

## **New report: Pakistan shows slowest progress getting poor girls into school in South & West Asia**

In the wake of the tragic shooting by the Taliban of the young Pakistani education activist Malala Yousafzai, the Education for All *Global Monitoring Report*, published by UNESCO this week, shows that Pakistan's progress in getting the poorest girls into school is less than half that of India, and Nepal and a quarter of Bangladesh's. The report also reveals that although Pakistan has the second-largest number of out-of-school girls in the world, it has reduced the amount it spends on education to less than 2.3% of GNP. Only 9 low-income and lower-middle-income countries spend a smaller share on education.

The barriers to education faced by Pakistani girls like Malala are stark in comparison with the rest of South Asia. The poorest girls in Pakistan are twice as likely to be out of school as the poorest girls in India, almost three times as likely as the poorest girls in Nepal and around six times as likely as the poorest girls in Bangladesh. These findings are revealed by the [World Inequalities Database of Education \(WIDE\)](#), a new website from the EFA *Global Monitoring Report* team that shows how factors such as gender, poverty, location and ethnicity affect a child's education chances.

Pakistan's progress in reducing the numbers of poor girls being denied a chance of an education has been too slow. The percentage of poorest girls out of school has fallen from 78% to 62%, a much smaller drop than in India (from 66% to 30%), Nepal (from 52% to 22%), and Bangladesh (from 91% to 44%).

In Pakistan, two-thirds of the children out of school are girls; a rate that is worse in only 16 other countries in the world. The country has the second highest number of out-of-school children in the world— 5 million – and the second highest number of girls out of school.

Pauline Rose, Director of the EFA *Global Monitoring Report* said, *“How is it possible that since 1999 when governments around the world committed to getting all children into school, countries like Pakistan have managed to consistently fail to address – we must put girls first if we're to crack this challenge. Two thirds of girls in the poorest areas in Pakistan are still not getting the chance of an education – a rate that is not appropriate for 21<sup>st</sup> century”.*

The Report continues to chart the amount a country is spending on education and exposes that although five million Pakistani children are denied an education— a figure surpassed only by Nigeria – Pakistan has reduced spending on education from 2.6% of GNP in 1999 to only 2.3% today.

Rose continued: *“The hope is that the tragic violence against Malala will bring shame on a country which has ignored the rights of its girls to an education for too long. Pakistan spends less on education than it spends to subsidise just three of its loss-making public-sector enterprises – the national airline, steel and electricity companies. Pakistan also spends less on education than it does on the military. Its priorities have to change.”*

The long term effect of neglecting to educate your children is finding you have a large proportion of your youth population without the skills needed to find work and contribute to economic growth. The *Global*

Monitoring Report 2012 released this week shows over a third of young Pakistanis do not have the skills they need for work; equivalent to 12 million people. This is the second highest number of unskilled young people of all countries in the world.

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For interviews or more information, please contact: Kate Redman (Paris) [k.redman@unesco.org](mailto:k.redman@unesco.org) on +33(0)602049345

To download the report and other relevant materials: <http://www.efareport.unesco.org>

Twitter: #YouthSkillsWork.

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

*The EFA Global Monitoring Report is developed annually by an independent team and published by UNESCO.*

[World Inequality Database on Education \(WIDE\)](#) developed by the Global Monitoring Report team

**Percentage of children who have never been in school:**

