Data and Analytics

Every Child Learns
UNICEF Education Strategy 2019-2030
Acknowledgments

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<tr>
<td>3ie</td>
<td>International Initiative for Impact Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRED</td>
<td>Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPRK</td>
<td>Democratic People’s Republic of Korea</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECCE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Care and Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMDAT</td>
<td>Emergency Events Database</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMIS</td>
<td>Education Management Information System</td>
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<td>FTS</td>
<td>Financial Tracking Service</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GPE</td>
<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
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<td>HAC</td>
<td>Humanitarian Action for Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIC</td>
<td>High-income country</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>IIEP</td>
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<td>LIC</td>
<td>Low-income country</td>
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<tr>
<td>LMIC</td>
<td>Lower-middle-income country</td>
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<tr>
<td>MICS</td>
<td>Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys</td>
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<td>OCHA</td>
<td>United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<td>ODA</td>
<td>Official Development Assistance</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>OFDA</td>
<td>Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>PASEC</td>
<td>Programme d’Analyse des Systèmes Éducatifs de la CONFEMEN</td>
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<td>PISA</td>
<td>Programme for International Student Assessment</td>
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<td>SABER</td>
<td>Systems Approach for Better Education Results</td>
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<td>SACMEQ</td>
<td>Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality</td>
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<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<td>STEM</td>
<td>Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics</td>
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<td>UIS</td>
<td>UNESCO Institute for Statistics</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>UMIC</td>
<td>Upper-middle-income country</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>USD</td>
<td>United States Dollar</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The acronyms of the regions used by UNICEF, and used in this presentation, are:

- **EAP** East Asia and Pacific
- **ECA** Europe and Central Asia
- **ESA** Eastern and Southern Africa
- **LAC** Latin America and Caribbean
- **MENA** Middle East and North Africa
- **SA** South Asia
- **WCA** West and Central Africa
1 | CONTEXTS IN WHICH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS LIVE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**POPULATION**
Child population growth is uneven. Children will comprise a very high proportion of the total population in certain regions, but increasing numbers of young people and decreasing fertility will lead to an increased potential to reap the demographic dividend.

**URBANIZATION**
Despite global urbanization, low and lower middle income countries will still be mainly rural.

**LANGUAGE**
In some countries, many different languages are spoken. The most linguistically diverse countries in the world are concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia.

**PUBLIC RESOURCES**
Lower income countries face three levels of compound challenges relating to financing public services for children: a lower GDP per capita; a smaller proportion of it collected for public spending, and a higher proportion of children.

In 2030, due to population growth, 63% of the world’s children will be living in (current) low/ lower middle income countries, mainly in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Populations in low/lower middle income countries will continue to have very large shares of 3-19 year olds (e.g., 43% of the total population in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2030, compared to 20% in non-programme countries), but increasing numbers of young people and decreasing fertility will lead to an increased potential to reap the demographic dividend.

Urbanization is ongoing in low/lower middle income countries, but in 2030 more than half the population will still be living in rural areas.

The most linguistically diverse countries in the world are concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia.

GDP per capita is only $680 in LICs vs. $21,050 in HICs

Government revenue is only 18% of GDP in LICs vs. 34% in HICs.

44% of populations are 3-19 years old in LICs vs. only 20% in HICs.
In high income countries the vast majority of workers are salaried. Based on trends, while the types of jobs are rapidly changing, this will also be the case in upper middle income countries in 2030.

In low and lower middle income countries, the vast majority of jobs are informal. Based on trends, this will still be the case in 2030.

Less than half of workers are salaried in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Women workers are significantly less salaried than men in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

In higher income economies, unemployment rates decrease with the level of education reached, while in lower income economies it is more challenging for those with secondary and tertiary education to find a job due to the fact that the modern/formal labor market is narrow and does not offer enough new jobs.

Significant numbers of countries are facing intense and extended humanitarian crises and disasters. This often leads to significant numbers of children on the move as they flee conflict or are displaced by the impact of climate events (droughts, typhoons, etc.).

Beyond violent conflicts, 36% of deaths among children under the age 14 can be attributed to environmental factors in the last 30 years. In particular, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of deaths due to extreme temperatures.

1.3 billion people lack basic access to electricity.

Only 32% of primary schools in low income countries have access to electricity.

In Least Developed Countries, only 14% of women and 21% of men are using the Internet.
In low and lower middle income countries, the demographic challenge is higher but increasing numbers of young people and decreasing fertility will lead to an increased potential to reap the demographic dividend.

**Share of urban population, by region**

- EAP
- ECA
- SA
- LAC
- MENA
- ESA
- WCA
- Non programme countries

**Child dependency ratio (population below 20 years old as a percentage of the 20-64 years old population), by income group**

- High-income
- Upper-middle-income
- Lower-middle-income
- Low-income

Over the next decade, 1 billion more young people will enter the job market. Along with the decrease of fertility, this will increase the potential to reap the demographic dividend.

In low/lower middle countries the higher share of children within total national population means
1. a higher cost for education for all of them and
2. lower public revenues due to a lower proportion of working-age/taxpayers.

This is particularly the case for Sub-Saharan Africa.
The poorest countries face three levels of compounding challenges in relation to financing public services for children.

**High income countries**

- **$21,050**
  - Gross domestic product per capita
- **34%**
  - Government revenue
- **20%**
  - Population between 3-19 years old

**Low income countries**

- **$680**
  - Gross domestic product per capita
- **18%**
  - Government revenue
- **44%**
  - Population between 3-19 years old
In Eastern and Southern Africa and South Asia, 60% of the population will still be living in rural areas in 2030.
Jobs are mainly formal/salaried and changing rapidly in higher income economies. In lower income economies, a very large proportion of informal jobs persists, especially for women in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

In high income countries, the vast majority of workers are salaried. Based on trends, this will also be the case in upper middle income countries in 2030.

In low and lower middle income countries, the vast majority of jobs are informal. Based on trends, this will still be the case in 2030, with 76% of employment in low income countries and 62% of employment in lower middle income countries still in the informal economy.

There are significant differences within income groups and across regions. Less than half of workers are salaried in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and East Asia. One billion young people will enter the workforce in the next decade.
Women comprise three quarters of young people (15-24) that are not in employment, education or training. In Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, women workers are significantly less salaried than men.
In low and lower middle income countries, the vast majority of jobs are informal, more than 60%. Based on current trends, this will still be the case in 2030.
In higher income economies, unemployment rates decrease with the level of education reached, while in lower income economies it is more challenging for those with secondary and tertiary education to find jobs.

**Unemployment (% of total labor force), by income level**

- Basic education
- Intermediate education
- Higher education

**Unemployment (% of total labor force), by region**

- Basic education
- Intermediate education
- Higher education

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on World Bank data
Note: Basic education = primary and lower secondary education. Intermediate education = post lower secondary, non tertiary.

In higher income countries (with a high share of formal/salaried jobs), those with a higher level of education are more likely to find jobs than those with less education.

In lower income countries (with a very low share of formal/salaried jobs), unemployment (and under-employment) is higher for those with secondary and tertiary education.

Unemployment rates of those with advanced (tertiary) education are particularly high in MENA, SA and WCA.
Significant numbers of countries are facing intense and extended humanitarian crises and disasters, contributing to growing numbers of children on the move as they flee conflict or are displaced by the impact of climate events.

12 countries
at highest risk of from humanitarian crises and disasters based on:

Hazards and exposure
Natural
Human

Vulnerability
Socio-economic
Vulnerable populations

Lack of coping capacity
Institutional
Infrastructure

In addition to these extended crises, a number of significant crises are emerging (e.g., Venezuela and affected countries).

Source: Index for Risk Management
The number of natural disasters has decreased in recent years but remains historically very high. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of deaths due to extreme temperatures.

36% of deaths among children under age 14 can be attributed to environmental factors in the last 30 years. In particular, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of deaths due to extreme temperatures.
Access to electricity and communication technologies continues to increase, but low income countries still lag far behind the rest of the world.

Current distribution of electricity and technology is inequitable between and within countries.

1.3 billion people lack basic access to electricity (2015)
68% of primary schools in low income countries do not have access to electricity (2017).

There are significant gaps in internet use between countries and within countries.

In developed countries, 81% of the population (94% of young people aged 15-24) use the internet compared with 41% in developing countries and only 17% in least developed countries (14% of women and 21% of men).

Broadband Commission’s 2025 targets for broadband-internet user penetration maintain these gaps: 75% worldwide; 65% in developing countries; and 35% in least developed countries.

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on World Bank, UIS and International Telecommunication Union data
In 2030, most of the world’s children will be living in countries that have more limited public resources, are more prone to humanitarian situations, and where education challenges are greatest.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SDGs
Education contributes to many other SDGs, but the economic benefits depend on children's learning outcomes.

Education reduces poverty, leads to better health, drives sustainable growth, prevents inequality and injustice and helps to protect the planet. However the association between education and economic growth is much more driven by learning outcomes than by access/enrolment.

Gender-responsive systems and girls’ education helps reduce early marriage, delay pregnancies, improve maternal and infant health behaviors and challenge/mitigate gender norms, including increased inclusion of women in better paid jobs and STEM jobs.

CHALLENGES
Countries facing the biggest access and demographic challenges tend to also face bigger challenges in terms of learning and equity.

Countries vary widely in terms of scale and the nature of education challenges they face/will face (i.e., access/demographic, learning and equity). Countries facing the biggest access/demographic challenge tend to also face bigger challenges in terms of learning, equity and emergency crises.

To reach universal pre-primary, primary and secondary education in 2030, countries will need to enrol 5.7 times the number of children currently in pre-primary, 1.1 times the number in primary and 2 times the number of children in secondary education. Sub-Saharan Africa will need to enrol 3.3 times the total number of children it does today.

ACCESS
Many countries are still far from achieving universal primary completion, let alone the more ambitious SDGs.

262 million children and youth (130.4 million girls and 131.4 million boys, or one out of five) are out of school.

Access to pre-primary education is increasing, though very slowly, especially in low income countries where 78% of children are missing out. Globally at least 175 million pre-primary age children are not in pre-primary education.

Primary completion rates have plateaued across the world, but are still short of 100%, most notably in low-income countries, where it has not improved since 2009 and remains at 66%.

The global completion rate at lower secondary level for the poorest children is 54%.

LEARNING AND SKILLS
Too many children and adolescents are not learning or developing foundational skills (literacy and numeracy) and other skills needed for life and work.

387 million primary school-age children, and 230 million lower secondary school-age adolescents, are not achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics. There are also major gaps in the skills needed for life and work.

Lifelong learning and skills development begins with the foundational skills developed in the early years of life, and education.
EQUITY
Access to education and learning remains highly inequitable.

Significant compounding disparities exist in access and learning in relation to wealth, location and gender.

Other dimensions (e.g., disability, mother tongue, ethnicity, sub-national region), often not measured or reported, can be associated with even larger equity gaps.

On average, 71% of the poorest adolescents (10-19 years old) have never attended primary school, dropped out of primary school or are in primary school. In Sub-Saharan Africa, this is the case of 9 out of 10 of adolescents (93% of girls and 90% of boys).

The richest children are on average 7 times more likely than their poorest peers to have attended school in early childhood.

GENDER
Gender gaps in learning and access vary significantly across the world, both in size and direction.

When combining access and learning outcomes (learning adjusted years of school), all regions except WCA have a high proportion of countries with disparities against boys.

WCA, SA and to a lesser extent ESA have a high proportion of countries with disparities against girls.

Many education sector plans and policies are gender-blind and not gender-responsive.

EMERGENCIES
Emergencies reduce education access and often require greater external support.

Rates of out-of-school children are higher in countries facing emergencies.

More than 75 million children aged 3-18 are in urgent need of educational support in 35 crisis-affected countries, and children in conflict-affected countries are 30 percent less likely to complete primary school and half as likely to complete lower-secondary school.

Natural disasters, regardless of scale, lead to loss of school days, resulting in cumulative deficits that are detrimental to education outcomes.

Reports of attacks on education are increasing. Schools, teachers, and students are often targeted and attacked as part of violent conflicts. Violence in schools also occurs outside of wider violent conflicts, e.g., attacks on students by teachers and students on students.

Emergencies often create and intensify education needs beyond the capacity and mandate of affected governments.
Effective learning is associated with economic growth and has broad benefits.

### Examples of education’s benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monetary</th>
<th>Non monetary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher probability of employment</td>
<td>Better health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater productivity</td>
<td>Improved health of children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher earnings</td>
<td>and family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced poverty</td>
<td>Greater resilience and adaptability</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More engaged citizenship</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Better choices</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Greater life satisfaction</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual / Family</th>
<th>Community / Society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher productivity</td>
<td>Higher productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More rapid economic growth</td>
<td>More rapid economic growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty reduction</td>
<td>Poverty reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-run development</td>
<td>Long-run development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Annual average per capita growth in GDP, 1970-2015, conditional on test scores, years of schooling completed, and initial GDP per capita**

The association between education and economic growth is driven much more by effective learning outcomes than by access/enrolment.
262 million children and youth, one out of five, are out-of-school (130.4 million girls and 131.4 million boys), and at least 175 million pre-primary age children are not in pre-primary education.

More challenged regions

- **ESA**: 105,744 - 348,576 (x 3.3)
- **WCA**: 108,169 - 356,011 (x 3.3)
- **MENA**: 77,650 - 201,853 (x 2.6)
- **SA**: 108,169 - 706,920 (x 1.9)

Less challenged regions

- **LAC**: 143,851 - 214,458 (x 1.5)
- **EAP**: 355,093 - 514,397 (x 1.4)
- **ECA**: 47,973 - 62,442 (x 1.3)

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on UIS and United Nations Population Division data.

**Progress made.** In the early 1950s, 50% of primary school-aged children were out of school. As late as 1970, the figure stood at 28%. Today, that figure has come down to 9%.

Since 2000, 75 million more children have been enrolled in pre-primary education, 89 million more in primary education and 138 million more in secondary education.

Given the current enrolment situation and forecasted child population growth, the number of enrolments required to reach SDG4 is particularly challenging in ESA, WCA, MENA and to a lesser extent SA.
Progress in primary completion rates has stalled in low income countries since 2009, and they remain well behind all other income groups.

**Primary completion rate**

- **High-income**
- **Upper-middle-income**
- **Lower-middle-income**
- **Low-income**

In the poorest countries, approximately 40% of children are still failing to complete primary education. Progress achieved between 2000 and 2009 has stalled (and in some cases reversed).

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on UIS data
High disparities across and within countries in access to early learning exist. The majority of poor children are excluded in nearly all UNICEF programme countries.

**Percentage of children 36-59 months old who are attending an early childhood education programme**

- **Richest 20%**
- **Poorest 20%**

Large equity gaps exist in nearly all countries, with the richest children on average 7 times more likely than their poorest peers to attend early childhood education.

**In 48 of the 73 countries, fewer than 1 in 5 of children from the poorest families access early childhood education programmes.**

**In 65 countries, fewer than half of them access early childhood education programmes.**
In six out of seven UNICEF regions, the majority of the poorest quintile adolescents have never attended, have dropped out, or are still in primary school.

**Adapted programme response:**
**entry points for education for adolescents**

- Never attended
- Dropped out in primary
- In primary school

Primary education (formal) or Accelerated Learning Programmes (literacy, numeracy and life skills)

**Per region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ECA</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
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<td>LAC</td>
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<td>MENA</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCA</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Share of private enrollment per country income level**

Private institutions constitute 42% of pre-primary, 17% of primary, and 27% of secondary enrolments globally.

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on household survey, UIS and World Bank data
Disability remains a significant barrier to accessing education.

Prevalence rate of functional difficulty among children 5-17 years old

Note: Traditional Domains refers to the disability domains of Short-Set Questions recommended by the Washington Group Statistics. Child Functioning domains covers the traditional domains and functioning domains important for children.

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on Sierra Leone MICS 2017

Children with disabilities (traditional domains) are much less likely to attend primary school in nearly all countries with available data.
More than one-half, 58% of children and adolescents are not achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics.
Significant equity gaps based on ethnicity also exist, and increase as children get older.

**Share of children in school in Serbia**

- **Primary age**: 99%
- **Lower secondary age**: 99%
- **Upper secondary age**: 88%

Source: UIS (administrative data, school year ending 2014)

National average access is very high at all levels of education in Serbia but masks very high disparities against ethnic minorities.

**Attendance rates to education in Serbia and Serbia Roma Settlements**

- **Serbia Total**: 100% at primary age, decreasing to 88% at upper secondary age.
- **Serbia-Roma Settlements**: Decreases significantly from primary to upper secondary age.

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on Serbia MICS 2014

Roma children in Serbia are less likely to attend early childhood education, and the equity gaps with other children living in Serbia increase as children get older.
The learning crisis: More than one-half of children and adolescents are not achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics and more than two thirds of these children are in school.

At current rates, by 2030, of the 1.4 billion school-age children in low- and middle-income countries, 420 million will not be on track to learn the most basic skills in childhood, and 825 million will not be on track to acquire the basic secondary-level skills they need to succeed in life, school and work.

Source: The Learning Generation

Source: UIS Fact Sheet No. 46
Gender gaps vary significantly across the world, both in size and direction.

When considering “Learning adjusted years of school” only 19% of low income countries and 17% of lower middle income countries have achieved parity. Girls are disadvantaged in 62% of low income countries and boys are disadvantaged in 63% of lower middle income countries. Boys are also more likely to be disadvantaged in UMICs and HICs.

All regions except WCA have a high proportion of countries with disparities against boys. WCA, SA and to a lesser extent ESA have a high proportion of countries with disparities against girls.

However, damaging gender norms disproportionately affect the most marginalized girls e.g. 12 million girls each year are married in childhood.

Source: Girls Not Brides

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Parity %</th>
<th>Disparities against girls %</th>
<th>Disparities against boys %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECA</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENA</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCA</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All programme countries</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non programme countries</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All countries</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on World Bank data (Human Capital Index)
* Parity defined as Gender Parity Index between 0.97 and 1.03
In reading, girls tend to outperform boys in all regions (except Sub-Saharan Africa) at primary level.

In maths, girls tend to outperform boys in North America/Europe (both levels) and Eastern/South-eastern Asia (primary level). Boys tend to outperform girls in Eastern/South-eastern Asia (lower secondary level) and in Sub-Saharan Africa (primary level).

**Early childhood education.** Children with early childhood education experience are more likely to achieve learning outcomes. In West and Central Africa children with any early childhood education experience were twice as likely to attain minimum competencies in literacy in Grade 2 compared to their peers without it.

Source: PASEC

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**Gender parity index for children and adolescents not achieving Minimum Proficiency Level in mathematics and reading, by level and learning domain**

- **Boys disadvantaged**
- **Girls disadvantaged**
- Mathematics at lower secondary age
- Mathematics at primary age
- Reading at lower secondary age
- Reading at primary age

Source: UIS Fact Sheet No. 46 (Data includes children in-school and out-of-school)
In West and Central Africa, children with early childhood education experience were twice as likely to attain minimum competencies in literacy in Grade 2.
Language of instruction and wealth are the most common significant factors of inequalities in learning outcomes, and inequalities tend to be wider in places with low overall levels of learning.

**Percentage of children of primary school age taking part in a mathematics assessment passing four levels of increasing difficulty**

- **Richest 20%**
- **Poorest 20%**
- **Average**

Source: WIDE website

Language of instruction and wealth are the most common significant explanatory factors of inequity in PISA results across all 3 subjects (reading, maths and science).

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on PISA data
In countries facing more risks and crises, access, learning and equity challenges are higher, while education in emergencies remains underfunded.

By 2030, more than 80% of the world’s poor will live in fragile and conflict affected contexts.

More than 75 million children aged 3-18 are in urgent need of educational support in 35 crisis-affected countries.

Children in conflict-affected countries are 30 percent less likely to complete primary school and half as likely to complete lower-secondary school.

Only 50 percent of refugee children have access to primary education and only 22% of refugee adolescents are in lower-secondary school.

Natural disasters, regardless of scale, lead to loss of school days, resulting in cumulative deficits that are detrimental to education outcomes.

Girls in conflict affected countries are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than girls in non-conflict affected contexts.

Although education as a percentage of total humanitarian funding has slightly increased, it remains very low at

**Education**

3.9%

This is significantly below funding dedicated to

**Food security**

41.8%

**Nutrition**

7.7%

**Health**

10.6%

**WASH**

6.5%

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team, based on OCHA FTS data
There is a vicious cycle between education inequality and violent conflict.

- **Violent conflict** is associated with increases in **education inequality** between wealth decile groups of 5.4% and 5% lower gender parity ratios.

- **Violent conflict** is associated with lower average number of years of **schooling** of 7.6%

- **Greater education equality** between male and female is associated with a decrease in the **likelihood of conflict** by as much as 37%

- **High education inequality** between ethnic and religious groups is associated with a doubling in the likelihood of **violent conflict**.

**Emergencies and the learning crisis.** More than half of the 20 countries with the lowest levels of learning experienced humanitarian situations in 2018.

Source: World Bank and UNICEF HAC data
Every Child Learns UNICEF Education Strategy 2019-2030

Schools, teachers, and students across the world are targeted and attacked as part of violent conflicts.

Attacks on education and military use of schools and universities in profiled countries, 2013-2017

- Very heavily affected
- Heavily affected
- Affected
- Not included

Schools, teachers, and students are often the target of violence, including gender-based violence. Between 2013 and 2017, there were more than 12,700 attacks registered, harming more than 21,000 students and educators in at least 70 countries.

Source: Education Under Attack 2018

Violence in schools also occurs outside of wider violent conflicts, e.g., in the form of attacks on students by teachers, students on students, and students on teachers.

Source: UNICEF and Plan Violencia escolar en América Latina y el Caribe Superficie y fondo
Access to education and learning remains highly inequitable, including in many middle and high-income countries.
3 | THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**CHILD / HOUSEHOLD / COMMUNITY LEVEL**

Many home (and related) factors greatly influence a child’s learning.

**SCHOOL / CLASSROOM / OTHER LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS LEVEL**

Lack of, and inequity in, school/classroom-level inputs.

**SYSTEM LEVEL**

Strengthening systems and improving their alignment are key to fixing implementation gaps and improving learning outcomes.

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**Child labour and early marriage** are negatively correlated with access and learning; children in ESA and WCA are exposed to very high levels of child labour.

**Education access and learning** is higher where children experience a positive and stimulating home environment and when they are well-nourished and healthy.

**Community based monitoring** can positively affect access and learning when communities have a role and the required information and capacity to act.

---

**In many parts of the world** there are not enough teachers, especially with the required training and knowledge, and often they are not equitably or efficiently distributed. Children in the lower grades and the most marginalized areas usually experience much larger classes.

**There is also a significant loss of teaching** time due to teacher absenteeism, late start of school years, early suspension of classes for exam preparation, etc.

**Using the home language** of children in the early grades is desirable for achieving early literacy and numeracy.

---

**Systems include**: institutional development and management; inspection and support to schools/teachers; curriculum content; assessment and accreditation; data, planning, monitoring and accountability; and financing.

**Stronger education systems** deliver better learning outcomes. Each element is important, and the consistency and alignment of each towards the same learning goal are just as crucial.

**Even when policies and plans exist** there is a significant “implementation gap” in many contexts. A GPE evaluation found that only 57% of Education Sector Plans produced in 2016/2017 are “achievable”.

**Common system and implementation gaps include**: inclusive education for children with disabilities; mother tongue education; classroom assessment to inform teaching and accreditation systems; data systems that include the most marginalized children (e.g., children with disabilities and migrants); and programmes against school-related gender based violence.
PUBLIC SPENDING
There is a lack of public spending for education, especially pre-primary.

PUBLIC SPENDING
There is a lack of equity in public spending distribution across levels of education, in particular in low/lower middle income countries.

INTERNATIONAL AID
There is a lack of priority for education in international aid (both development and humanitarian), and it is often not sufficiently targeted to the most marginalized children and pre-primary.

EVIDENCE
There is new evidence on what works in education, and context matters a lot.

Public spending on education is in most cases well below the 20% of total public expenditure financing target, as outlined in the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030.

The limited funding that does exist is often not concentrated in the sub-sectors that benefit the greatest number of children and that contribute most to achieving SDG targets. For example, in low-income countries, on average, only 2% of education spending goes towards pre-primary education, compared to 22% for tertiary education.

Public financing of education is often regressive: low income countries spend 46% of their public education budgets on the 10% most educated students, but only 10% of public education resources is spent on the 20% poorest children.

In high income countries, lower levels of education tend to be completely subsidized by the state and households contribute much more at higher levels of education, especially tertiary.

In lower income countries the pattern is often reversed, with tertiary education heavily subsidized by the state and households, including the poorest, shouldering a large portion of the pre-primary, primary and secondary education costs.

Education ODA has been increasing in absolute terms, but its share within total ODA has been declining.

Education ODA continues to prioritize post-secondary education, including scholarships, to the detriment of lower levels of education. For example, early childhood education receives less than 1% of Education ODA.

Education as a percentage of total humanitarian funding has slightly increased but remains very low (below 4%).

New evidence exists on the cost-effectiveness of a wide range of education interventions.

Size of effect varies greatly depending on context and how interventions are implemented.

Benefit-incidence analyses (i.e., analyzing which socio-demographics groups benefit the most from public education spending) are rarely done at country level.
Enabling environment for learning includes:

1. Child/household/community level, including nutrition and health status

2. School/classroom/other learning environment level

3. System level (including financing)

Each element in the levels is important, and their alignment/consistency is just as crucial.

Good sector planning/policies are important, but there are also significant implementation gaps between policies and service delivery, e.g. financing or resources not reaching schools, teacher training methodologies not applied in classrooms, assessment not aligned with curricula.

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on 3ie (2016) and University of Cambridge
Despite evidence of its effectiveness, there is a large variation across countries in the level of family/parental involvement in education.

Fostering family/community engagement is instrumental in reducing institutional barriers and improving access and learning. Fostering dialogue and collective problem-solving around local education-related barriers and challenges is essential, especially for vulnerable children.

Source: 3ie
There is an overall shortage of teachers, and they are not always deployed in the schools and grades where they are needed the most.

**How equitable is the distribution of teachers in a country?**

100% = All schools have the same PTR

- Zimbabwe (2014)
- The Gambia (2018)
- Mauritania (2017)
- Cambodia (2018)
- Burundi (2014)
- Cameroon (2018)
- South Sudan (2014)
- Bénin (2015)
- Nepal (2013)

**Average class size (number of students)**

- First grade of primary
- Last grade of primary

- Malawi
- DRC
- Ethiopia
- Niger
- Sudan
- Morocco
- Namibia

Inequity of teacher allocation translates into a concentration of teachers in a (relatively) limited number of schools and disparities in class size. There are also disparities between grades within the same schools, as the class size typically decreases from the lower to the higher grades in primary education.

Inequitable teacher allocation across grades (with less teachers deployed to early grades) contributes to the fact that children who lag behind in learning outcomes during the early years stay behind for the remaining school career, and that the gap increases over the years (Matthew effect).
The policies guiding teacher development, management and accountability need strengthening in many countries.

Teachers’ policy score (UNICEF Strategic Plan indicator, 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Country Count</th>
<th>Percent of Countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0 to 1.5</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>1.6 to 2.5</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 to 2.5</td>
<td>3.6 to 4.0</td>
<td>2.6 to 3.5</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 to 3.5</td>
<td>3.6 to 4.0</td>
<td>3.6 to 4.0</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 to 4.0</td>
<td>3.6 to 4.0</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNICEF Country Offices
Note: Each dimension is scored from 1 (Weak) to 4 (Championing) similar to World Bank SABER and averaged to calculate a country score. See more details here.
https://data.unicef.org/resources/unicef-strategic-plan-education-country-profiles/
Effective use of good teaching practices varies greatly across countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers who score at least 80 percent on a test equivalent to student Grade 4 language curriculum (%)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher asks a mix of lower and higher order questions (%)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher gives positive feedback, praises, corrects mistakes (%)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A large proportion of teachers lack the needed skills and do not have sufficient mastery of the concepts they are expected to teach, which raises the issue of the effectiveness of teacher training programmes.

**Language of instruction**

Students in Burundi and Tanzania—two countries where a local language familiar to children is used throughout primary school—outperform their peers in other countries participating in the PASEC and SACMEQ tests, respectively.
Significant teaching time is lost due to teacher absenteeism and other reasons.

**Scheduled time for teacher’s present or teaching**

- Percentage of scheduled time teacher is teaching
- Percentage of scheduled time teacher is present but not teaching
- Percentage of scheduled time teacher is not in classroom

**Effective learning days, Mali, 2009/10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official learning time</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After school closures</td>
<td>172 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After teacher absenteeism</td>
<td>167 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After pupil absenteeism</td>
<td>155 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After truncated weekly schedule</td>
<td>138 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After truncated daily timetables</td>
<td>135 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After time wasted in class</td>
<td>130 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After writing exercise</td>
<td>122 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are many reasons for this loss of instructional time, including teacher absenteeism, late start of school years, early suspension of classes for exam preparation, etc.

Various factors lead to teacher absenteeism, including:

- health issues
- strikes
- collection of pay
- family reasons (death, marriage, birth, etc.)
- follow-up of administrative issues
- distance of home from school
- unexcused/ illegitimate absenteeism, lack of motivation etc.

Many developing countries suffer significant losses of instructional time, which reduces student learning.


Source: Education Sector Analysis Methodological Guidelines
https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/methodological-guidelines-education-sector-analysis-volume-1
It is necessary to improve the coherence and alignment of education systems/actors towards the goal of learning and effective implementation.

**Improving alignment and coherence is crucial to fix the “implementation gap” and escape the “low learning trap” and high inequality.**

**Power and politics influence both education policy and its implementation, but are not always fully considered in developing and monitoring education strategies, plans and programming.**

### ALIGNMENT

*Education systems* are traditionally aligned to enrollment goals, not learning

*Education stakeholders* have multiple interests and not all of them are consistent with improving learning outcomes.

**It is important** to build a coalition for learning that provides political space to innovate and experiment.

### COHERENCE

*Low performing education systems* often lack coherence, and system components (e.g. curriculum, teacher training, assessment) do not reinforce a learning focus.

*The beneficiaries* of better learning (students, parents, and employers) often lack the information or short-term incentives to press for change.

*Improving system* coherence requires improving accountability between actors so that relationships are clear and consistent in terms of delegation, financing, information, and motivation.

### Multiple interests govern the actions of education stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Learning-aligned interests</th>
<th>Competing interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Student learning, professional ethic</td>
<td>Employment, job security, salary, private tuitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>Student learning, teacher performance</td>
<td>Employment, salary, good relations with staff, favoritism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureaucrats</td>
<td>Well-functioning schools</td>
<td>Employment, salary, rent-seeking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td>Well-functioning schools</td>
<td>Electoral gains, rent-seeking, patronage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents and students</td>
<td>Student learning, employment of graduates</td>
<td>Family employment, family income, outdoing others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judiciary</td>
<td>Meaningful right to education</td>
<td>Favoritism, rent-seeking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>Skilled graduates</td>
<td>Low taxes, narrowly defined self-interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nongovernment schools</td>
<td>Innovative, responsive schooling</td>
<td>Profit, religious mission, funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(religious, nongovernmental, for-profit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suppliers of education inputs</td>
<td>High-quality, relevant inputs</td>
<td>Profit, influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., textbooks, information technology, buildings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International donors</td>
<td>Student learning</td>
<td>Domestic strategic interests, taxpayer support, employment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Narrowing the “implementation gap” to ensure education policies and plans results in change in children’s lives. Across thematic focus areas, countries report greater progress in establishing legal/policy frameworks than in their implementation.

**GPE evaluation**

Only **57%** of Education Sector Plans produced in 2016/2017 are “achievable”.

**Planning** must address both technical and political barriers in order to improve implementation.

**Working at scale** is not just “scaling up” (replication): new, system-wide forces come into play that may complicate and challenge implementation.

**International** best-practice (policy transfer) is unlikely to take root in countries with different social and political contexts.

**Problem-driven** iterative approaches may narrow the implementation gap by identifying locally-nominated problems and positive deviance (rather than pre-packaged intervention solutions).


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**Source: UNICEF Country offices**

**Note:** Percentages refer to percentage of countries scoring 2.5 or more on relevant sub-dimensions. Implementation for Inclusive Education: Physical environment, Materials and communication, Human resources, Attitudes, EMIS. Implementation for mother tongue education: Alignment of curricula and training, Resource allocation, Community engagement. Implementation for SRGBV: Prevention and response mechanism, awareness, attitude and empowerment, data collection, availability and use.
There is a large variation in the proportion of government spending directed towards education. Most countries are well below the financing target of 15-20% of public expenditure.

In nearly all regions there are countries that have reached or exceeded the financing target of 20%. However, most countries in most regions remain below the target.

**Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 committed to increasing public spending on education 4 to 6% of GDP or at least 15 to 20% of total public expenditure.**

Low income countries direct significantly less of their education budgets towards pre-primary education, but still direct a relatively high proportion towards tertiary education.
Public financing of education is often regressive: low income countries spend 46% of their public education budgets on the 10% most educated students, and only 10% is spent on the 20% poorest children.
Low income countries spend 46 percent of their public education budgets on the 10 percent most educated students and only 10% on the 20% poorest children.

**Share of public education resources spent on the 20% poorest children**

- **Per income level**
  - Low-income
  - Lower-middle-income
  - Upper-middle-income

- **Per region**
  - WCA
  - ESA
  - EAP
  - SA
  - LAC
  - ECA

**On average in low income countries, only 10% of public education resources is spent on the 20% poorest children.**

In lower middle income countries it is only 14%.

Sub-Saharan African countries are on average more regressive with their education spending.

EAP, SA, and LAC regions have countries with similarly inequitable education financing.

ECA region is close to equitable education spending, although data is limited.

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on UIS and household survey data
Education Aid has been increasing, but its share in total ODA has been declining, and the share dedicated to early childhood education is extremely low.

![Graph showing trends in education aid](image)

**Breakdown of education aid by subsectors**

- **Early childhood education**
- **Primary education**
- **Secondary education**
- **Post-secondary education**
- **Other basic education**
- **Unspecified level**

The share of education aid to post-secondary education has slightly decreased, in favor of basic and secondary education. But the amounts of ODA directed towards early childhood education is extremely limited.

![Graph showing breakdown of education aid](image)

Only 0.7% of education ODA went to early childhood education in 2016.

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on OECD / DAC data
Education ODA continues to prioritize post-secondary education and early childhood education receives less than 1% of Education ODA.
Many education systems are inequitable and inefficient, and do not prioritize developing learning and foundational skills in younger learners.
The proportion of education staff within UNICEF has decreased during the last ten years and is very low compared to peer organizations. However, UNICEF still has over 790 education staff across 144 countries.

UNICEF education expenditure in 2017 was USD 1.2 billion compared to approx. 500 million annually for the period 2006-2010. The increase during the last four years was driven by the increased resources for emergencies, in particular for responding to the Syria crisis.

UNICEF is in the bottom half of development partners in terms of budget priority for education: education is only 21% of the total programme spending and is only 12% of the spending funded by Regular Resources (non-earmarked funds).

There is large regional variation in the percentage of expenditure dedicated to education: from 49% in ECA (driven by emergency response in Turkey), to a low of 15% in WCA, and 13% in HQ.

Bilateral (46%) and multilateral donors (25%) are the main- and increasing- sources of funding.

Thematic funding and Regular Resources have decreased between 2012 and 2018, respectively from 24% to 11% and from 16% to 9% of the total funding.

The top 5 resource partners (European Commission, Norway, GPE, UK and Germany) represented 64% of the total resources in 2017.

There is a recent growth in partnerships with foundations and the private sector, but these remain a small proportion of resources and tend to be highly earmarked for specific activities.

48% of UNICEF education spending takes place in only ten countries, including 31% in Syria-crisis affected countries.

Globally, during the 2014-2017 period, UNICEF spending in education was $0.6 per school-age child per year with large variation across regions and countries and significantly higher amounts in countries facing the highest education challenges and/or emergencies (from $2.4 per child in MENA to $0.17 in EAP; from $80 per child in Lebanon to $0.03 in China).
**UTILIZATION**

The past 10 years have seen a significant trend towards more system strengthening activities.

Since 2006 the percentage of education expenditure on system strengthening activities has more than doubled (from less than 20% to 40%).

In recent years, a reduction in the proportion of expenditure on service delivery activities has reversed due to an increase in emergency response expenditure.

There is proportionally more spending on system strengthening work in ECA, LAC, WCA, and more spending on service delivery support in crisis-affected regions such as MENA, ESA and SA and in countries facing higher education challenges.

**UTILIZATION**

There has been a greater focus on capacity development than on evidence generation.

Compared to other UNICEF Programme areas, education system strengthening work has focused more on capacity development and less on evidence generation/research.

Between 2014 and 2017 the proportion of education system strengthening work on evidence generation/research was approximately half that of other UNICEF Programme areas.

**RESULTS**

Spending is used to deliver results in service delivery, system strengthening and global public goods.

Service delivery: between 2014 and 2018, UNICEF provided education to 43.5 million children in emergencies, delivered learning materials to 70.7 million children and trained 238,851 school management committees/school communities.

Support to education system strengthening contributed to progress achieved in multiple thematic areas, e.g. early learning policies, gender-based violence in and around schools, and learning assessment systems.

UNICEF led, or co-led with partners, the development and implementation of many global/ regional public goods.
Funding for UNICEF education has increased but is still a low budget priority compared to that of other development partners.

UNICEF is in the bottom half of development partners for the education share of social sectors aid.

For the Health/Nutrition and Child Protection/Social Inclusion shares, UNICEF is in the top half of development partners in terms of budget priority.

Spending was USD 1.2 billion in 2017 (as opposed to around USD 500 million for the period 2006-2010). This represents only 0.1 % of global annual education spending in low and middle income countries (USD 1.2 trillion).

For the period 2014-2017, education’s share is only 21% of the total spending.

Share for Education within social sectors aid, 2014-2016

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on OECD/DAC data
Note: data for donors are funding and data for UNICEF is spending
Spending priority for education is higher (and increasing) in ECA and MENA and on the low side in HQ, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

UNICEF sectoral human resources as a proportion of total human resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health and HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child protection</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social inclusion</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-sectoral</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total programmes</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Between 2014-2017

48% of UNICEF education spending occurred in only ten countries.
Only ten countries account for nearly half of education expenditure, all of them in humanitarian or fragile settings.

The increase in education spending was driven by the increase of resources for emergencies, in particular for responding to the Syria crisis in ECA (Turkey) and MENA.

In 2018 50% of UNICEF education spending occurred in only eight countries, including 40% in five countries affected by the Syria crisis.
Resources come mainly from a limited number of key bilateral and multilateral donors. The shares coming from the Education Thematic Fund and regular resources are decreasing.

Bilateral

46% and multilateral donors

25% are the main - and increasing - sources of funding.

Thematic funding and Regular Resources have decreased, respectively from 24% to 11% and from 16% to 9% of total funding.

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on inferred data
Comparison with other programme areas, 2017-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme areas</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Programme areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilateral donors</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilateral</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Funds</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Resources</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparatively less resources have come from Regular Resources (non earmarked), and more from Thematic Fund.

Top 10 resource partners to education by contribution, 2017, US$ million

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Partners</th>
<th>Contribution (US$ million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Commission</td>
<td>164.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>76.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF Qatar (private sector fundraising)</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Cannot Wait</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNICEF Education Annual Results Report 2017

In 2017, the top five partners (European Commission, Norway, GPE, UK and Germany) represented 64% of the resources.
Since 2006, there has been an increased prioritization for system strengthening, and service delivery has recently picked up mainly due to support education in emergencies.

There has been 10+ year increasing trend in system strengthening work.

For the period 2014-2017, 75% of UNICEF’s education service delivery work was concentrated in 15 countries – mainly emergency contexts, and with a particular focus on the Syria crisis.

There has been proportionally more system strengthening work in ECA, LAC and WCA, and more service delivery support in MENA, ESA and EAP and in countries facing higher education challenges.
Since 2006 the percentage of education expenditure on system strengthening activities has more than doubled, from less than 20% to 40%.
Compared with other UNICEF Programme areas, education system strengthening has focused more on capacity development and less on evidence generation/research.

Compared with the other programme areas, UNICEF Education focuses more on capacity development (institutional strengthening) and less on evidence generation and research.

A similar pattern can be seen across regions, but has some variation.

Source: UNICEF Education Strategy team based on internal data.
Others include: advocacy, south-south and horizontal cooperation, partnerships, advocacy and public engagement, market shaping.
Although more children than ever before are enrolled in school, the duty-bearers obligated to realize this right for every child are collectively failing to improve learning, and this failure is deep and broad, and has significant consequences.