

Committee: Social, Cultural and Humanitarian

Question of: Access to Education

Student Officer: Carmen Bilbao

Introduction

Education is widely accepted to be a fundamental resource, both for individuals and societies. Indeed, in most countries basic education is nowadays perceived not only as a right, but also as a duty, governments are typically expected to ensure access to basic education, while citizens are often required by law to attain education up to a certain basic level.

Today, education remains an inaccessible right for millions of children around the world. More than 72 million children of primary education age are not in school and 759 million adults are illiterate and do not have the awareness necessary to improve both their living conditions and those of their children. In the majority of developing countries, net enrollment rates are higher than attendance rates. This reflects the fact that many children who are officially enrolled, do not regularly attend school. recent primary school attendance estimates for a selection of (mainly) low and middle income countries in Africa, where the gaps between attendance and enrollment are largest. low attendance rates are an important problem in sub-Saharan Africa. In Niger, Chad and Liberia, estimates suggest that less than half of the school-aged children attend primary school.

The Issue

As a result of poverty and marginalization, more than 72 million children around the world remain unschooled.

Sub-Saharan Africa is the most affected area with over 32 million children of primary school age remaining uneducated. Central and Eastern Asia, as well as the Pacific, are also severely affected by this problem with more than 27 million uneducated children.

Additionally, these regions must also solve continuing problems of educational poverty (a child in education for less than 4 years) and extreme educational poverty (a child in education for less than 2 years).

Essentially this concerns Sub-Saharan Africa where more than half of children receive an education for less than 4 years. In certain countries, such as Somalia and Burkina Faso, more than 50% of children receive an education for a period less than 2 years. The lack of schooling and poor education have negative effects on the population and country because children leave school without having acquired the basics, which greatly impedes the social and economic development.

Marginalization and poverty:

For many children who still do not have access to education, it is notably because of persisting inequality and marginalization.

In developing and developed countries alike, children do not have access to basic education because of inequalities that originate in sex, health and cultural identity (ethnic origin,

language, religion). These children find themselves on the margins of the education system and do not benefit from learning that is vital to their intellectual and social development.

Factors linked to poverty such as unemployment, illness and the illiteracy of parents, multiply the risk of non-schooling and the drop-out rate of a child by 2.

Undeniably, many children from disadvantaged backgrounds are forced to abandon their education due to health problems related to malnutrition or in order to work and provide support for the family.

Financial deficit of developing countries:

Universal primary education is a major issue and a sizable problem for many states.

Many emerging countries do not appropriate the financial resources necessary to create schools, provide schooling materials, nor recruit and train teachers. Funds pledged by the international community are generally not sufficient enough to allow countries to establish an education system for all children.

Equally, a lack of financial resources has an effect on the quality of teaching. Teachers do not benefit from basic teacher training and schools, of which there are not enough, have oversized classes.

This overflow leads to classes where many different educational levels are forced together which does not allow each individual child to benefit from an education adapted to their needs and abilities. As a result, the drop-out rate and education failure remains high.

Inequality between girls and boys:

Today, it is girls who have the least access to education. They make up more than 54% of the non-schooled population in the world.

This problem occurs most frequently in Arab States, in Central Asia and in Southern and Western Asia and is principally explained by the cultural and traditional privileged treatment given to males. Girls are destined to work in the family home, whereas boys are entitled to receive an education.

In sub-Saharan Africa, over 12 million girls are at risk of never receiving an education. In Yemen, it is more than 80% of girls who will never have the opportunity to go to school. Even more alarming, certain countries such as Afghanistan or Somalia make no effort to reduce the gap between girls and boys with regard to education.

Although many developing countries may congratulate themselves on dramatically reducing inequality between girls and boys in education, a lot of effort is still needed in order to achieve universal primary education.

Key Events

Event/Date	Explanation
1945	The right to education was enshrined in UNESCO's constitution following the guiding fundamental principles of non-discrimination, equality of opportunity, universal access and solidarity.

1948	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights defined education as a fundamental human right.
1990	The move for greater international cooperation in education that began with the adoption of the World Declaration on Education for All, in Jomtien, Thailand, by some 150 governmental and non-governmental organisations. The aim was to create universal access to basic education for all children, youth and adults by the end of the decade.
2000	<p>New impetus was given at the World Education Forum in Dakar where 164 governments pledged to achieve 6 Education for All (EFA) goals incorporating the concepts of gender equality and quality education.</p> <p>The United Nations adopted the 8 Millennium Development Goals with Goal 2 being to achieve universal primary education by 2015.</p>
2002	Major donors for education launch Global Partnership for Education (formerly Education for All - Fast Track Initiative) to give all children around the world the opportunity to complete primary education, and to ensure that all girls and boys have the same opportunities to attend school.
2003	The Catalytic Fund is established as a multi donor, multi recipient trust fund to support the implementation of developing country partners' education plans.
2004	The Education Program Development Fund is established as a second trust fund to provide technical assistance for the development of sustainable education sector programs.
2005	At the United Nations World Summit 2005 in New York, representatives of 191 member states commit to support the efforts of developing countries in the implementation of Education for All (EFA), including by channeling resources through the Global Partnership for Education.
2006	16 GPE developing country partners achieve the goal of gender parity in school enrollment, up from only 10 countries in 2001-2002.
2007	10 million more children are enrolled in school in the 33 developing partner countries of GPE
2008	GPE supports programs to eliminate school fees and provide a daily meal to 600,000 pupils in Ghana. GPE allocates grants to 18,000 Kenyan schools for school supplies.

2009	GPE allocates US\$ 359 million in grants to 13 developing countries (Timor-Leste, Nicaragua, Guyana, Ghana, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Zambia, Gambia, Mongolia, Yemen, Niger and Rwanda). Carol Bellamy is selected as the new independent Chair of the Global Partnership.
2010	GPE allocates US\$ 441.3 million in grants to 10 developing countries (Tajikistan, Haiti, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Lao PDR, Guinea, Liberia, Togo, Djibouti, Cameroon, and Nepal). Robert Prouty is appointed Head of Global Partnership for Education Secretariat.
2011	A new commitment to provide quality education to all children: The Global Partnership for Education changes its name from Education for All - Fast Track Initiative to better reflect its dedication to international education. Launch of the GPE Replenishment Campaign for 2012-2014, raising more than US\$ 1.5 billion to put an additional 25 million children into school.
2012	Since 2003, the Partnership has helped put 22 million more children into school, support the construction of 53,000 classrooms and trained over 300,000 teachers
2013	The Global Partnership welcomed 5 new developing country partners to reach a total of 59. Our Board of Directors approved grants worth over US\$1 billion to 25 country partners. Alice Albright was named Chief Executive Officer.
2014	Julia Gillard, former Australian Prime Minister, was appointed Chair of GPE's Board. She led a successful second replenishment of GPE's resources for 2015-2018, bringing in US\$28.5 billion in new commitments from developing countries and donor partners.
2015	<p>The World Education Forum in Incheon, Republic of Korea adopted the Incheon Declaration reaffirming the Education for All commitments of Jomtien and Dakar and committing to the new Global Education 2030 Agenda.</p> <p>A new Global Goal for education was formally adopted by the United Nations in September, which sets out a highly ambitious education agenda for the next 15 years. The Global Partnership fully supports the new Global Goal for education and will play a key role as convener, coordinator and implementing partner of the 2030 education agenda.</p>
2016	GPE introduces its new strategic plan, GPE 2020, which adopts the UN Global Goal for education as its vision. Defining 3 goals and 5 objectives, the plan will guide GPE partners to improve learning and equity through building stronger education systems.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Universal Primary Education is one of the eight international Millennium Development Goals, towards which progress has been made in the past decade, though barriers still remain.

On 15 October 2012, UN Special Envoy for Global Education Gordon Brown, the former British Prime Minister, visited Malala Yousafzai (Nobel Peace Prize winner for her impact in education) while she was in the hospital, and launched a petition in her name and "in support of what Malala fought for". Using the slogan "I am Malala", the petition's main demand was that there be no child left out of school by 2015.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, is the first international legal instrument that recognizes education as a human right. Article 26 states: 'Everyone has the right to education'. It is a non-legally binding instrument but with a great political and moral force. Since its adoption, the right to education has been reaffirmed in numerous human rights treaties and declarations adopted by the United Nations.

UNESCO is the United Nations agency for education, science, and culture. The organization has adopted two conventions in the field of education, one on non-discrimination in education and the other on technical and vocational education. It has also adopted a number of recommendations, including on: the status of teachers, higher education, adult education, and human rights education. These recommendations are non-binding but states nonetheless are politically and morally obliged to implement them.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the UN special agency dealing with labour issues. The ILO has adopted an impressive array of conventions including some related to vocational training, teachers, child labour, and Indigenous Peoples' right to education.

International humanitarian law regulates the conduct of parties in armed conflicts and includes provisions on the right to education and education more generally, for example, the protection of students, education staff and educational facilities.

Possible Solutions

- Ensure that every child has access to all education services in the same way and at similar cost to that of nationals.
- Advocate for sustainable education services for children integrated within the national public system when and wherever feasible.
- Ensure that the education offered conforms to national and international standards and provides a safe and child-friendly learning environment, well educated teachers with a sound knowledge of child-centred pedagogy and sufficient well-equipped infrastructure and facilities.
- Provide protection and special assistance to the most vulnerable groups and individuals among rural communities so they can access education equitably, including separated and orphaned children, girls and women at risk, the elderly, persons with disabilities and children in need of special education. Ensure education is free from protection risks, with a particular focus on gender and protection.
- Partner with a wide range of actors, especially Governments, local authorities, other UN agencies, international agencies, NGOs, civil society and community organizations,

academic institutions and the private sector to ensure the availability of quality education services.

- Ensure that community members participate actively, transparently and without discrimination in assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education in urban settings.
- Establish and utilize efficient monitoring and evaluation systems to improve program implementation, prioritisation and impact.

Bibliography

- UNHCR. “Ensuring Access to Education.” www.unhcr.org/4ea9552f9.pdf#zoom=95.
- GPE. “Global Partnership for Education.” www.globalpartnership.org/timeline.
- Our world in Data. “Global Rise of Education.” ourworldindata.org/global-rise-of-education.
- Right to education project. “Attempts to solve education”. www.right-to-education.org/page/humanitarian-law