality and relevance, so that they have a sound knowledge of the subjects they will be teaching and the ability to acquire the skills needed to teach. But, more stringent qualification requirements can limit the pool of women able to enter teaching, especially those from disadvantaged groups.

In the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, few ethnic minority women have become qualified teachers, partly because the number of girls completing school is low (Kirk, 2006). In Cambodia, policy changes in the late 1990s raised the entry requirement for teachers from 10 to 12 years of basic education, resulting in very low recruitment of women from rural areas, where few have access to upper secondary schools (Geeves and Bredenberg, 2005).

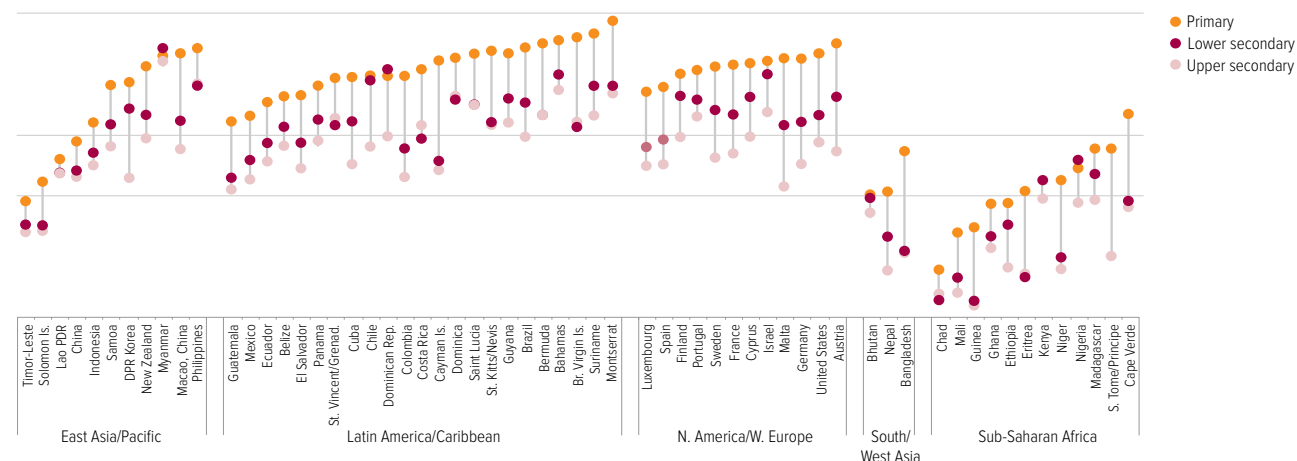
In Mozambique, government action resulted in the numbers of female teachers in grades

1 to 5 almost tripling between 1998 and 2008 and increasing sixfold in grades 6 and 7. The Ministry of Education encouraged the heads of teacher training colleges to take measures aimed at recruiting more women, including allocating more places for female students. As a result, the proportion of women students in these colleges has consistently been at or above 50%. Such affirmative measures have helped increase the number of women teachers quickly (Beutel et al., 2011).

In Afghanistan, women teachers are urgently needed, but the lack of girls’ education until recently has meant very few women qualified to become teachers. In 2008, less than 30% of those in initial teacher education were female, even though the numbers had been increasing thanks to programmes enabling women to enter teaching with lower qualifications (Wirak and Lexow, 2008).

Working with secondary school girls to raise their interest in teaching and offering financial assistance is another strategy that can potentially increase the number of female teachers, as experience from South Sudan illustrates (Box 5).

**sub-Saharan Africa**  
education, 2011





**Box 5: South Sudan encourages secondary school girls to go into teaching**

In South Sudan, where there is an enormous shortage of qualified teachers, less than 1% of girls complete secondary school. Decades of civil war coupled with cultural factors have undermined the role of women in public life and deprived most girls of the opportunity to attend school. Women make up about 65% of the post-war population, yet less than 10% of all teachers are women. Gender equity at all levels of education will be significantly harder to achieve if girls continue to lack female teachers who can support their learning and serve as role models.

To increase the number of female teachers, the Gender Equity through Education Programme provided financial and material incentives to over 4,500 girls to complete secondary school and to train young women graduates to enter the teaching profession. Schools with no female teachers were encouraged to identify a mentor for girls, a local woman who could come to the school regularly to discuss questions, concerns and ideas with girls. Communications materials with positive messages about women teachers and their role

in the newly independent country were developed to reach young women. The programme distributed kits containing sanitary pads, developed and distributed learning materials, and supported other government programmes aimed at increasing gender equity in education.

The programme achieved significant success, including greater awareness among teachers and school personnel of girls' needs. The provision of stipends in particular was linked to a substantial increase in the retention of girls in secondary schools. However, about one in five girls said they planned to pursue a career other than teaching, partly because of the low status of the profession. The police, the military and security companies pay three times as much, and teaching is seen as a stepping stone towards other jobs or post-secondary education opportunities. If such initiatives are to encourage more women to go into teaching, salaries and conditions of service need to improve.

Sources: Epstein and Opolot (2012); Globalgiving (2013).

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

Good quality education depends on giving teachers the best possible training, not only before they start teaching but also throughout their careers. Initial teacher education should prepare teachers to help students from a wide range of backgrounds and with different needs, especially in the early grades. It should go beyond the theory of teaching to include classroom experience, and ensure that prospective teachers know enough about the subjects they are going to teach. Initial teacher education also lays the foundations for ongoing training that reinforces skills and knowledge. In-service training is especially important for teachers who may be untrained or undertrained, especially those teaching in disadvantaged communities.

***Increase teachers' awareness of gender attitudes and perceptions***

Teachers, both female and male, need training to understand and recognize their own attitudes,

perceptions and expectations regarding gender, so that their interactions with pupils do not harm girls' and boys' learning experiences and achievement.

In Turkey, a one-term pre-service teacher education course on gender equity had a significant impact on female teachers' gender attitudes and awareness. Those participating in the course, which included topics such as gender socialization, selection of teaching materials and the school environment, showed significant improvement on a scale designed to measure attitudes to gender roles (Erden, 2009).

The Forum for African Women Educationalists has developed a Gender-Responsive Pedagogy model to address the quality of teaching in African schools. The model includes training teachers in the use of gender-equitable teaching and learning materials, classroom arrangements and interaction strategies, along with strategies to eliminate sexual harassment and encourage gender-responsive school management. Since 2005, over 6,600 teachers have been trained using this model (Forum for

African Women Educationalists, 2013). Case studies of schools where teachers were trained using this model – as part of a wider package of activities – reported that teachers were more responsive to gender issues and provided greater support to girls; the studies also found improved participation and learning outcomes (Forum for African Women Educationalists, 2006; Haugen et al., 2011).

### *Initial teacher education needs to provide relevant classroom experience*

Teacher education, including in-service training, needs to prepare trainees to instruct students from diverse backgrounds using a wide array of teaching strategies. This is particularly important in poorer countries, where girls' learning needs are likely to be especially diverse

as large numbers of marginalized learners enter school. Yet, a study of pre-service teacher education for lower secondary mathematics teaching in 15 countries found that none of the countries included preparation for student diversity as a key focus of teacher education (Blömeke, 2012).

In poor countries especially, teachers need to be prepared for the practical challenges of under-resourced and diverse classrooms, particularly in remote, rural areas. Development Aid from People to People, an international non-profit development organization, has established teacher training colleges in Malawi that offer pre-service education designed to equip new teachers, especially women, with the skills necessary for rural schools (Box 6).

#### **Box 6: Practically oriented pre-service teacher education supports female teachers in rural Malawi**

Malawi has one of the world's most dramatic teacher shortages, resulting in primary school classes with around 76 students on average. Unless urgent action is taken, the country is unlikely to close the teacher gap by 2030. Shortages are particularly problematic for rural areas, where teachers, especially women, are often unwilling to teach. These circumstances contribute to some of the lowest learning outcomes in the world.

To increase the number of primary teachers equipped to teach and stay in rural areas, Development Aid from People to People Malawi recently established four teacher education colleges in rural districts. Training programmes emphasize the integration of theory and subject content, the practical application of teaching skills, student-led research and reflection, community outreach and social development. Opportunities for teaching experience are provided during initial college-based training and one year of teaching practice. On graduation, the new teachers are expected to work effectively in rural areas, including using teaching and learning materials produced from locally available resources. The training programmes place a strong emphasis on supporting the needs of all learners, including learners at risk, and establishing community-based projects such as school gardens to support vulnerable children.

In a recent evaluation, it was found that the programme has been particularly beneficial in encouraging young women to train as rural teachers. Of the female students in the programme, 80% found that school practice topics prepared them adequately for teaching in rural areas, compared with 38% of female students in government colleges. Furthermore, 87% of female students in the programme said they would opt for a rural post, compared with 67% of those in government colleges.

The Ministry of Education posted graduates of the programme to rural government schools. By 2011, 564 newly qualified teachers were working in rural primary schools, an additional 750 were training and 1,420 children were receiving remedial lessons. Given the large numbers of rural children needing such support, government colleges need to learn from the programme to ensure that all trainee teachers, especially women, acquire the skills to teach in areas where they are most needed.

*Sources:* DeStefano (2011); Development Aid from People to People (2013); Mambo (2011).

### *Ongoing training to adapt to new teaching and learning approaches*

Learner-centred pedagogy might be more applicable than traditional approaches to teaching girls and other children from marginalized groups. In many low income countries, teaching usually relies on traditional approaches such as lecturing, rote learning and repetition, reflecting what teachers experienced themselves at school and how they were taught in teacher education institutions (Hardman, 2012). Many countries have been trying to move from these teacher-dominated approaches towards a learner-centred approach that emphasizes critical thinking. Teachers are expected to help students actively construct knowledge through activities, group work and reflection (Vavrus et al., 2011). In Kenya, a school-based teacher development programme, which combines subject learning and pedagogical practice and led to certification, shows that training can be effective in helping teachers adopt learner-centred methods. Teaching became more interactive, and attitudes towards students, especially girls, became more positive (Hardman et al., 2009).

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

Gender is a main factor in the unequal allocation of teachers. While women teachers provide role models for girls and may make schools safer for them, they are less likely than men to work in disadvantaged areas. Women teachers are understandably reluctant to work in such areas, which sometimes lack basic facilities such as electricity, good housing and health care. Safety also is a key concern, especially for unmarried women, who may also find it difficult to find accommodation in some social contexts.

But if the best teachers seldom work in remote, rural, poor or dangerous areas, the learning opportunities of children who are already disadvantaged suffer as a result because of larger class sizes, high rates of teacher turnover and a scarcity of trained teachers. Uneven allocation of trained female teachers is a key factor in wide equity gaps in learning and the reasons some children leave school before learning the basics. In Afghanistan, female teachers are vital for girls to be able

to enrol in school, but women face cultural barriers in seeking work in areas where they are not chaperoned by family members. As a result there are twice as many female teachers as male teachers in the capital, Kabul, while in Uruzgan province, most of which is remote and unsafe, there are no female teachers who have the minimum qualification (Wirak and Lexow, 2008). Governments thus need to devise strategies to ensure that teachers are equally allocated, but few have succeeded in doing so effectively.

Uneven allocation leaves parts of some countries without female teachers. A survey of teachers in 10 districts of Rwanda showed that only 10% of primary school teachers were female in Burera district, compared with 67% in Gisagara district (Bennell and Ntagaramba, 2008). In Sudan, adequate accommodation rarely exists in rural areas, and married women teachers have to be deployed where their husbands live. As 67% of primary school teachers are women, this further reduces the pool of teachers available for rural areas (World Bank, 2012b). In Malawi, a female teacher can request a posting to another district to follow her husband and cannot be denied the opportunity to join him, no matter where he is (World Bank, 2010a).

There are no simple solutions to the unequal allocation of female teachers. Governments attempt to overcome the problem by planning teacher deployment, enabling rural students to study in urban areas, providing incentives for teachers and recruiting teachers from the local community, but all these approaches have met with mixed success. For example, while local recruitment has its benefits, such as teachers' greater acceptance of a rural posting and reduced attrition, some of the most disadvantaged communities lack competent applicants where access to primary schooling is low. Incentives for teachers to accept difficult postings, such as housing, monetary benefits and accelerated promotion, are usually needed to ensure that all students are taught by good teachers.

■ *Teacher housing* is often used to attract female teachers to rural areas where suitable housing is not available for rent. The Programme to Motivate, Train and Employ

Female Teachers in Rural Secondary Schools in Bangladesh (1995–2005) provided women teachers in rural areas with safe housing near schools once they had completed training (Mitchell and Yang, 2012).

- *Local recruitment of female teachers* is another response to the teacher deployment problem. In Lesotho, a system of local recruitment allows school management committees to hire teachers, who apply directly to the schools for vacant posts. This ensures that only teachers willing to work in those schools apply; schools do not have a problem with teachers refusing postings. One major benefit of this system is that most teaching posts are filled, and there is relatively little difference in pupil/teacher ratios between rural and urban areas. Furthermore, almost three-quarters of teachers in the more remote mountainous areas are female. However, many of the rural schools recruit untrained teachers: school census data show that only half of teachers in mountain areas are trained, compared with three-quarters in the more populous lowlands (Mulkeen, 2006).

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

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

In some countries, few teachers can afford basic necessities without taking a second job. In Cambodia, where a teacher salary did not cover the cost of basic food items in 2008, over two-thirds of teachers had a second job. National data on average teacher pay disguise variations in pay among different types of teachers: salaries are often considerably less than average for teachers at the beginning of their career, which tend to be disproportionately women. In Malawi, those entering the profession, or lacking the academic qualifications needed for

promotion, earn less than one-third of teachers in the highest pay category. Their salary was equivalent to just US\$4 per day in 2007/08.

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

In sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, policy-makers have responded to the need to expand education systems rapidly by recruiting teachers on temporary contracts with little formal training.

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

In many developing countries, teachers' career structures are not sufficiently linked to prospects of promotion that recognize and reward teacher effectiveness. Many teachers have limited prospects of promotion. Those teaching in remote areas may be especially affected. In Pakistan, teachers have to acquire additional qualifications in order to be promoted, which limits the chances of those working in rural areas, especially women, who have fewer opportunities to study (Bennell and Akyeampong, 2007).

### Strengthening teacher governance: the case of gender-based violence

Better teacher governance is vital to reduce girls' disadvantage in learning and strong school leadership is required to ensure that teachers are held accountable for their presence, actions and behaviour. In particular, gender-based violence, which is sometimes perpetrated by teachers, damages girls' chances of learning. Strategies to prevent and respond to teacher misconduct, and take action against perpetrators of abuse, require advocacy and support from school leadership, teachers and their unions, as well as parents and their communities, if they are to protect girls and safeguard their learning.

Gender-based violence, which encompasses sexual and physical violence, intimidation and verbal abuse, is a major barrier to the achievement of quality and equality in education, whether it is perpetrated by teachers, community members or pupils. In addition to physical and psychological trauma, gender-based violence has long-lasting health consequences, such as unwanted pregnancy and the spread of HIV/AIDS, and often prevents students from completing their education.

Gender-based violence in schools is often not reported, so much of it may remain hidden. It is often committed by male pupils, although male teachers may be the main perpetrators of the most extreme forms of abuse and exploitation. A survey of 1,300 students from 123 primary and secondary schools in Sierra Leone found that 27% of incidences of unwanted sexual touching and 22% of incidences of verbal abuse were perpetrated by male pupils at school. A small percentage of cases were attributed to male teachers (4% and 3%, respectively). Almost a third of cases of forced or coerced sex in exchange for money, goods or grades were perpetrated by male teachers (Concern et al., 2010). A survey of gender-based violence in schools in Malawi found that around one-fifth of teachers said they were aware of teachers coercing or forcing girls into sexual relationships. Of those who reported awareness of such incidents, almost three-quarters knew of cases happening at their own school (Burton, 2005).

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

Codes of conduct for teachers need to refer explicitly to violence and abuse, and ensure that penalties are clearly stipulated and consistent with legal frameworks for child rights and protection. In Kenya, for example, a range of penalties is available to discipline teachers in breach of professional conduct, including suspension and interdiction; new Teacher Service Commission regulations state that a teacher convicted of a sexual offence against a pupil is to be deregistered (Kenya Teachers Service Commission, 2013). Conviction rates for sexual violence are notoriously low, however; in Sierra Leone, 1,000 cases of sexual assault were filed in 2009, but no action was taken against perpetrators (Concern et al., 2010).

Advocacy and lobbying through national networks and alliances is an important first step in ensuring that adequate legal and policy frameworks are in place to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in schools:

- In Mozambique, the Stop Violence against Girls in School programme, working with a network of civil society organizations, has published a detailed analysis of laws and policies relating to girls' education and protection. It informed the government's revision of the penal code, which now makes explicit and strengthens laws against sexual violation of minors (Leach et al., 2012).
- In Malawi, the Safe Schools project used national advocacy networks to lobby successfully for revisions to teachers' codes of conduct and call for stronger enforcement of regulations relating to misconduct. Awareness workshops were held for school supervisors and school committee members, who then ran sessions with teachers, pupils, counselors and parents on the revised code. Manuals developed for

training teachers and counselors included modules on the code as well as support, referral and reporting procedures. An evaluation of the project found that the proportion of teachers who reported having seen the code of conduct rose from about three-quarters to almost all. The number of teachers who said they knew how to report a violation of the code increased by over one-third, and virtually all of those said they had a responsibility to report violations (DevTech Systems, 2008).

- In Ghana, earlier versions of the teachers' code of conduct were consolidated into a single revised version explicitly addressing gender violence. As in Malawi, a consultative approach was adopted, with a team running workshops for representatives of regional education offices, schools and communities. Once the revised code was approved by a national review committee in 2008 and endorsed by teacher unions, meetings were held with all 428 head teachers and teachers in the 30 project schools to familiarize them with the revised code (DevTech Systems, 2008).

Working directly with teacher unions is a way to build support for taking action against teachers who violate codes of conduct. In Kenya, the Stop Violence against Girls in School advocacy team collaborated with the Teachers' Service Commission, the Ministry of Education, the Kenya National Union of Teachers and the Children's Department to draft a parliamentary bill based on a 2010 Teachers Service Commission circular on sexual abuse. The bill aims to reinforce procedures for reporting incidences of abuse or violence carried out by teachers, and to ensure that convicted teachers are not simply transferred to other schools (Leach et al., 2012). The circular states, moreover, that any failure to report or attempt to cover up an incident would lead to disciplinary action (Kenya Teachers Service Commission, 2010). The union, which previously was often a block to reform, is now reported to be committed to avoid protecting teachers found guilty of an offence, and a centralized database has been established to track teachers convicted of sexual offences (Leach et al., 2012).

Even where existing laws provide adequate legal protection against gender-based violence, enforcing them remains a challenge. A survey in Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique found that reporting mechanisms were generally weak. Of 842 girls who reported experiencing gender-based violence, only a few saw their cases referred through official channels, and a small minority were reported to the school management committee, district education office or police. In Ghana, no more than 7% of cases of various types of sexual violence were reported to the school management committee, 2% to district education offices and 14% to police. In Kenya, a greater proportion of cases, predominantly of forced or coerced sex were reported to the management committee or district education offices. In Mozambique, by contrast, no girls who experienced sexual violence reported the incidents (Parkes and Heslop, 2011).

In order to take action against teachers involved in violence or abuse of pupils, it is critical to ensure that reporting procedures are transparent and child-friendly. A national study in Sierra Leone noted that girls were often fearful of reporting teachers, and schools, parents and community members may be complicit in helping teachers avoid prosecution, especially for serious offences (Concern et al., 2010). Complex bureaucratic processes also tend to dissuade victims and their families from pursuing matters. The establishment of Family Support Units within the Sierra Leone Police, set up to tackle gender-based violence, is a more innovative approach to the problem. 'Mother clubs' in Sierra Leone negotiate difficulties faced by girls wishing to report cases of abuse, and provide moral and sometimes financial support (Concern et al., 2010).

### **Curriculum strategies that improve learning for girls**

Teachers can only break learning barriers effectively if they are supported by appropriate curriculum systems that pay particular attention to the needs of girls at risk of not learning. Where schools fail to deliver quality education, and girls are dropping out early, second-chance programmes can teach them foundation skills through a shorter cycle of learning. Curricula

also need to promote inclusion of girls, including by ensuring that textbooks avoid negative gender-related stereotypes.

### *Second-chance learning programmes enable disadvantaged girls to catch up*

Second-chance learning programmes offer one successful model of accelerating children's progress and raising achievement for disadvantaged groups. They are typically delivered in non-formal settings and target disadvantaged out-of-school children, such as those from underserved communities, those who left formal schooling in the early grades or those whose opportunities for education were interrupted by conflict, with particular attention to the needs of girls. Most accelerated learning programmes are intended to give children and young adults who have dropped out a second chance to complete basic education and obtain educational qualifications, and hence an opportunity to re-enter formal schools.

Such programmes vary enormously in size and scope, from pilot studies and projects designed to target particular communities to large, well-established programmes complementing governments' basic education provision. Established in 1985, BRAC's education programme in Bangladesh is one of the largest of its kind, with nearly 5 million students having graduated by 2012, of whom over two-thirds were girls (BRAC, 2012, 2013).

Accelerated learning programmes typically cover two or more grades of formal schooling in a year, with the aim of raising participants' academic proficiency to a level that allows them to re-enter the formal system in the appropriate grade. The majority of such programmes focus on basic numeracy and literacy skills, usually taught in the local language, coupled with practical learning oriented to learners' lives (Longden, 2013).

### *Developing gender-responsive curricula that foster inclusion*

To improve learning for all children, teachers need the support of innovative and inclusive curriculum and assessment strategies that can reduce disparities in school achievement and offer all children and young people the

opportunity to acquire vital transferable skills. Curricula that do not acknowledge and address issues of inclusion can alienate disadvantaged groups within the classroom, and so limit their chances to learn effectively.

In some countries, curricula reinforce traditional gender stereotypes, placing girls in a subservient role and hindering gender-equitable learning. Analysis of secondary school English-language textbooks published by the Punjab textbook board in Pakistan found that women and girls were seldom represented, or were represented in a discriminatory way. In 20 out of 22 lessons in one English textbook, women were not mentioned at all (Shah, 2012).

Gender-responsive curricula can be used to address issues directly affecting girls and boys and their schooling. The Group Education Activities curriculum developed for the Gender Equity Movement in Schools project in Mumbai, India, included content on gender roles, violence, and sexual and reproductive health for Standard 6 and 7 girls and boys. An evaluation from 2008 to 2010 showed improved scores on tests measuring attitudes regarding a range of gender-related issues, compared with girls and boys in control schools. Participating students tended to oppose early marriage and domestic violence and believed girls should continue to higher education (Achyut et al., 2011).

The Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial, a secondary school programme serving girls from the minority Garifuna group in Honduras, aims to empower girls and women. An interdisciplinary curriculum questions dominant power structures and challenges gender stereotypes. Teaching is learner-centred and inquiry-based, and emphasizes dialogue. Graduates displayed greater ability to identify problems and conceive solutions, along with more gender awareness, self-confidence and knowledge (Murphy-Graham, 2008). After two years, adolescents in villages where the programme had been implemented had higher composite test scores than those in other villages (McEwan et al., 2012, cited in Lloyd, 2013).

A sense of vocation: Bonafice, a teacher in Lodwar, Turkana, Kenya, says 'Teaching is more than just a profession, it's also a calling.'





# Recommendations: Unlocking teachers' potential to solve the learning crisis for girls and young women

Girls' educational opportunities should never be determined by where they grow up, their parents' income, their ethnicity, or whether they have a disability. Yet, in a quarter of the world's countries, less than half of children are learning basic literacy and numeracy skills. In total, 250 million children, many of whom are girls, are not learning the basics. Urgent action is needed to ensure that these children do not become a lost generation.

How governments and donor agencies respond to this learning crisis will determine whether good quality education can be achieved for girls. Learning disparities emerge early in life, even before girls start school, so it is vital to see that all girls benefit from early childhood education and go on to receive primary schooling of good quality in the early grades. If girls learn to read with comprehension and understand basic mathematics by the time they complete primary school, they acquire the foundations for making further progress in education and gaining the skills they will need to get good jobs.

Policy-makers should adopt the following ten critical teacher reforms to achieve equitable learning for girls. These reforms can ensure that all girls and young women, especially the disadvantaged, receive the education they need to realize their potential and lead fulfilling lives.

## **1** Fill teacher gaps

Girls and young women benefit from the presence of female teachers in schools, by improving their enrolment and achievement rates. The teaching profession often fails

to attract sufficient number of female teachers, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and deployment in rural areas is insufficient. Moreover, on current trends, some countries will not meet their primary school teacher needs by 2030. The challenge is even greater for other education levels, especially in the poorest countries.

It is particularly crucial that, governments, supported by donor agencies, redouble efforts to make up teacher shortages and focus insofar as possible on hiring female teachers, and especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

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

Girls and young women need the best teachers to optimize their learning opportunities. These teachers should be drawn from a wide range of backgrounds, reflecting learners' diversity. It is vital that they have at least a good secondary education.

Affirmative action should be considered to attract more women into teaching. To increase the pool of better-educated female teachers, policy-makers should also aim to improve girls' access to secondary education, especially in disadvantaged areas.

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

Every teacher should receive training to equip them to meet the learning needs of all students, including the specific needs of girls and boys

An outdoor class in Turkana County, northwestern Kenya. Teacher education needs to prepare teachers for such remote schools.



that relate to gender. However, many teacher candidates are recruited with weak subject knowledge and only apply traditional teaching methods, because they have also suffered from a poor quality education.

Teachers also need adequate preparation to address gendered dimensions of school and classroom interactions that can negatively affect girls' and boys' learning experiences and outcomes. Gender training should be provided for teachers through in-service as well as pre-service programmes.

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

Globally, the training of teacher educators has largely been ignored, with the result that most teacher educators have little knowledge and experience of real classroom teaching challenges. Policy-makers should give training of teacher educators high priority, ensuring that educators have adequate exposure to the classroom learning requirements facing those teaching in difficult circumstances.

Once teachers qualify to teach, the professional support they receive in the early stages of their career is vital to their effectiveness. Policy-makers should ensure that trained mentors are available to help newly qualified teachers translate teaching knowledge into activities that improve learning for all children.

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

Recruiting the best teachers and giving them the best training will amount to little if they do not teach in the areas where they are most needed. Often poor, remote areas do not attract the best teachers because of inadequate infrastructure and harsh working conditions. Adequate compensation, bonus pay, good housing and support in the form of professional development opportunities should be used to encourage trained teachers to accept positions in disadvantaged areas. In remote or rural areas with acute teacher shortages, governments should recruit teachers locally and provide them with ongoing training to ensure that all children, irrespective of their location, have teachers with the capacity to improve their learning.

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

Many low income countries find it difficult to raise teacher salaries substantially because of budget constraints. Governments should nonetheless do all they can to make teachers' pay more competitive. Paying teachers low salaries sends a negative signal to society about the value of teachers' contribution to education quality. In some poor countries, teachers barely earn enough to lift their families above the poverty line. To recruit the best teachers and retain them, teacher pay must be similar to that of professionals in comparable fields to avoid the risk of teachers losing motivation or leaving the profession.

Attractive career and pay structures should be used as incentives for all teachers. Career and pay structures should recognize and reward teachers in remote areas and those who teach disadvantaged children.

#### **7 Strengthen legislative and policy frameworks to protect all children from gender-based violence**

Girls need the support of strong school leadership to protect them from –and respond to – gender-based violence whether perpetrated by teachers, community members or pupils. Governments should work closely with teacher unions to formulate policies and adopt codes of conduct to tackle unprofessional behavior. Such codes should refer explicitly to violence against pupils, ensuring that penalties are consistent with legal frameworks for child rights and protection. A range of penalties, such as suspension and interdiction, should be used to tackle serious cases of teacher misconduct.

#### **8 Equip teachers with curricula that support improved learning for girls**

Teachers need the support of inclusive and flexible curriculum strategies designed to meet the learning needs of children from disadvantaged groups, including girls. Teachers and teaching assistants should be supported with curriculum content and delivery methods that improve learning and increase equity, allowing girls to catch up. Gender-responsive curricula should promote the inclusion of girls,

for example, by ensuring that textbooks avoid negative gender-related stereotypes and combat gender biases.

In countries with a large population of out-of-school children and youth, governments and donors should give priority to investment in second-chance and accelerated learning programmes and recruit and equip teachers with the skills to run them.

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

Teachers need strong skills in classroom-based assessment practices to identify and help learners from disadvantaged backgrounds who are struggling. Pre-service and ongoing teacher education should train teachers how to use assessment tools to detect learning difficulties early, and how to devise appropriate strategies to tackle these difficulties. Girls' learning responds particularly well from such efforts, especially in early grades.

Girls and young women can make considerable gains if they are offered more opportunities to monitor their own learning. Teachers should be provided with skills to help girls use learning materials to evaluate and monitor their progress. Targeted additional support via trained teaching assistants or community volunteers is another key way of improving learning for students at risk of falling behind.

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

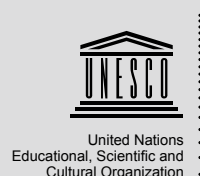
Countries should invest in collecting and analysing annual data on the number of trained teachers available throughout the country and how many additional teachers are needed, including characteristics such as gender, ethnicity and disability, at all levels of education. These data should be complemented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

# TEACHING AND LEARNING: Achieving quality for all

Worldwide, 250 million children – many from disadvantaged backgrounds – are not learning the basics because of a lack of attention to education quality and a failure to reach the marginalized. The 2013/4 *Education for All Global Monitoring Report, Teaching and learning: Achieving quality for all*, shows that as a result, many girls and young women unable to read or write, let alone acquire the skills they need to get decent work and lead fulfilling lives.

Poised on the threshold of 2015, this summary of the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report provides a critical assessment of trends and challenges in meeting the Education for All Goals as well as an overview of the issues framing the teaching and learning crises from a “gender” lens. As the international community prepares to formulate post-2015 development goals, the Report makes a compelling case for giving education a central place in the global and national frameworks. It presents the latest evidence from around the world of the power of education – especially of girls – to help improve health and nutrition, reduce poverty, boost economic growth and deepen the foundations of democracy.

It describes how policy-makers can put an end to the learning crisis – by supporting and sustaining a quality education system for all children, regardless of background, through providing the best teachers. For accelerating girls’ education, this means recruitment of female teachers, especially in rural areas who are supported and motivated through appropriate incentives; and a focus on gender-aware and responsive teacher training and professional development, among others. Unless special efforts are urgently taken to extend educational opportunities to the marginalized, girls in the poorest countries may take several generations to achieve universal completion of primary and lower secondary education as well as universal youth literacy.



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