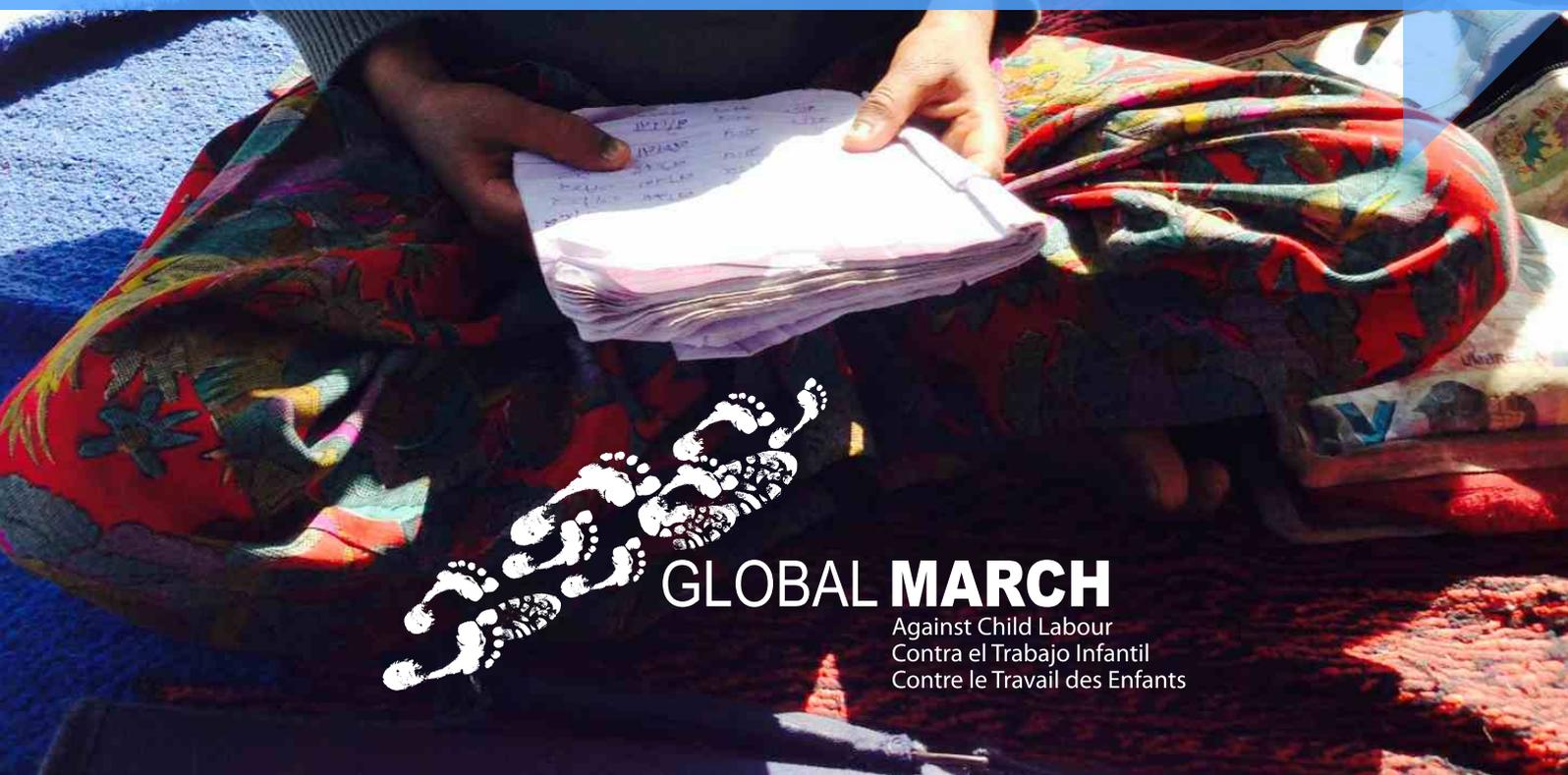




# Policy Paper: Out-of-school Children and Child Labour

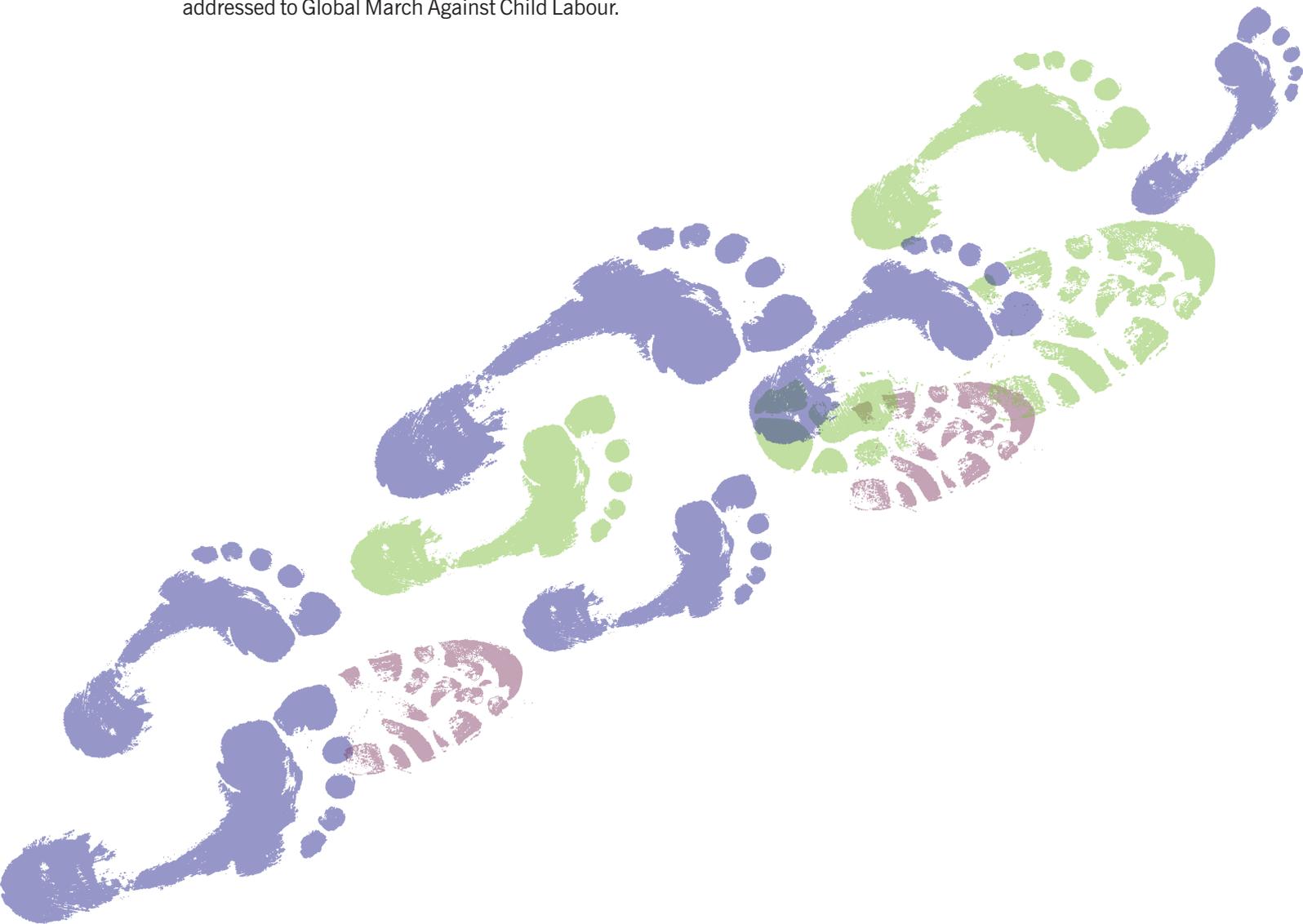


**GLOBAL MARCH**

Against Child Labour  
Contra el Trabajo Infantil  
Contre le Travail des Enfants

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## 1. Education For All – All girls and boys in school

The right to education – like all human rights – is universal and inalienable. Fully realising the right to education is a holistic one, encompassing access to education, inclusive education, educational quality and the environment in which education is provided. Further, education as a human right places the prime responsibility for its realisation on the states who are the custodians of all human rights with the duty to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. In terms of primary education, states are obliged to ensure free and compulsory education for all.

Education is one of the most powerful tools for transforming human lives, nations, society and world at large. Equipped and empowered with knowledge and skills through education, children and youth can give wings to their dreams, becoming teachers, musicians, mathematicians, scientists, doctors, artists, farmers and many such capable and productive members of society upon adulthood.

Education provides a compelling case for development. A recently completed study from 50 countries established that every extra year of schooling provided to the whole population can increase average annual GDP growth by 0.37%. Another survey of 120 countries from between 1970-2000 provides compelling evidence that education consistently and significantly boosts economic development and is a necessary precondition for long-term economic growth. Further, by making people more skilled and

employable, education can provide an escape route from poverty. In low-income countries, an additional year of education adds about 10% to a person's income on average. Education also plays an important role in promoting good health. Children of more educated mothers are less likely to be stunted or underweight due to malnutrition, and educated mothers are more likely to give birth in safe conditions. Education can reduce the spread of HIV by promoting safe sexual behaviour. Investing in girls' education and reaching the goal of gender parity would enable gender equality elsewhere in society, such as in the labour market. Lastly, education has effects far beyond the classroom. Through education, societies foster values, spread ideas and equip their citizens with skills for participation in society. Education also promotes tolerance and understanding between people – both individually and on a national level thus fostering peace (EFA GMR Policy Paper June 2012). Sadly, we are far from reaping these and many more benefits of education as many children are missing out on a chance to be in school, learn and receive education.

As the Education For All (EFA) process is progressing, two main groups of children are still left behind. First, children

### Education as a right in international treaties

*Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26)*

“Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory..”

*United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (Article 28) :*

“1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

- (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
- (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
- (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
- (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
- (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.”

who have yet to gain access to a good primary school. Second, those who do not get to attend even when a basic primary school is accessible: these are referred to as the 'hard-to-reach children' among the out-of-school children. According to the most recent figures released by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), there were 57 million out-of-school children of primary school age in 2011, a slight decrease from 2010.

The focus of this paper is on these 'hard-to-reach children', and within them the children who work instead of going to school for a complex set of reasons – child labourers.

To some children, the main obstacles to education are not school availability, cost or quality, but rather poverty, economic insecurity, discrimination and cultural practices. Furthermore, many children work, because child labour is perceived as the best use of their time and to prepare them for the life they are expected to lead.

Child labour and schooling is in many ways a nexus that is not easy to sort out. There is evidence to show that child labour depresses school enrolment rates, negatively affects school achievement, decreases graduation rates, and inflates drop-out rates. Household poverty forces millions of children out of school and into paying jobs or – especially for young girls – domestic chores.

Working children are disadvantaged vis-à-vis their non-working counterparts in terms of their ability to attend school in many of the countries where child labour is common.

## 1.1. Out-of-school children

A total of 126 million primary and lower secondary aged children are out-of-school (UIS Fact Sheet, June 2013), translating to approximately 9% of all primary aged children out-of-school and 18% of lower secondary aged children missing out on an education. Girls are more excluded globally than boys, accounting for more than 50% of all out-of-school children in primary age group.

While the numbers of primary aged out-of-school children have declined from over 105 million in 1990, the progress has slowed and has eventually stagnated between 2008 and 2010. Of the 57 million primary aged children who were out-of-school in 2011 (UIS Fact Sheet, June 2013), 49% are expected to never enter school, and a further 23% have attended but left school. Furthermore, half of the out-of-school children (30 million) were in sub-Saharan Africa.

Children who are expected to never enter a school – 28 million of the global number of out-of-school children, i.e., 17 million girls and 11 million boys – are a serious challenge.

Year	Out-of-school children of primary school age	Progress in reduction of out-of-school children in primary school age (% change from previous year)
2000	102 million	-
2001	99 million	2.9 %
2002	95 million	4%
2003	85 million	10.5%
2004	74 million	11%
2005	71 million	4%
2006	68 million	4.2%
2007	63 million	7.4%
2008	60 million	4.8%
2009	61 million	NA (numbers registered an increase by 1.7% in 2009)
2010	59 million	3.3%
2011	57 million	3.4%

Table 1: Number of out-of-school children from 2001-11 and progress in reduction (in %)

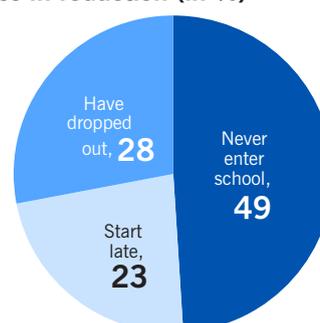


Figure 1: School exposure of out-of-school children (in %)

Alarming, the number of out-of-school children of primary school aged increased in sub-Saharan Africa to 30 million in 2011 from 29 million in 2008, with Nigeria housing a third of all these children – an estimated 10.5 million out-of-school children.

Of the out-of-school children, regional data show large variations in patterns. In the Arab States, Central Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and South and West Asia, about one-half of all out-of-school children will probably never enter school. In Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Western Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe, most out-of-school children will start school late. East Asia and the Pacific, as well as South and West Asia, have a large share of dropouts among their out-of-school populations.

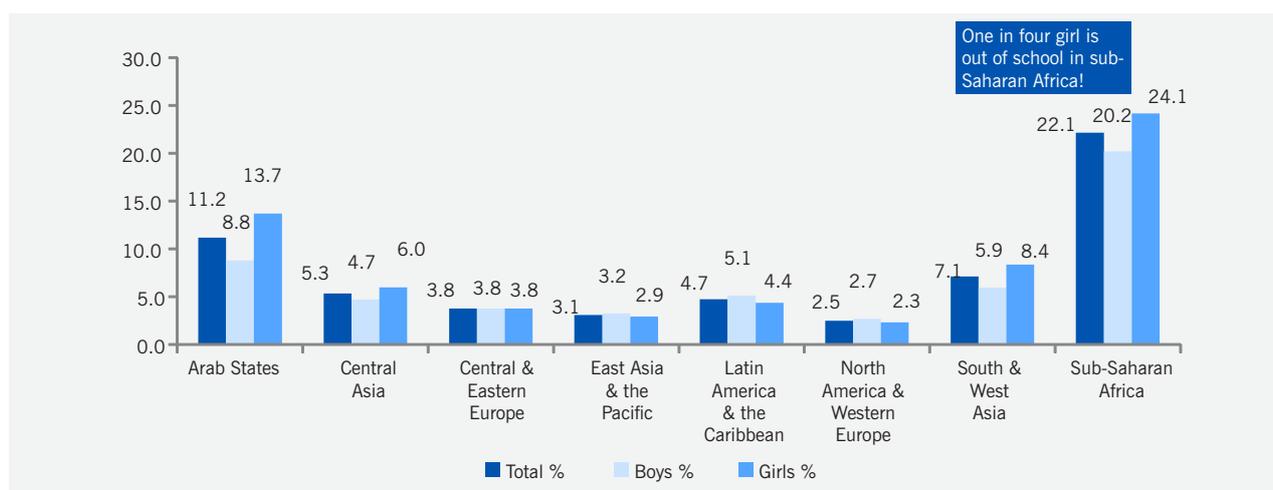


Figure 2: **Percent of primary school age out-of-school children, by region and gender (UIS, 2011)**

Furthermore, it is estimated that there are 69 million out-of-school adolescents missing out on an education. South and West Asia have the largest numbers of out-of-school adolescents – 31.2 million. With 21.8 million out of school adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa, it has the highest percent (almost 36%) of adolescents out of school. Significant numbers are also present in East Asia and the Pacific, and Arab States. Adolescent girls are highly disadvantaged than their male counterparts, with an alarming 40% of adolescent girls out-of-school in sub-Saharan Africa and 30% in South and West Asia (UIS, 2011).

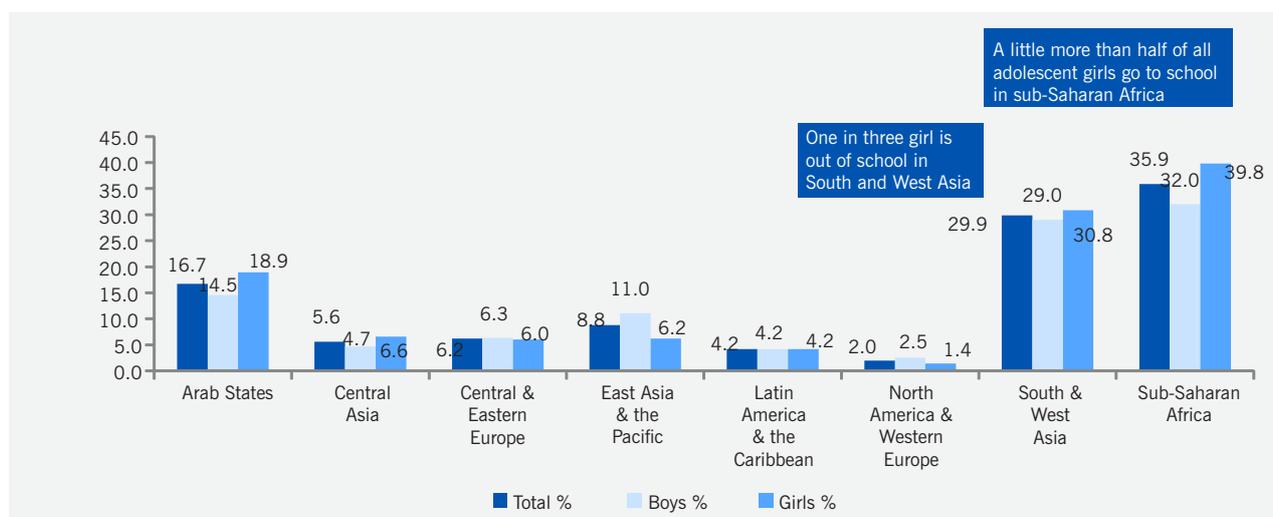


Figure 3: **Percent of lower secondary school age out-of-school children, by region and gender (UIS, 2011)**

Typically, it is the marginalised, poor and remote rural populations, and those affected by conflict and discrimination, who are denied access to schooling. In short, the children who are being denied education are those who need it the most.

## 1.2 Hard-to-reach children

Children who do not go to school are children living in conditions of poverty, socio-cultural marginalisation, geographic isolation, racial and/or gender bias. Amongst others, hard-to-reach children include girls, children living with conflict/fragile states (who account for half the world's out of school children), children with disabilities, the rural poor, orphans and vulnerable children and working children (one in nine of the world's children are involved in child labour – accounting for 168 million children). Their exclusion from education is simply one more manifestation of a web of rights violations. Without access to good quality education, children are denied the opportunity to acquire knowledge, capabilities and self-confidence necessary to act on their own behalf in changing the circumstances which are excluding them.

Hard-to-reach children face one or a combination of obstacles to education, beyond whether or not good schools are available. It is these hard to reach children, including child labourers, which remains the great challenge. Economic factors are often thought to be important. Many poor families may indeed face problems covering even the smallest, informal fees, or simply cannot make it without the labour input or meagre earnings of the child. But the notion that observed household poverty is the main obstacle to schooling may have been exaggerated. The effect of fearing to fall into poverty is far less explored, and may be even more important to whether a child is sent to school or has to play a different role in the household risk mitigation strategy. Cultural norms and expectations may in many places turn out to explain more of the labour/schooling choice than anything else. When poverty and cultural norms interact, they may become effective obstacles to the inclusion and education of many vulnerable children.

***With more children completing primary education, the demand for secondary education is growing. This increased demand poses a serious challenge for countries with limited resources. In sub-Saharan Africa, about one quarter of the children who complete primary school do not continue on to secondary education.***

In some cultures, gender roles play a decisive part in explaining the labour and non-enrolment of girls. In combination with poverty, girls are given lower priority when a family must decide which children are to be sent to school. Girls are also more vulnerable to be taken out of school to work during hardships.

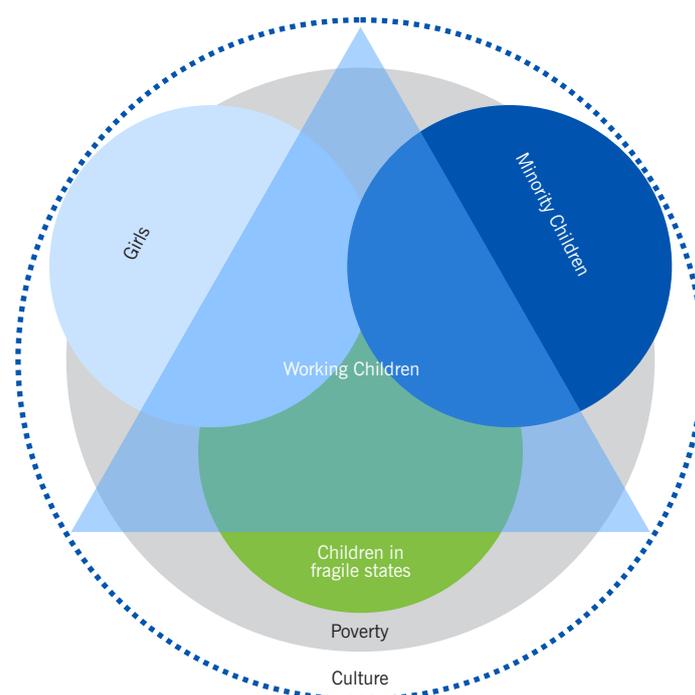


Figure 4

School attendance figures provide evidence of the trade-off between child labour and Universal Primary Education (UPE). The Understanding Children's Work (UCW) Initiative has used household survey data to examine school attendance in some sixty countries.

*Its findings indicate that working children face an attendance disadvantage of at least 10% in 28 countries, at least 20% in fifteen countries and at least 30% in nine countries. Child labour is also associated with delayed school entry. In Cambodia for example a working child is 17% less likely to enter school at the official age and thus runs a higher risk of dropout.*

## 2. Understanding child labour

*“Child labour must not become the nation's social safety net.”*

Kailash Satyarthi (1998), Global March

Whilst child labour is not a recent phenomena, it is surprising that it still exists. Endemic in today's poor countries, child labour seems to have re-emerged in industrial countries and is raising questions about its importance in national and regional economies<sup>i</sup>.

It has now been clearly established that the achievement of Universal Primary Education and the elimination of child labour are co-dependent challenges – that one cannot be achieved without the other. Even, in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Britain, legislation intended to regulate child labour “proved to be unenforceable unless all children are required to attend school.”<sup>ii</sup>

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates the number of child labourers aged 5 to 14 at 120 million in 2012 and an estimated 38 million (i.e. about one-fourth) in hazardous work involving dangerous conditions, long hours or hazardous machinery (*Marking progress against child labour, 2013*). And, a large number engaged in the worst forms of child labour are a direct source of marginalisation in education.

Most child labourers are in agriculture (58.6%), compared to 32.3% in services and 7.2% in industry.

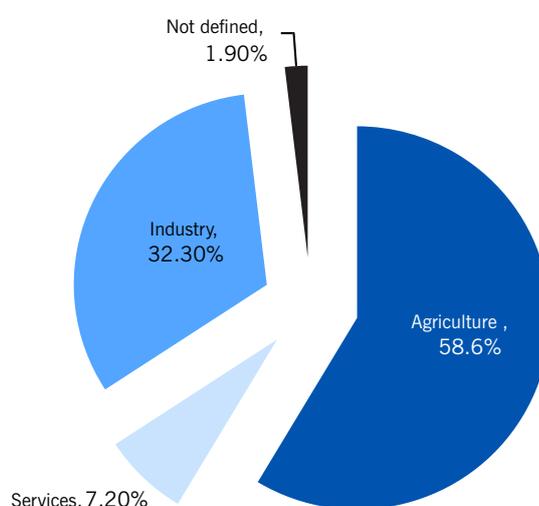


Figure 5: Child labour, distribution by economic activity (5-17 age group) data ILO, 2013

While the largest number of child labourers is in the Asia-Pacific region, one in five children is in child labour in Sub-Saharan Africa (21.4% activity rate) with nearly 10% of all children in Sub-Saharan Africa in some form of hazardous work.

While not all child labourers are kept out of schools, most combine work and school, often with damaging effects on their education. The degree to which children combine work and school varies by country, with children working about 30 hours a week or more unlikely to attend school (Edmonds, 2007). Overall child labourers are expected to achieve lower scores than their non-working classmates (Gunnarsson et al 2006).

While poverty has a direct bearing on child labour, it is not the *sole* reason why children work, as child labour relates to cultural aspects such as gender norms as well as more general determinate issues such as children's age, education, gender and parental employment conditions. And, the majority of child labour literature including by Global March asserts that it occasionally perpetuates an inter-generational trap rooted in poverty and that “child labour is both a cause and consequence of poverty.”

Poorer children are more likely than wealthier children to work outside the home and less likely to combine work and school (Blanco Allais and Quinn, 2009). Child labour exacerbates poverty-related gender disadvantages – and disproportionately affected girls in education. Economic shocks, natural and manmade disasters also propel families to pull children out of schools and push them into labour.

### 3. Education and child labour - co-dependent challenges

*“...if we want to achieve Education for All, the issue of child labour must be taken more squarely into account.”*

UNESCO, 2002

Child labour confronts educational systems and policies with a wide array of challenges. Some of the child labour problem will be solved by offering better schools, since many children work because it is, by and large, the best alternative given the quality and price of schooling options offered – or not offered at all. Education policy and programming is therefore the answer to solving an important part of the child labour problem in many countries.

Child labour research has solidly documented the relationship between child labour and schooling:

#### Enrolment facts:

- Rates of children's work and **school attendance** are negatively correlated
- Children's work is associated with both lower school intake and late school entry

#### Performance facts:

- Children's work is associated with lower academic test scores, and other direct indicators of school performance.
- There is indirect evidence also of a negative link between child labour and **school performance**.

#### Repetition and drop-out facts:

- Children's work is associated with higher drop-out
- Children's work is associated with higher grade repetition

- Rates of children's work and **school attendance** are negatively correlated. The former acts as a significant barrier to education for all. At the national level higher incidence of child labour is generally associated with lower values in the Education Development Index (EDI) which is a yard stick to measure gains in EFA.
- Children's work is associated with both lower school enrolment, late school entry and overall low literacy rate.
- Children's work is associated with higher drop-out rate.
- Children's work is associated with higher grade repetition (indirect evidence also of a negative link between child labour and **school performance**).
- Children's work is associated with lower academic test scores, and other direct indicators of school performance.
- There is significant correlation between levels of economic activity and primary school repetition rates and school survival rates.
- Incidence of child labour is higher when there is lack of an accessible and affordable education infrastructure
- There is strong evidence of **school achievements** having a direct bearing on **expected future wage earning capacity**.
- Lower **pupil to teacher ratio** reduces the involvement of children in economic activity and increases the number of children attending school.
- The presence of school library can stimulate **an increase in** school attendance.
- The presence of **experienced teachers**, attracts larger numbers of children to attend full time school.
- Effects differ by sex and area or residence: e.g., in case of **pupil/teacher ratio**, effect larger for male children and in rural areas. **In Yemen** pupil teacher ratio and **male to female teacher ratio** appears important in **attracting girls to school**.
- Empirical findings suggest that **school quality** programmes are not only effective in **increasing school attendance**, but also act as **deterrents to child labour**, especially for children of secondary school age.
- **Conditional cash transfer programmes** have a strong, consistent and robust negative effect on child work over all age ranges.
- Rural working children tend to be among the most disadvantaged. **School attendance** figures in rural areas differ considerably by work status. In one quarter of a sample countries child labourers in rural areas faced a **school attendance gap** of 20 % or more against children who are not working.

(Source: Child labour and education: Evidence from SIMPOC surveys, ILO 2008 and Does school quality matter for working children, UCW)

But what about those who still remain in labour or are out of school for other reasons? Because the needs of these children are not easily met by school improvements alone, the social protection sector and also other public services (like labour, health, water and sanitation) will have to step up and share the responsibility for EFA with the education sector. If they do not, EFA will not be achievable. Preventing educational marginalisation by tackling child labour requires not only more effective legislation but also economic incentives aimed at keeping children in school.

## 4. Obstacles to attaining universal primary education and eliminating child labour

Several obstacles have been mentioned earlier due to which children are missing out on education, are dropping out early or are working at the cost of being in school and learning. The main obstacles to attaining universal primary education and eliminating child labour are now discussed in this section in some detail through country examples. For the purposes of this policy paper, the countries covered include Afghanistan, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Republic

of Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, and Yemen. These countries have particular situations with respect to education and child labour, and are reflective of the situation globally and cover the special situation in Sub-Saharan Africa. There is additionally treatment of Democratic Republic of Congo with respect to conflict affected and fragile states.

## 4.1 Gender Discrimination

One of the major obstacles for UPE attainment and child labour elimination is addressing gender discrimination. Owing to vulnerabilities and gender biases regarding the roles of boys and girls wherein males are mainly seen as bread winners and females as assuming domestic responsibilities, more girls than boys of primary school age remain out of school and miss the chance at education and learning, viz., 30.6 million girls vis-à-vis 26.6 million boys in 2011 (UIS, 2011). Many girls remain out of school due to the double burden of unpaid domestic chores and engagement in economic activity to support family income. Many girls also are engaged in hidden or invisible and worst forms of child labour such as paid domestic labour in third party homes, small-scale agriculture, small home-based workshops, forced labour and prostitution, etc., which has a negative impact on any opportunity for school attendance<sup>iii</sup>. As per latest available ILO statistics, 59.4 million girls between the age of 5-14 years are child labourers, out of which 21.5 million are engaged in hazardous work (ILO, 2013). Further, 5.9 million girls between the age of 5-14 years are child domestic labourers engaged in third party homes (ILO, 2013). While these girl child labourers have to work at the cost of their childhood and education, work also has damaging effects on their physical and mental well-being which negatively impacts their learning and retention at school when given a chance at education.

As per GMR 2012, in as many as 60 countries girls remain disadvantaged in primary education with the gender parity index (GPI) being less than 0.90, i.e., for every 100 boys in school less than 90 girls are in school. While the reasons for girls' disadvantage vary, one of the biggest obstacles for girls in countries farthest from achieving gender parity is entering school in the first place. Once enrolled, their chance of progressing through the cycle is usually similar to that of boys. It is the girls from poor households who are disadvantaged and have a lower chance of starting school (See figure below). Besides poverty, other factors also affect girls' access to education, viz., lack of adequate water and sanitation facilities, safety of the journey to school and proximity, etc. Without access to quality education, girls drift into the labour force at an early age well below the minimum age of employment, which hampers their development.

### Poor girls have a lower chance of starting primary school



Sources: Delprato (2012) based on analysis of Demographic and Health Surveys; EFA Global Monitoring Report team estimates (2012) based on analysis of Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys.

Figure 6: Expected cohort intake to grade 1 and survival rate to grade 6 by gender and wealth, selected countries with GPI in 2010 below 0.90, 2005 to 2008

In **Afghanistan**, around 2.5 million girls were out of school in 2011<sup>iv</sup>. Many of these girls are child labourers, working in brick factories<sup>v</sup>, agricultural sector, homes as domestic helps, prostitution and other activities<sup>vi</sup>. Girls are most disadvantaged in Afghanistan which ranks at the bottom of the ranking for gender parity index with only 69 girls being enrolled in school for every 100 boys in 2010. Despite being ranked at the bottom, Afghanistan has overcome the biggest obstacle to girls' education any country has witnessed: from an estimated female gross enrolment ratio of less than 4% in 1999, when the ruling Taliban had banned girls' education, to 79% in 2010, resulting in an increase in the GPI from 0.08 to 0.69. With a long way to go, the government needs to continue to address constraints on girls' schooling (GMR 2012). Strong negative social attitudes towards females and the damage and adverse impact of the conflict in Afghanistan on education are constraints that need addressing<sup>vii</sup>. In Afghanistan, insurgent groups have repeatedly attacked education infrastructure in general and girls' schools in particular.<sup>viii</sup>

**Cote d'Ivoire** has the highest number of children of out-of-school children in West Africa, i.e., 1.2 million in 2009. More than half of these children are girls, i.e., 57% amounting to 0.68 million girls of primary school age (GMR 2012). Many of the girls who are not in school are involved in some form of work. For instance, Ivorian girls as young as age 9 work as domestic servants, often working 12 to 14 hours per day. Girls are also engaged in hazardous work in agriculture and particularly in the production of cocoa<sup>ix</sup> and along with agricultural work, they have to perform tasks traditionally performed in rural households such as fetching water, making food, etc.<sup>x</sup> With more girls out of school than boys, Cote d'Ivoire is lagging behind in achieving gender parity. The GPI is below 0.90, i.e., 0.833 in 2011 implying that only 83 girls are enrolled in schools for every 100 boys (GMR 2012).

**Pakistan** has the second largest number of children out of school in the world, i.e., 5.4 million in 2011 (as per new estimates 5.3 million in 2012). About 58% of these out of school children are girls, i.e., 3.2 million girls of primary school age in 2011. The gender disparity in education can be seen from the GPI in Pakistan which is 0.818 in 2010, implying that only 81 girls are enrolled in school per 100 boys enrolled (GMR 2012). Many girls who are not attending school are engaged in several forms of child labour, i.e., in agriculture; carpet weaving; manufacturing soccer ball, surgical tools, as domestic helps, etc. Several girls also miss out on education due to forced marriages or being forced in to prostitution. As in Afghanistan, repeatedly insurgent groups have attacked education infrastructure in general and girls' schools in particular in Pakistan also.

In **Togo**, only 89 girls per every 100 boys are enrolled in primary school, i.e., GPI is 0.899 in 2010, less than 0.90. Togo has paid scant attention to the gaping disadvantages faced by girls in their education systems despite Fast Track Initiative approval and financing for their Education Sector Plan<sup>xi</sup>. Many girls not in school are child labourers engaged in agriculture harvesting goods like cocoa, cotton and coffee; in homes as domestic servants from an early age of 5 years or in other activities<sup>xii</sup>. In Togo, girls from rural areas are at risk of being out of school, owing to the traditional practice of *confiage*, wherein many rural parents send their children to live with city-dwelling relatives who would help them attend school. Girls instead end up as domestic workers<sup>xiii</sup>. Girls from poor families have a lower chance of starting primary school vis-à-vis boys from poor families as well as girls from wealthy families (see figure 6).

In **Yemen**, as per latest statistics for 2012 nearly 80% of out of school children are girls (UIS, 2012). Yemen also has severe gender disparities in primary education as only 81 girls are enrolled in school for every 100 boys enrolled, i.e., GPI is 0.817 in 2010. In Yemen, girls not only have lower chance of entering school, but, once in school, are also less likely to reach grade 6. As can be seen from the figure 6, only 49 out of 100 of poor girls enter school, compared with 72 out of 100 poor boys. And only 27 of poor girls reach grade 6, compared with 52 of poor boys (GMR 2012). Around 0.5 million girls between the age of 5-15 are working and mostly in private households and in agricultural activities<sup>xiv</sup>.

### 4.2 Conflicts

Conflicts have been identified as a major barrier for the attainment of universal primary education and other education goals in the Dakar Framework for Action adopted by governments in 2000<sup>vi</sup>. Conflict-affected countries account for a large proportion of out of school children. Presently, 28.5 million children of primary school age are out of school in conflict-affected countries, this figure being 50% of world's out of school children, and up from the figure of 42% in 2008. Children in conflict-affected countries are not only less likely to be in primary school, but also more likely to drop out. Survival to the last grade in poorer conflict-affected countries is lower than in other poorer countries, i.e., 65% vis-à-vis 86%. In such countries, girls are most affected and disadvantaged in education with 55% of out of school children being girls (EFA GMR Policy Paper, July 2013) and their gender parity indexes being lower than 0.90 (GMR 2011). The largest number of out of school children in conflict-affected countries is in Sub-Saharan Africa (12.6 million) making it another reason for focussing attention and efforts in this region.

Conflicts are an obstacle to UPE and child labour elimination in several ways. Conflicts can interrupt progress in education, i.e., disrupt or reverse education gains made over many years. For example, the two decades of conflict in Afghanistan up to 2001 resulted in a loss of 5.5 years of schooling as progress in education stalled and Mozambique's civil war also cost the country over five years of schooling. In conflicts, often armed groups as a part of their military strategy commit attacks on schools, teachers and children. In several long-running conflicts, armed groups have attacked schoolchildren and teachers as a way to 'punish' their participation in state institutions. There is deliberate destruction of education facilities and schools get bombed or looted in conflicts, and are also used for military purposes, such as recruitment grounds and polling stations<sup>xvi</sup>. Such attacks result in growing fear among children to attend school, among teachers to give classes, and among parents to send their children to school (GMR 2011). For children who are already struggling to attend school due to poverty and other vulnerabilities, irregular attendance or completely missing out on school during conflicts may eventually lead to drop-outs. Conflicts encourage the forced recruitment of children into armed forces, a worst form of child labour as per ILO Convention No. 182. While some are used as fighters and take direct part in hostilities, others are used in supportive roles (e.g. cooks, porters, messengers, or spies) or for sexual purposes<sup>xvii</sup>. Such child recruitment is an enormous barrier to education, not just because child soldiers are not in school, but also because the threat of abduction, the trauma involved, and problems of reintegration have far wider effects. While thousands of girls and boys are associated with armed forces and groups, they represent only a small proportion of a much larger number of children who are trapped in other worst forms of child labour as a result of armed conflict as per the ILO. The destructive impact of conflicts on the socio-economic environment can increase risk factors associated with child labour. Conflict also increases the potential for children already working to be involved in more dangerous and harmful work. Mass displacements as a consequence of conflicts expose children who constitute almost half of the refugees and internally displaced people to the risk of extreme disadvantage in education. Data from UNHCR survey paint a disturbing picture of the state of education in refugee camps wherein enrolment rates averaged 69% for primary schools, on an average 8 girls for every 10 boys were enrolled in primary school indicating gender disparities and a high pupil/teacher ratio in many cases (nearly one-third of camps under the survey reported ratios of 50:1 or more) (GMR 2011).

Conflicts also impact education through the spending or the allocation of funds on education in conflict-affected countries. Armed conflict diverts public funds from education to military spending. In 2011, 21 developing countries were spending more on arms than on primary schools. If they were to cut military spending by 10%, they could have put an additional 9.5 million children in school. Further, allocation of education in humanitarian aid has been inadequate and below 4% - the proportion being demanded by the global education community. In 2012, education accounted for just 1.4% of humanitarian aid which has further decreased from an already low figure of 2.2% in 2009. As compared to other sectors, it has the smallest share of humanitarian appeals that are funded: just 26% of aid requests for education constituting modest amount were met in 2012 (EFA GMR Policy Paper, July 2013).

While there is an extensive body of international human rights laws, rules and norms that should protect children, teachers and other civilians caught up in armed conflict, impunity reigns, and Security Council resolutions aimed at protecting children and education in conflict situations are widely ignored. Governments and the international community should be called to provide a more robust defence of children, teachers, civilians and schools during conflict. It should also be stressed that education should be a core part of humanitarian aid with proper strategies to recruit teachers in after conflict education strategies.

Education should also be a key component of the wider peace-building agenda. Policy reform in areas such as curriculum and language of instruction should be explored to build more peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the right to basic education for a significant number of children is not yet achieved. Almost one child out of two between 6 and 11 does not go to school, with a gap between boys and girls (59% against 51%), and a considerable difference between urban and rural areas (66% against 48%). Parental preference for educating boys rather than girls is a persisting challenge, especially in the west of the country where the primary school enrolment rate is 37.9% among girls compared to 55.9% for boys (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), 2006). According to EFA GMR 2011, grievances over education inequalities in the north were at the root of the civil strife in Côte d'Ivoire over the past decade. The report further elaborating on the political crisis in Côte d'Ivoire reported that it was causing grave harm to an already broken education system destroying schools, with “gunfire disrupting classes, teachers staying home for political reasons and families increasingly desperate about their children's schooling.”

The wars in **Democratic Republic of Congo** (DRC) that raged over 15 years ending in 2008, compounded by continuing violence in the east of the country and decades of corruption and poor governance, has left the country coping with many challenges including ensuring access to basic education. In DRC, a vast number of children are out of school, i.e., more than one in four aged children 5-17 are missing out on the fundamental right to education. Out of the 7.4 million children aged 5-17 currently not enrolled in schools, girls account for more than half of out-of-school children – 3.9 million. The education disadvantage for girls is clearly reflected in the country GPI which was below 0.90 in 2010, i.e., 0.87 (GMR 2012). Further, the number of children who are not in school is three times higher in rural areas than in urban areas. The province of Katanga, which, rich with minerals, would seem an unlikely place for the figures to spike, has the largest number of children aged 5–17 who are out of school – over 1.3 million. The large number of out-of-school children in DRC exists despite the fact that though the Congolese government in 2010 made primary education free, the elimination of school fees is yet to become operational in many provinces<sup>xviii</sup>. While low income of parents and existence of school fees makes education inaccessible, children also remain out-of-school due to their engagement child labour, especially in agriculture, mining and as child soldiers<sup>xix</sup>.

Children have been most affected by the decade long violent internal armed conflict in **Nepal** that ended in 2006. While tackling longstanding structural problems, inadequate infrastructure, weak governance and rule of law are expected to increase growth and employment, the pace has been slow. Dropout remains persistently high in the early years, notably at grade 1; 25% of students leave before reaching grade 5 (2009) and there is some evidence that some students are making a poor start in early years reading and number skills. At least 400,000 primary school age children (8%) are not in school. Just half of the students pass their secondary leaving exam. The poor, disadvantaged groups and those located in remote areas fare worst: 64% of out-of-school children are from disadvantaged families, and only 21% of Terai Dalits are literate.

The last three years in **Syria** have seen more than 4.25 million people displaced internally and more than 2.1 million living as refugees in neighbouring countries. Before the crises, the rate of primary enrolment in Syrian Arab Republic had surpassed 90%. But during the last school year, almost 2 million Syrian children aged 6-15 dropped out of school because of conflict and displacement. As the conflict rages, denying more children their ‘right to education’ is not only hampering their intellectual development, but also future opportunities.

## 4.3 Low quality and inequity in learning (raising quality and strengthening equity)

*“Children have a right to an education, a quality education.”*

With increase in school enrolments, the next challenge is of 'quality'. Many countries are already facing the challenge of 'quality of education' and quality of learning for both the student/pupil and the society at large. Additionally, quality of education will also determine the achievements of access to and inclusion in universal primary education. A framework of quality in education starts with the quality of learners, in a quality learning environment, through quality content and quality processes leading to quality outcomes in education and overall learning.

Input factors	Student characteristics including socio-economic status, family size, composition and attitude towards education, education level of parents
Quality learning environment	School-based factors such as infrastructure, class size, enabling and inclusive environment for girls
Quality content	Curriculum, teaching and learning materials
Quality processes	Teachers, their training, skill development and their working conditions; specific student-centric approaches, language of learning
Quality outcomes	Lifelong learning, rights awareness, healthy well-nourished, and free from exploitation, violence and labour, trained and skilled

Millions of children attend schools for several years without mastering basic skills. Out of around 650 million children of primary school age, as many as 250 either do not reach grade 4 or if they do, are failing to learn the basics (GMR 2012). International learning assessments such as Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA 2009) draw attention to the very large disparities between rich and poor countries, schools in urban areas and rural areas, and between students accessing early childhood learning including pre-primary schools and students who have not. Real learning divides are larger than those captured by international learning assessments, as these do not include children who are out-of-school. Especially in countries where school participation rates are low and dropout rates high, exclusion of out-of-school children can distort national learning profiles.

Quality of education not only impacts learning achievements, but is also relevant for increasing school attendance. Ray and Lancaster<sup>xx</sup> (2005) found child labour to negatively affect school attendance following a multi-country study on Sri Lanka, Portugal, Belize, Cambodia, the Philippines, Namibia and Panama. Phoumin<sup>xxi</sup> (2008) however, found grade attainment in Cambodia to be adversely affected only by work beyond 22 hours per week.

As returns to education are also a proxy for labour productivity, the crucial role of education quality in the growth process is also evident. Allocation of children's time across different activities depends, among other things, on the relative returns of such activities. To the extent that school quality affects return to education, it also influences the household's decision concerning the investment in children's education versus economic activity.

Teachers are the front-line providers in education, yet the lack of teachers, and especially of trained teachers, presents not only a major obstacle to quality in learning and education, but the achievement of the EFA goals. The latest estimates suggest that 112 countries need to expand their teacher workforce by a total of 5.4 million primary school teachers by 2015 (UIS, 2011), with the most acute shortage in Sub-Saharan Africa that alone needs more than 2 million new recruitment. To improve student outcomes, having enough teachers and reasonable

pupil/teacher ratios (PTRs) is not sufficient: the teachers need to be well trained and motivated. In 26 of 165 countries PTR was above 40:1 in 2010 including 22 in sub-Saharan Africa and, 7 countries (Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Pakistan, Samoa the former Sudan and Yemen) saw their ratios grow by more than 5 pupils for every teacher over the decade. The increase in school enrolment rates in each country was not matched by increase in number of teachers, raising serious questions about quality in these countries (GMR 2012). Overcrowding in classrooms and poorly trained teachers are resulting in children struggling to learn. This is further exacerbated at secondary school level, with many children and young people either not learning or learning poorly at primary levels, leading to drop outs.

The first National Child Labour Survey of **Yemen** in 2010 found that of the 7.7 million children aged 5-17 years, 1.6 million (21%) were employed. The employment rate is higher among older children (24%) than younger children (11%).

Low school attendance is a problem particularly for female and rural children. Girls aged 6-17 years have an attendance rate of 63.4%, compared to a 77.2% attendance rate among boys in the same age group. An even larger gap exists between urban and rural children, with the rural girls having the lowest attendance rate (57.5%). The primary education completion rate for boys and girls is 42% in rural areas. Also, many girls tend to be over-age for their grades and most drop-out before completing basic education.

Studies have indicated that the lack of female teachers is one of the factors resulting in low enrolment and retention of girls in schools, particularly in higher grades when parents tend to object to male teachers. In 2010-2011, only 28% of teachers in government basic and secondary schools were females. The Ministry of Education estimates that 4,500 female teachers are needed to remedy the acute shortage of female teachers in rural areas. Furthermore, a survey found that the absenteeism rate was 14% on average among teachers in basic education schools (World Bank, 2006<sup>1</sup>). The situation has been further aggravated by the country's recent conflicts by displacing 64,000 6 to 14 year olds or by apprehending 13,000 school teachers and managers. Further more, not being able to access and enjoy the right to education increases and adds to the marginalisation and social exclusion of the children making it more difficult for them to participate in society as adults.

### 4.4 Funding and Allocation to Education

Right to an education is a fundamental human rights and one that must be guaranteed by the state. Therefore, the state also has the responsibility of adequately resourcing the provisions of Education For All. Without free education for all, the right to an education cannot be guaranteed. The amount of funds allocated and spent on education are essential and matter for attainment of universal primary education. This can be seen from the fact that most countries that accelerated progress towards Education for All goals over the last decade did so by increasing their spending on education substantially

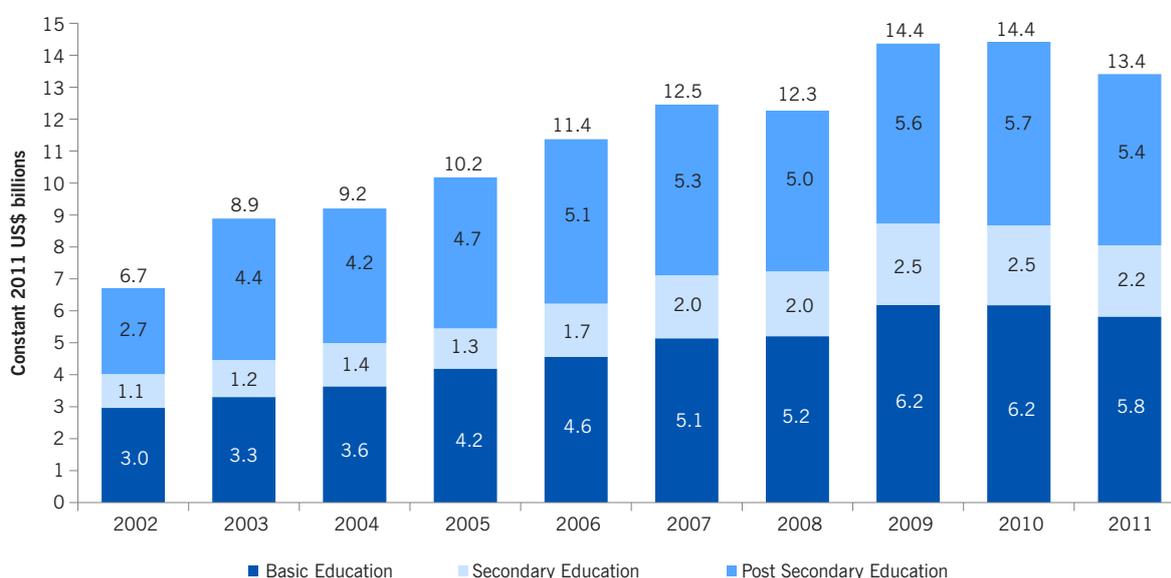
An important aspect of national spending on education by governments includes making primary education free for all. To send their children to school, households have to incur various costs such as school fees, uniforms, transport, etc. For poor households, meeting these costs is a challenge and a reason to send children to work instead of schools. Abolition of school fees by states has contributed to making primary education more accessible for children of such households. In rural Kenya, the poorest households reaped a larger share of the benefit of fee abolition (EFA GMR 2012). However, in many cases, fee abolition only covers tuition fees and bearing other costs such as of uniforms, books, etc often proves prohibitive for poor households, making education inaccessible for their children.

1. World Bank, 2006, Tracking Basic Education Expenditures in Yemen: Analyses of Public Resource Management and Teachers Absenteeism

or maintaining it at already high levels. For example, when Tanzania increased its spending on education from 2% of GNP in 1999 to 6.2% of GNP by 2010, i.e., by more than 3 times, over the same period the primary net enrolment ratio doubled. Another example is of Kenya which by consistently spending over 5% of its income on education over the last decade has increased the net enrolment ratio from 62% in 1999 to 83% in 2009. While global trend for allocation of national income to education has in general been positive with over 60% of the low and middle income countries having increased the share of national income spent on education over the period covering 1999 to 2010, some countries have maintained a low level of spending – less than 3% of GNP over the past decade. This especially covers countries that still have a long way to go for achieving EFA. For instance, with a net enrolment ratio of just 69% in 2011, the Central African Republic has maintained a low level of spending at less than 2% of GNP, reducing it from 1.6% to 1.2% (GMR 2012).

Along with addressing low and stagnating levels of national spending on education, ensuring that countries increase their spending on education to at least 6% of their income as per commitments made in the Dhaka Declaration is essential for attaining universal primary education. Based on the data available, it has been found that only 9 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1 country in South and West Asia, and 1 country in Central Asia are spending more than 6% on education.

The current trends of aid to education also pose a challenge for the Education for All goals. While the total aid to education stagnated in 2010 at USD 14.4 billion, it has decreased to USD 13.4 billion in 2011. This reduction in total aid is harming the aid to basic education, which fell for the first time since 2002, from USD 6.2 billion in 2010 to USD 5.8 billion in 2011 (See figure below). With the slowed progress in the reduction of out-of-school children, declining aid to education, especially for basic education will stall the progress in ensuring that every child is in school.



Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report team analysis based on OECD Creditor Reporting System (2013)

Figure 7: Total aid to education disbursements by US\$ billions, 2002-2011

It is also worrisome that aid to education is not going to countries that need them the most. Of the USD 5.8 billion in aid to basic education in 2011, only USD 1.9 billion was allocated to low income countries, which face the greatest struggle to achieve universal primary education. Aggregated aid to basic education in the poorest countries fell by 9% between 2010 and 2011, equivalent to USD 189 million, while aid to lower middle income countries increased by a similar amount over the same period. In case of Sub-Saharan Africa which accounts for more than half of all out-of-school children worldwide, aid to basic education to the region has dropped by 7% between 2010 and 2011<sup>xxii</sup>.

Lower spending on education through national allocation and donor support will adversely impact not only the number of out-of-school children but also on the number of children involved in child labour.

**Pakistan** has the second largest number of children out of school – 5.4 million (in 2011). Yet it has maintained a low level of spending, allocating less than 3% of its GNP on education. It has reduced its spending on education from 2.6% to 2.3% of GNP over the decade. In contrast, the government spends more on subsidies for companies like Pakistan International Airlines, Pakistan Steel and Pepco (its energy company) than on education<sup>xxiii</sup>. It also spends around 7 times more on military than on primary schooling (GMR 2011). To overcome the financial constraints and to expand the learning opportunities to all children, Pakistan needs to divert only one-fifth of its military budget to education to pay for every child to be in and complete primary school. Further, in terms of donor funding, while aid to basic education has increased by 6% in 2011 in Pakistan, it still receives a small share of education aid (5%) than India (10%) in spite of the fact that the number of out-of-school children in Pakistan are three times larger than the number in India in 2011 (EFA Policy Note, 2013).

**Nigeria** heads the list of out-of-school children with one in six of the world's out-of-school children, a total of 10.5 million. This is ironical given that Nigeria is a resource rich country, being one of the largest exporters of oil and gas. While Nigeria retains 72% of oil exports as government revenue, it has the potential to only send 23% of the country's out-of-school children to primary school - around 2.4 million. The challenge for Nigeria is to manage, distribute and use the natural resource revenue better and ensure that education is the top priority for the government (EFA GMR 2012). Further, despite being home to the largest population of out-of-school children, Nigeria does not figure among the top ten recipients for aid to basic education and has even seen its aid decrease by nearly one-third between 2010 and 2011 (EFA Policy Note June 2013).

### 4.5 Low learning achievement

To attain universal primary education, it is not only important to reduce the number of out-of-school children to zero and ensure that all children have access to school, but also that children are learning in school and staying in school. Making sure that children learn is at the heart of any education system. But, millions of children who go to school do not learn the basics. But learning the basic is not the objective of RTE. Education supports the full development of children and quality education provide children with the knowledge, skills, attention and creativity needed to solve problems locally and globally and actively contribute to sustainable and democratic development of societies. Out of around 650 million children of primary school age in 2010, as many as 250 million either do not reach grade 4 or, if they do, fail to attain minimum learning standards, i.e., 130 million children of primary school age who were in school were failing to learn the basics and 120 million did not reach grade 4 (EFA GMR 2012). In 2010, 75% of the children have not learnt to read or count by grade 4 in Benin, Chad, Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, and Zambia. EFA GMR 2012 notes that low learning achievement among other things is on account of overcrowded classrooms and poorly paid teachers which are resulting in children struggling to learn the basics in many parts of the world, particularly in low income countries. Quality of education is one among many factors that affects learning achievement as mentioned above.

Student drop-outs or children leaving school early before reaching the last grade of primary education, also resulting in low learning achievements, pose a challenge for universal primary education as very often, these children lack basic literacy and numeracy skills, which reduces their capabilities and life chances (Global Education Digest, 2012). In 2011, about 137 million children began primary school, but at least 34 million children left school before reaching the last grade of primary education. Sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia have the highest rates of early school leaving or drop-out rates (See figure 8). Across these regions, more than one in every three students who started primary school in 2011 will not make it to the last grade (UIS Fact Sheet, June 2013).

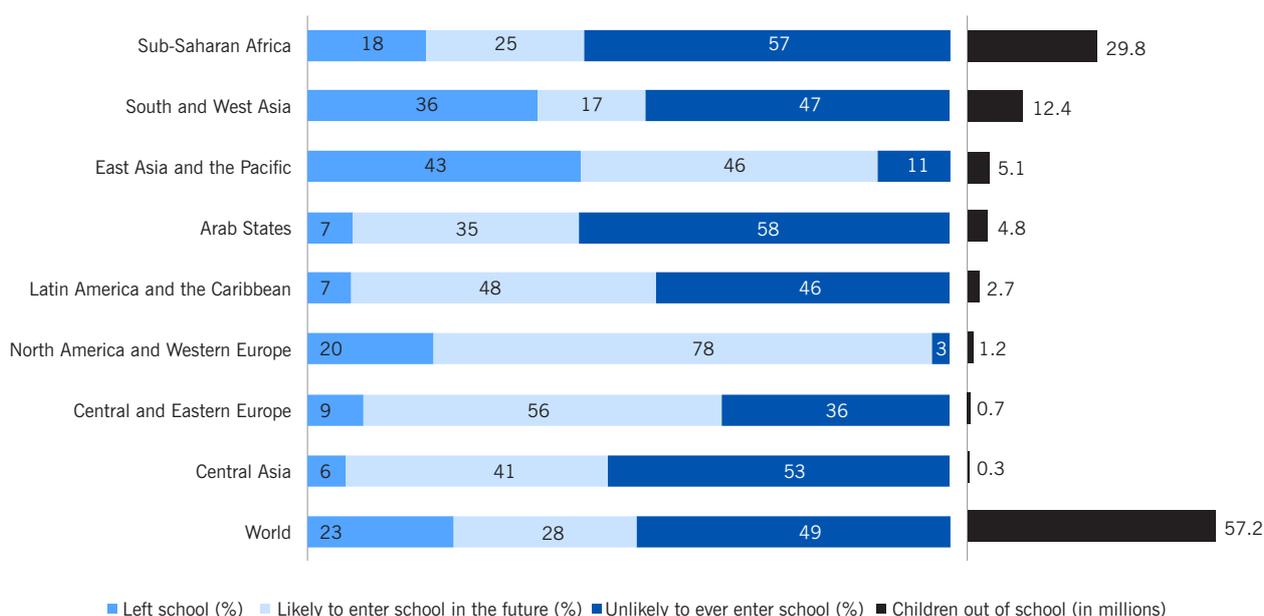


Figure 8: School exposure of out-of-school children of primary school age by region, 2011

An analysis of the profile of the children who leave school early or drop-out shows household poverty as a factor playing an important role (Hunt, 2008; Hammond et al., 2007; Sabates et al., 2010). Further, it also shows that children who combine work and school are more likely to leave school early (UCW 2010). This clearly implies that children dropping out of school are likely to become engaged in some form of child labour (which in many cases is itself the cause of the drop-outs).

In Nigeria, many children do not even enter school, and of those that do, many do not learn the basics. Of those who start school, 80% survive until the last grade – implying a drop-out rate of 20%. Further, it has been noted that primary education is not of sufficient quality to ensure that all children can learn the basics. This could be seen from that fact that among young men aged 15 to 29 years in 2008 who had left school after six years of schooling, 28% were illiterate and 39% were semi-literate. The figures are even worse for young women, with 32% illiterate and 52% semi-literate after being in school for six years (EFA GMR Fact Sheet, October 2012).

The drop-out rate to the last grade of primary education is rather high in Togo – 41% in 2009. This clearly points that many children are not acquiring basic skills in Togo. In Togo, the primary education repetition rates also remain very high, i.e., 23%. Many of the children repeating grades leave school before completing primary education and thus often without learning basic skills (Global Education Digest, 2012).

## Conclusion

It is clear that none of the Education for All goals will be achieved globally by 2015. Thus, it is vital that the post-2015 education goals are clearly defined, robust, realistic and well resourced. It is important that the children left behind in 2015 are prioritised in the post-2015 education goals, so that there is no one left behind. If progress continues to be as slow as recent years, 53 million children will remain out-of-school in 2015.

The momentum to reach out-of-school children has slowed down considerably since 2005. Progress has slowed mainly because the number of out-of-school in sub-Saharan Africa has remained stagnant over the last several

years. While access to education has been improving globally, there has been little progress in reducing the rate at which children leave school before reaching the last grade of primary education – school leaving rate has remained around 20% since 2000.

Despite a global increase in the number of children enrolling in secondary school, the lower secondary gross enrolment ratio was just 52% in low income countries in 2010.

Although the number of out-of-school adolescents of lower secondary school age fell from 101 million in 1999 to 69 million in 2011, it has stagnated since 2007. Three out of four out-of-school adolescents live in South and West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Teachers are the key agents to improve the quality of education. One of the gaps in current educational goals is the quality of teachers and teaching.

These gaps between what we committed to achieve in 2000 and what we could actually achieve has shown that the resources we needed to achieve were unmet and need to be better targeted at those most in need. The successes of many poor countries in achieving some of the targets were backed by robust investments in education, both domestic and international. The failure by donors to keep their promise has left an education financing gap of US\$26 billion per year in some of the world's poorest countries. Basic education must be prioritised in donors' budgets, and additional funding case be raised by reallocating aid towards tertiary education (support for students from developing countries who pursue their higher education in donor countries) to basic education.

In sub-Saharan Africa, if recent trends continue, the richest boys will achieve universal primary completion in 2021, but the poorest girls will not catch up until 2086 – and will only achieve lower secondary school completion in 2111.

- EFA GMR 2013/14<sup>xxiv</sup>

“Business-as-usual” is leaving 57 millions of children behind, almost half of whom are expected never to enter a classroom, and millions without basic literacy. If we do not get it right by 2015, how can we get it right after that date, and get not just all children but also all adolescents into school? Those leading the debate on goals and targets must ensure sufficient funding to bring all children and adolescents in schools, and in good quality education. There must be a specific target for financial by aid donors towards education goals with a focus on poorest and those that need it the most, otherwise, children will continue to pay the price.

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