

FACT SHEET

GIRLS' EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

FACT: The Government of Indonesia since its independence in 1945 has steadily expanded its education system and compulsory 9 years of basic education¹ was declared a national policy in 1994.

FACT: Most children, both boys and girls, enroll in primary school, with the net enrolment ratio² (NER) reaching 93 per cent in 2002, with no significant gender gap.

FACT: At the junior secondary school level, the NER drops to 61.6 per cent with a slightly higher ratio for girls (62.4 per cent) than boys (60.9 per cent).

FACT: More children from urban areas (71.9 per cent) go to junior high compared to rural areas (54.1 per cent).

FACT: Enrollment differs significantly among income groups. The poorest 20 per cent of the population has a much lower NER of 49.9 per cent compared to 72.2 per cent in the richest 20 per cent.

FACT: Data from the Ministry of Education shows significant gender gaps in school dropout rates, both at primary and junior secondary levels³. Girls are more likely to drop out of school than boys. In primary school, out of every 10 children who drop out, 6 are girls and 4 are boys. It's the same in junior secondary school. The gender gap slightly widens at the senior secondary school to 7 girls dropping out for every 3 boys (Ministry of National Education, 2002).

FACT: Roughly 1.8 million children of primary school age 7-12 years, and 4.8 million age 13-15 years, remain outside schools (National Socio-Economic Survey, 2002).

FACT: Data on school transition rates show that boys and girls are equally likely to proceed from primary school to junior secondary school. Transition rate from primary to junior secondary education for boys (83 per cent) is slightly higher-although not significantly- than that of girls (81 per cent). The gender gap in transition rates widens a little-although still insignificantly- at the next higher level of schooling from junior secondary to senior secondary education levels (73 per cent for boys compared to 69 per cent for girls).

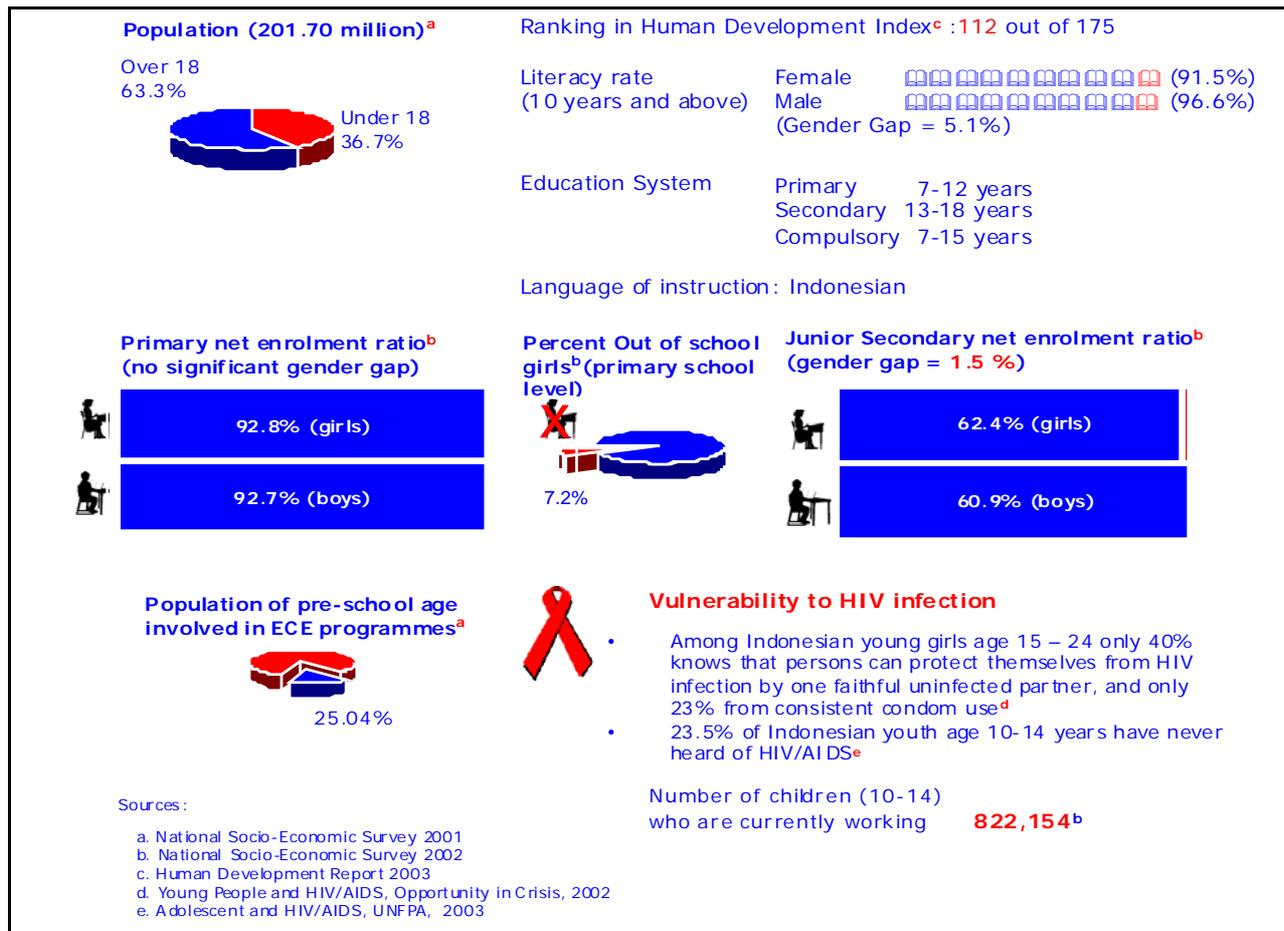
¹ Indonesia since 1994 defines compulsory basic education as nine years: six years of primary education (for ages 7-12 years) and three years of junior secondary education (ages 13-15 years).

² Net enrolment ratio (NER) is defined as the proportion of children of relevant age group attending school in relation to the total population of children in the relevant age group. For primary education the relevant age group of children is 7-12 years old; while it is 13-15 years for junior secondary education.

FACT: Literacy has remained high over the past decade for the 15-24 year age group: 96.6 percent in 1992 and 98.7 in 2002. There is no significant literacy gender gap as indicated by a gender parity index of 97.9 per cent in 1992 and 99.8 per cent in 2002.

FACT: 85% of Indonesian girls aged 15-19 have at least one major misconception about HIV/AIDS or have never heard of AIDS.

GIRLS' EDUCATION: INDONESIA AT GLANCE



THE BARRIERS

While it is apparent that access to education becomes increasingly more limited as children go to higher levels of education, Indonesia has achieved an overall good progress towards gender parity in net enrolment ratio at primary and junior secondary levels. Does this mean that Indonesia does not have serious gender problems in education? Far from it, gender issues that are less obvious, more complex and intractable -perhaps harder to address with quick fixes- continue to plague Indonesia. These larger issues become barriers to achieving gender equality in education and they include:

Gender biased textbooks that reinforce the gender stereotypes continue to be widely used in schools. Studies that analyzed contents of primary school textbooks show that there are more illustrations showing males/boys than females/girls. Also illustrations of

males/boys show more diversity and creativity in roles than those of females/girls. In addition, more prominent men's names are cited than prominent women.

Gender stereotyping still prevails as shown in the selection of specialization at vocational schools and universities, which indicates a form of "voluntary discrimination" practiced by both females and males. Social sciences are generally dominated by female students and technical sciences by male students.

National policies exist promoting gender equality in education, but there are inadequate programmes to directly address inequalities in education by increasing access and participation of disadvantaged children, including poor and marginalized girls.

Inadequate gender awareness and expertise persist despite gender mainstreaming mandate-this is in part a result of a deeper-rooted problem of inadequate contextualization of gender concepts in a way that makes sense within existing Indonesian socio-cultural and religious beliefs and traditions.

Early marriage is one of the key issues identified in specific areas of Indonesia (Indramayu, West Java for example) as affecting girls access to and participation in education.

Inadequate reliable sex-disaggregated data at national and sub-national levels hampers the education sector's ability to assess progress beyond access and participation. Sex-disaggregated data are used mainly for reporting on global commitments and rarely for policy formulation and project preparation.

GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

As mandated by the Indonesian Constitution and as part of its global commitments to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Education For All (EFA), and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the Government of Indonesia is implementing the following policies and strategies in basic education:

General policies to promote basic education

Improving access and expanding learning opportunities for all school-aged children, targeting in particular poor and remote communities where access is most difficult

Increasing the quality and relevance of basic education, in order to ensure that all those who graduate have the basic competencies required for coping with life or for continuing to higher levels of education.

Increasing the efficiency of education resources management and enabling all basic education institutions to carry out their functions more efficiently and effectively.

Implementing efforts to increase access to basic education together with improvement of basic education quality, since basic education completion cannot be considered separately from efforts to enhance quality.

Specific policies to promote gender equality in education

providing equal access for all boys and girls to quality and gender-sensitive education; reducing the illiteracy rate of the adult population – specifically the female population – through enhancing performance at all educational levels in formal and non-formal education, as well as in equivalency education and functional literacy programmes; and building the capacity of educational institutions in managing and promoting gender sensitive education.

Implementation strategies for the above general and gender specific policies include:

- Creating a national movement for completion of basic education, involving communities, especially parents and community leaders, NGOs, the private and industrial sectors.
- Enhancing and strengthening existing essential programmes for increasing school enrolment, while re-assessing programme activities that are less essential; and mobilising resources for maintaining and improving the Basic Education Programme.
- Providing more opportunities for private schools and community-based educational institutions to participate more in basic education provision.
- Using alternative education approaches and programmes to reach previously unreached poor and remote communities and improve equity in access to basic education.
- Providing district and city governments with full authority and responsibility for local implementation of the Compulsory Basic Education Programme, so that they can take into account region-specific potentials and challenges, with support from the central and province governments.
- Providing equal access to quality education, specifically primary education, for boys and girls, through formal and non-formal channels.
- Providing access to equivalency education for the adult population that cannot undertake formal education.
- Providing access to literacy education services, specifically for the female population.
- Enhancing coordination, information, and education in the mainstreaming of gender-sensitive education.
- Developing educational institutions for providing gender-sensitive education at central and provincial levels.