



Education for All Global Monitoring Report *The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education*

Facts and Figures

Armed conflict and education

- Over the last decade, 35 countries experienced armed conflict. The average duration of violent conflict episodes in low income countries was 12 years.
- In conflict-affected poor countries, **children face major barriers to education:**
 - 28 million children of primary school age are out of school – 42% of the world total.
 - Children in conflict-affected poor countries are twice as likely to die before their fifth birthday as children in other poor countries.
 - Only 79% of young people are literate in conflict-affected poor countries.
 - The world's 43 million refugees and internally displaced people have limited access to education: In 2008, just 69% of primary school age refugee children in UNHCR camps were attending primary school.
- Schools, schoolchildren and teachers are being **deliberately targeted** in conflict:
 - In Afghanistan, at least 613 attacks on schools were recorded in 2009, up from 347 in 2008.
 - In Thailand's three southernmost provinces, 63 students and 24 teachers and education personnel were killed or injured in 2008 and 2009.
 - Of the rapes reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, one-third involve children (and 13% are against children under the age of 10).
- **The 'youth bulge':** In many conflict-affected countries, over 60% of the population is aged under 25, but education systems are not providing youth with the skills they need to escape poverty, unemployment and the economic despair that often contributes to violent conflict.
- **The humanitarian aid system is failing children caught up in conflict:** Education accounts for only 2% of humanitarian aid.
- **Donors' security agendas are compromising the effectiveness of education aid:** Education aid to conflict-affected states is heavily skewed towards countries seen as strategic priorities.
- **Armed conflict is diverting public funds from education into military spending:**
 - It would take just six days of military spending by aid donors to close the US\$16 billion Education for All external financing gap.
 - Twenty-one developing countries are currently spending more on arms than on primary schools – if they were to divert just 10% of military spending to education, they could put an additional 9.5 million children into school.

- Pakistan, which has one of the world's largest out-of-school populations (7.3 million in 2008), spends over seven times as much on arms as on primary schools.

Global education progress

- The number of **children out of school** is falling too slowly.
 - From 1999 to 2008, an additional 52 million children enrolled in primary school – enrolment rates rose by one-third. The number of children out of school was halved in South and West Asia.
 - In 2008, there were still 67 million primary-school age children out of school.
 - In sub-Saharan Africa, 10 million children drop out of school every year.
- Hunger holds back progress in education: in developing countries, 195 million children under 5 – one in three – experience malnutrition which causes irreversible damage to their cognitive development.
- Gender disparities hamper progress in education. Had the world achieved gender parity at the primary level in 2008, there would be an additional 3.6 million girls in primary school.
- About 17% of the world's adults – 796 million people – still lack basic **literacy** skills. Nearly two-thirds are women.
- Another 1.9 million **teachers** will be needed by 2015 to achieve universal primary education.

Education funding

- National expenditure
 - Low income countries as a whole have increased the share of national income spent on education from 2.9% to 3.8% since 1999.
 - Central Asia and South and West Asia invest the least in education.
 - The financial crisis took a heavy toll on education budgets. Seven of the 18 low income countries surveyed in the Report cut education spending in 2009. These countries had 3.7 million children out of school.
- Donor spending (aid to education)
 - Donors have not met the commitments they made in 2005 to increase aid. In 2008, they invested US\$4.7 billion in aid to basic education.
 - Current aid levels fall far short of the US\$16 billion required annually meet the world's education goals in low-income countries.
 - Several major donors continue to skew aid budgets towards higher levels of education: if all donors allocated at least half their education aid to the basic level, an additional US\$1.7 billion could be mobilized annually.
 - An International Finance Facility for Education could raise US\$3 billion to US\$4 billion a year by issuing bonds.
 - A 0.5% levy on mobile phone transactions in Europe could raise US\$894 million for education annually.