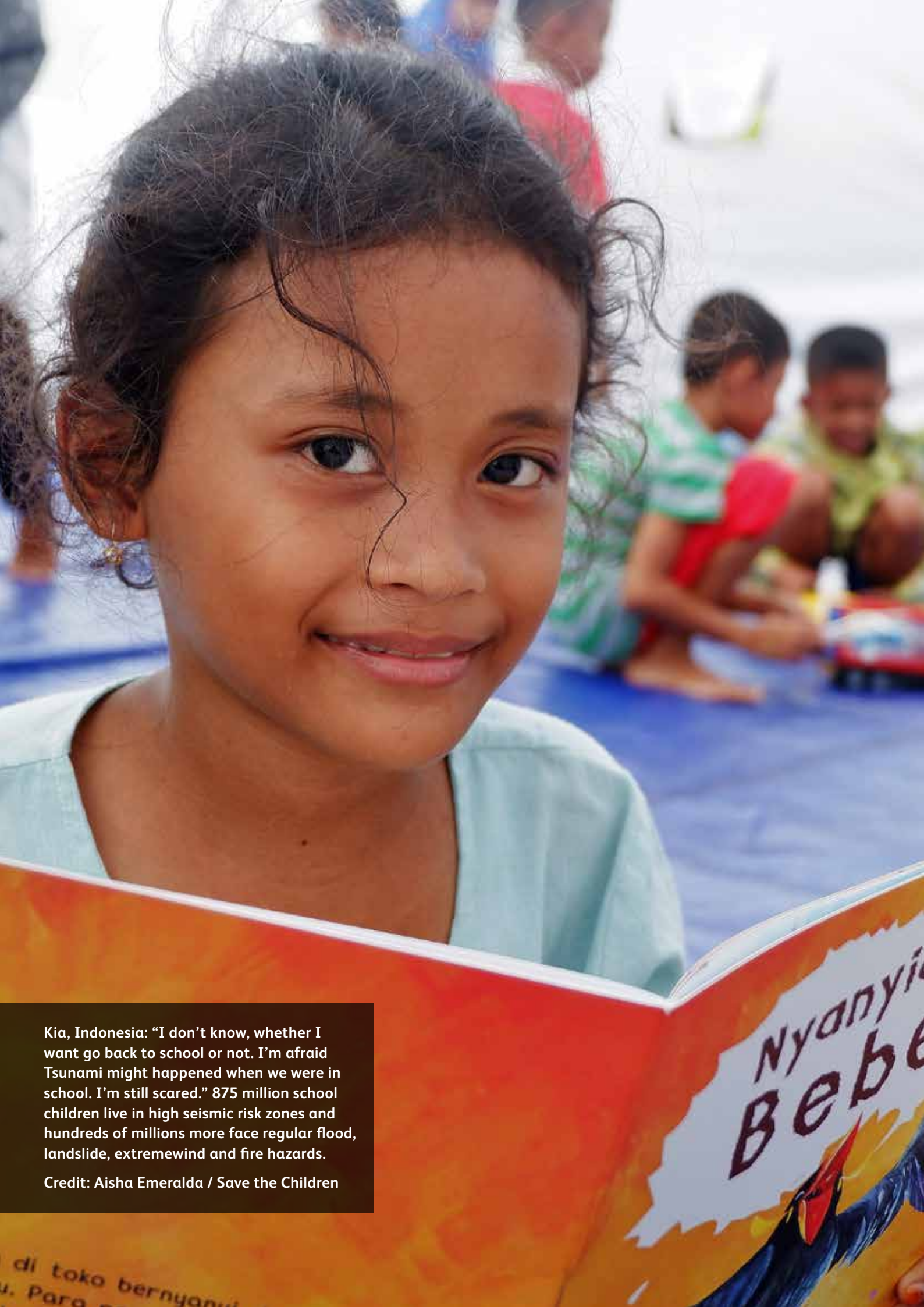


**Unlock education
for everyone:**
delivering the pledge to leave
no one behind in education



Kia, Indonesia: "I don't know, whether I want go back to school or not. I'm afraid Tsunami might happened when we were in school. I'm still scared." 875 million school children live in high seismic risk zones and hundreds of millions more face regular flood, landslide, extremewind and fire hazards.

Credit: Aisha Emeraldal / Save the Children

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Foreword

As Chair of the International Development Committee and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Global Education for All, I spend a lot of my time in Parliament considering the Government's approach to global education.

Thanks to the hard work of the UK Government and others, more children and young people than ever before are receiving a quality education. I have seen what this means first-hand, for example when the Select Committee visited both the Middle East and East Africa as part of our inquiry into DFID's work on education.

But there is a worrying trend whereby, despite progress being made overall, education outcomes among the most marginalised have stalled and in some places are actively decreasing.

I have seen the challenge of reaching marginalised children and young people through visits to refugee camps in Bangladesh and Jordan and when looking at programmes for disabled children and young people in Kenya.

The scale of the challenge cannot be overstated. But it is one we cannot ignore. For that reason I am pleased to see Send My Friend focus their efforts on the most marginalised this year. I believe firmly in the right of every child and young person, no matter who they are or where they live, to receive a quality education. It is not fair that the lottery of birth still dictates a child's opportunity to learn.

The Sustainable Development Goals reflect my beliefs, with leaders agreeing to leave no one behind in Agenda 2030. But I am deeply concerned by current data, which suggests we are not delivering the promise of education for all.

Unlock Education comes at an important time. As the UK engages in its first ever Voluntary National Review, this report calls on the UK to reassess progress on education while innovatively engaging with the cross-cutting factors of marginalisation that prevent many children and young people from learning.

By presenting not just what is locking children and young people out of education, but how we break down these barriers, this report provides a constructive and important contribution to the UK's global education debate.

I welcome this report and the continuing work of the Send My Friend to School coalition, and urge the UK Government to seriously consider this report's recommendations. Only through leading globally, working with countries and investing equitably can we address the intersecting forces of marginalisation and truly unlock education for all.



Stephen Twigg MP

Chair, All Party Parliamentary Group for Global Education



Afsana*, aged 10, lives in the brothel with her mother Tuli and her five-year-old brother Selim. Afsana loves school and is the second best student in grade three, despite her difficult living conditions. Children growing up in brothels experience intersecting forces of disadvantage in their pursuit of learning, including poverty and discrimination. Afsana dreams of finishing school and finding a job to take her family out of the brothel.

Credit: Allison Joyce / Save The Children

Executive Summary

The world is vastly off track in delivering the universal right to education, one that it promised to deliver for all children and young people through the *leave no one behind* pledge in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. **262 million¹ children and young people remain out of school and too many that are in school are not learning².**

We will not achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) – the goal to provide quality and inclusive education for all by 2030 – unless we urgently accelerate progress for the furthest behind groups. Across the globe inequitable education systems mean that children and young people are being denied the opportunity to learn simply because of who they are or where they live: poverty, conflict, gender, geography, minority status and disability are all major reasons for exclusion from education.

While some children and young people face individual barriers to learning, the furthest behind children and young people in education often face multiple,

compounding and intersecting disadvantages. Education policy and programming, therefore, needs to address these multiple forms of disadvantage simultaneously in order to be effective. Governments also need to identify and account for children and young people who are often invisible in data sets and are therefore locked out of learning because they do not feature in national education planning. This includes, for example, adolescent girls, children displaced due to conflict, children with disabilities, child labourers, nomadic and other migratory populations, ethnic minorities, children living in slums and street children.

Inequality in education persists due to **inequitable and unresponsive education systems that allocate resources uniformly rather than according to need, underinvestment in public education, lack of accountability, gender inequality, discrimination, insecurity and instability caused by conflict and crisis.** While there has been increasing political will to address inequality in education globally, there has been inadequate action

and results delivered for the furthest behind children and young people.

This report challenges the UK Government to turn policy commitments into action to reach the furthest behind and unlock education for everyone. 2019 is a critical year for progress on SDG4 as it is one of the focus goals under review at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July – the body mandated to review and follow up on the progress of the SDGs. The UK is also, for the first time ever, participating in the Voluntary National Review (VNR) of its progress on the SDGs and will report at the HLPF. This is a key platform for the UK to visibly reaffirm and champion the *leave no one behind* pledge in education, and lead its implementation.

The Send My Friend to School coalition is calling on the UK Government to **lead globally, work with countries, and invest more, and more equitably, in education** to ensure the promise of education for all is achieved by 2030 and that no child or young person is left behind.

¹ UNESCO, 2017. *More than One Half of Children and Adolescents are not Learning Worldwide*.

² Ibid.

Recommendations

The UK Government is seen as a champion of global education on the world stage. At the start of 2019, the decade of delivery for the SDGs and with SDG4 under review at the HLPF, being a leader in global education will be defined by the ability to unlock education for those children and young people who have been left behind by education systems around the world.

This year thousands of schools and young people across the UK will be creating paper keys depicting the inequality in education around the world. They will present these keys to their local MP to call on the UK Government to Unlock Education for Everyone. The Send My Friend to School coalition is calling on the UK Government to take the following measures.

LEAD GLOBALLY: The UK Government should reaffirm and champion the *leave no one behind* pledge in education and lead its implementation. The UK should:

- **Use international meetings and events**, including the G7, G20 and the HLPF, to press other governments and international organisations to take action to address intersecting inequalities in education.
- **Engage and collaborate with disadvantaged and marginalised children and young people and their families** at grassroots level in determining global policy. This should include engaging with development partners and networks, including organisations that represent disabled people,

and locally-based community groups. It should also include engaging with teacher unions and teacher training organisations.

- **Ensure a strong focus on equity and on mapping intersecting inequalities in the newly launched DFID, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and World Bank partnership** that will develop tools governments can use to better monitor the quality of their education systems.

WORK WITH COUNTRIES: The UK Government should work with developing country partner governments and other key stakeholders **to support inclusive, gender and disability responsive education sector plans and budgets to ensure that no child is left behind.** The UK should:

- **Promote the use of Equity Based Stepping Stone Targets methodology** to inform equitable education sector plans and the adoption of progressive funding formulae in national education budgets.
- **Undertake a mapping exercise** assessing the extent to which DFID and FCO country level programmes address intersecting inequalities.
- **Ensure that all UK-funded education programmes, including development and humanitarian programmes disaggregate data** by age, socioeconomic status, gender, immigration status, and disability. Where possible they should also be disaggregated by ethnicity and locality.

- **Build measures for evaluating the impact and effectiveness of programmes in addressing intersecting inequalities in all education programmes.** This should include specific measures to evaluate their impact in including and providing quality education to the furthest behind groups of children and young people in their context.
- **Promote the importance of holistic, cross-Government and cross-sectoral commitment and action to achieve SDG4,** particularly across ministries of education, finance, gender, health and child protection. This should also include working with civil society to capitalise on SDG17 (partnerships) to deliver SDG4.
- **Ensure that all UK programmes, policies and projects are supportive of public education systems and do not support or promote for-profit providers.**
- Support the **Inclusive Education Initiative** and advocate for additional donors to support the initiative.
- Support the **Global Partnership for Education** financially and through critical engagement with its governance and operations, and champion the use of **Equity Based Stepping Stone Targets methodology** in GPE's work with developing country partners when determining indicators for equity.
- **Encourage new mechanisms** in the education financing architecture to deliver on the *leave no one behind* pledge in education, including through adopting Equity Based Stepping Stone Targets.
- Accelerate progress for hard-to-reach adolescent girls **through continued support for the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC)**, and by strengthening the GEC's approach to addressing intersecting inequalities.

INVEST MORE AND INVEST EQUITABLY:

DFID and FCO should commit to **progressive universalism and allocation by need and impact** (prioritising the progress of the furthest behind children and young people) when making education-financing decisions. The UK should:

- Renew and increase (ensuring any increase is additional and not at the expense of other Official Development Assistance to education or other public services) the UK's commitment to **Education Cannot Wait** in 2019.
- Increase investment in **pre-primary** education.
- Ensure Official Development Assistance to **education leverages and deepens domestic financing** commitments.
- **Ensure Official Development Assistance to education is free from commercial interests**, does not support for profit providers, and ensures education is free and universally available at the point of use.



Maya*, 11 yrs old from Sa'ada, Yemen loves attending school but a main challenge she faces in attending is that there's no female teacher in her village. A lack of female teachers can negatively affect girl's retention in school. Maya wants to become a teacher so that she could encourage the girls to continue their education and to become teachers.

Credit: Mohammed Awadh / Save the Children

Introduction

Education is a universal human right. It is the key to ensuring a positive future for individual children and young people, but also for whole communities and the wider world. That's why, in 2015, world leaders promised quality education for all as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and pledged to *leave no one behind* in achieving this goal.

The goal to provide education for all by 2030 – SDG4 – is a promise that all the world's children and youth, no matter who they are or where they live, will realise their right to a free, quality, safe, and inclusive education by 2030. This commitment requires that those who are currently the furthest behind in education experience the fastest rates of progress.

Yet, despite this global commitment, **millions of children and young people remain locked out of learning:** 262 million³ children and young people do not attend school and many of those who do attend are not learning. We are not making fast enough progress and at current rates we will be more than 50 years late⁴ in delivering on SDG4, depriving generations of children and young people of their future and creating devastating, long-lasting and wide-

ranging impacts for the communities and societies in which they live.

The global education crisis is happening due to the **persistence of inequality in education systems around the world.** Access to education and learning is not a level playing field: underinvestment in education quality and inclusion has meant the furthest behind children and young people have not experienced the accelerated rates of progress they were promised. These deep inequalities in education have meant that in too many countries the gap between the furthest behind children and young people and the national average has stagnated – and, alarmingly, for some children and young people the gap is growing.

Inequitable education systems mean that children and young people are experiencing unfair treatment simply because of who they are and where they live. Having a disability, being female in a place where gender discrimination is rife, living in a rural area, experiencing poverty or being caught up in an emergency or protracted conflict or crisis are all reasons why some children and young people are locked out of learning. And many children and young people experience several of these factors at the same time,

in overlapping and reinforcing ways, increasing their exclusion.

Accelerating progress for the furthest behind in education is challenging, but it is also achievable. **This year is crucial in the journey to unlocking education for all children and young people** because in 2019 the international community will be reviewing its progress on SDG4 at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), the body mandated to follow up and review SDG progress at the global level.

This report will make the case for why we must urgently address inequality in education and why 2019 is a critical year for doing so, with a **specific focus on the UK Government.** The UK is often looked to as a global champion for education for all, and the SDG4 review in 2019 coincides with the UK undertaking its first ever Voluntary National Review (VNR) – reporting on its contribution to achieving this international commitment. This key international moment provides the perfect platform for the **UK Government to champion addressing the multiple and overlapping inequalities in education through its global leadership, work with countries and investments in education.**

³ Ibid.

⁴ UNESCO, 2016. *Global Education Monitoring Report 2016. Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all.* Online. See <https://bit.ly/2R2SiUc>

CASE STUDY:

Locked out of learning for being a girl



‘I really like to go to school so that I can become a nurse – and I want my dream to become true’

Seventeen-year-old Aquira is head girl at her community school in rural Zambia. A community school is a school in a place where there is no government provision and a school is started by local community members.

“When I was younger, my uncle took me to Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia, and his wife made me into a maid. I did the housework, cooking, and looked after their children. After some time, I was 10 years old and I contacted my mum and said Uncle wasn’t taking me to school so she said she would come and get me. But my Uncle refused. So I was living with my uncle, I was not doing anything, not going to school, not going to church because my uncle was working and they were leaving their children with me. And then I contacted my mum again and told her Uncle is not taking me to school. My uncle shouted at me and said you won’t go back there and you won’t see your parents. And then I started crying.”

After contacting her mother again, Aquira was finally picked up from her uncle’s house and taken back

to her village to begin school. “I started in Grade 1. After Grade 1, I took the exam and I passed and the teachers were proud of me because I got the highest mark in class and so they took me to the Grade 2 classroom and I took that test too and passed. After that I went into Grade 3 and continued and now I am in Grade 7.”

While Aquira excels in school and dreams of getting a good job, she believes her family suffers for her education.

“Sometimes,” she says, “I stopped coming to school because of money.” Only when her father was able to get a job to support her school fees was she able to go back to school.

Aquira faces many obstacles in her education journey, including a rural location, gender discrimination, employment and fees. Still, she is supported by her family and her community to go to school, so she can realise her dream of becoming a nurse.

The persistence of inequality in education

International progress on access to education hides a bleaker reality – one that shows we are letting down the children and young people who need us the most. Millions of children and young people are not experiencing their right to a free, quality, safe and inclusive education simply because of who they are and where they live.

For these children and young people, progress is not happening fast enough: a staggering 46 % of the furthest behind groups are off track with limited convergence, and 31 % are off track with no convergence, to meet the SDG4 target by 2030⁵.

We know education systems around the world lock out certain groups of children and young people from learning because of who they are.

The poorest children and young people are four times more likely not to go to school than the richest, and five times less likely to complete primary education⁶. The rate of progress for the world's poorest 20 % would need to more than triple to reach the SDG4 target by 2030⁷.

Twice as many girls as boys will never start school⁸. In school, girls also face increased risks of school-related gender-based violence that include psychological, physical and sexual attacks. An estimated 150 million girls have experienced sexual violence in school⁹.

Children and young people from ethnic minorities, indigenous groups and nomadic and pastoralist communities may experience fewer rights and therefore have difficulty in accessing education. When they do access education, however, they will often be taught in a language they don't understand, and a curriculum not sensitive to their local context and lifestyle, which exacerbates dropout rates and reinforces social exclusion.

Half of children and young people with disabilities in lower and middle-income countries do not go to school¹⁰, and are being increasingly left behind by global efforts to increase education opportunities for all. The gap in primary completion rates between children and young people with and without disabilities has increased over

time from a few percentage points some decades ago to 17.6 points for boys and 15.4 points for girls in the latest available census data¹¹; the disability gaps for literacy have also increased to 16.2 points for boys and 15.5 points for girls¹².

We also know that education systems lock out certain groups of children and young people from learning because of where they live.

Children and young people growing up in fragile and conflict affected areas are more than twice as likely to be out of school¹³ and refugee children are five times more likely to be out of school¹⁴. When children and young people in these contexts do access education it is often of poor quality, and diminishing numbers of these children and young people transition to higher levels of the education system.

Regionally, a disproportionate number of the world's children and young people who are not in school, or in school but not learning, live in sub-Saharan Africa. Over half of the 262

⁵ Save the Children, 2018. *Still Left Behind?* Online. See <https://bit.ly/2VZb15E>. Analysis of convergence rates is based on 80 countries where sufficient data are available, representing 76% of children and young adults aged 15–24. Groups include girls, poorest 20% and rural areas. Data: UNESCO World Inequality Database on Education.

⁶ Save the Children, 2018. *Still Left Behind?* Online. See <https://bit.ly/2VZb15E>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ UNESCO, 2016. *Leaving no one behind: How far on the way to universal primary and secondary education?* Online. See <https://bit.ly/2VtLItB>

⁹ Plan International, 2013. *A Girl's Right to Learn Without Fear*. Plan Limited: Woking

¹⁰ The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity, 2016. *The Learning Generation: investing in education for a changing world*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2FXdglM>

¹¹ Male, C., and Q. Wodon, 2017. *Disability Gaps in Educational Attainment and Literacy, The Price of Exclusion: Disability and Education Notes Series*, Washington, DC: The World Bank

¹² Ibid.

¹³ UNESCO, 2015. *Humanitarian aid for education: why it matters and why more is needed*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2REKcX1>

¹⁴ UNESCO and UNHCR, 2016. *No more excuses: provide education to all forcibly displaced people*. Online. See <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000244847>.

million children and young people out of school globally live in sub-Saharan Africa¹⁵, and at all levels of education, the region has the highest out-of-school rates¹⁶. Sub-Saharan Africa is also home to nearly three-quarters – 393 million – of children and young people living in countries affected by emergencies¹⁷. There are also significant inequalities within education in sub-Saharan Africa. The region has the lowest Gender Parity Index for enrolment at all levels of education of any region in the world¹⁸ and the unequal distribution of schools in sub-Saharan Africa is a key driver of widening income inequality in the region.¹⁹

There are also significant in-country differences in access to quality education between urban and rural areas, and urban slums. In Ethiopia, 42% of rural children and young people are out of school compared to 15% in urban areas; in Laos, 23% of rural adolescents graduated from secondary school compared to 65% of those from urban areas²⁰. In India, urban children and young people also had better access and learning outcomes than rural children, except for children living in urban slums²¹.

However, while we know certain groups of children and young people are being left behind,

inequality in education is heavily context dependent and therefore achieving equitable and inclusive education systems can only follow thorough diagnosis of the equity issues at a national level. Countries need to identify and account for children and young people who are invisible in data sets, understand the reasons why children and young people in certain contexts are not in school and learning, and then design and implement education sector plans and budgets accordingly to explicitly address the inequality in their education system.

The problem is made more complex by the fact that marginalisation and inequality in education is often a result of multiple and intersecting forces of disadvantage.

A population-based understanding of who is being left behind in education that focuses on isolated dimensions of identity is not enough. No child or young person has just one identity; while some children and young people face individual

barriers, the furthest behind often face multiple, compounding and intersecting obstacles.

Poverty has been a proven cause of educational disadvantage and is an overarching and cross-cutting factor in exclusion from school and learning²², often intersecting with, and exacerbating, other forms of disadvantage. For example, when households are living in poverty they may have to make difficult choices about which children to send to school; perceptions about the inability of children and young people with disabilities to learn and earn an income, or the cultural beliefs that devalue girls' education, often lead to choices that perpetuate discrimination and inequality in education.

Disability also intersects with gender, and girls with disabilities are often least likely to be able to access a quality education. This is as a result of exclusionary education systems, social norms and discrimination based upon both their disability and their gender, which compound and intersect and create new forms of discrimination.²³

¹⁵ Calculated based on figures in UNICEF's State of the World's Children report (2017). Raw data available at <https://bit.ly/2BTmPkO>

¹⁶ UNESCO, 2016. *Leaving no one behind: How far on the way to universal primary and secondary education?* <https://bit.ly/2nwfZKn>

¹⁷ UNICEF, 2016. *Nearly a quarter of the world's children live in conflict or disaster-stricken countries.* Online. See <https://uni.cf/2WbQ0pQ>

¹⁸ UNESCO, 2018. *Global Education Monitoring Report Gender Review: Meeting our commitments to gender equality in education.* Online. See <https://bit.ly/2G7sLFS>

¹⁹ UNDP, 2017. *Income Inequality Trends in sub-Saharan Africa: Divergence, Determinants, and Consequences.* Online. See <https://bit.ly/2x9YHoo>

²⁰ UNESCO, 2015. *Policy Paper 20 – Education 2030: Equity and Quality with a Lifelong Learning Perspective.* Online. See <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002330/233029E.pdf>

²¹ UNICEF, 2014. *Global Initiative on Out of School Children South Asia Regional Study.* Online. See <https://uni.cf/1kcxwwS>

²² UNESCO, 2015. *Education For All 2000–2015: Achievements and Challenges*

²³ Leonard Cheshire and UNGEI, 2017. *Still left behind: Pathways to inclusive education for girls with disabilities.* Online. See <https://bit.ly/2B2tG9h>



Zipporah (12 years old), attends third grade in school Turkana Central sub-county, Kenya. In Turkana 85% of children live in poverty. Poverty is a key overarching and cross cutting factor in exclusion from school and learning, often intersecting with, and exacerbating, other forms of disadvantage. Zipporah wants to become a teacher when she grows up to help her community break out of poverty.

Credit: Jordi Matas / Save the Children

Conflict also exacerbates the exclusion of children and young people with disabilities and the risks girls face: children with disabilities remain some of the most “hidden, neglected and excluded of all those displaced”²⁴ and girls in conflict affected countries are almost two and a half times more likely to be out of school²⁵.

To be effective, therefore, education policy and programming needs to address multiple forms of disadvantage simultaneously.

However, this doesn’t often happen in practice given capacity constraints and a lack of evidence on what works at scale.

Given the scale of the problem, progressive universalism must be at the core of achieving SDG4.

Progressive universalism emphasises the importance of providing quality public services for all but with particular focus, support and action for the most disadvantaged groups. In education, this means pursuing quality

education for all while prioritising the progress of the furthest behind children and young people through targeted support, early intervention and effectively allocated resources. We are vastly off track to achieve SDG4 for all children and young people. Therefore, if we intend to unlock education for all children and young people, we need to proceed with progressive universalism as a core principle in education sector planning and investment.

²⁴ Save the Children, 2018. *Time to Act: A costed plan to deliver quality education to every last refugee child*: p.57. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2Mjf2yO>

²⁵ UNESCO, 2015. *Policy Paper 21: Humanitarian aid for education: why it matters and why more is needed*. Online. See <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000233557>

CASE STUDY



Pursuing learning amidst intersecting forces of disadvantage



‘After I lost my sight I studied from aged 6 to 8 years in one of the schools in my district.’

Yogesh lost his sight when he was four years old due to malnutrition. Now, at the age of 15, he is in Grade 4 at a resource centre in the Nepalese capital of Kathmandu. Resource centres are attached to mainstream schools, where students are ideally included in mainstream classes as much as possible and only receive additional specific lessons in the resource class.

“The place where I am from is Khotang, a very remote part of Nepal, it is hilly and mountainous. In Khotang it was hard to learn – there was just one teacher who couldn’t give the time needed to all of the students. There was no separate resource classes [and] I was not regularly attending school because of the low quality. When I was in my village people used to call me names – insulting words for being blind.”

When he was 11, a relative came to know about the resource centre in Kathmandu and encouraged Yogesh to attend. “Now I live at this school,” Yogesh says. “I stay with my grandparents in the school

holidays. It takes one and a half days to get there if we go by road...A family member comes to pick me up and then we travel together. For my education it is good to be in Kathmandu, I am getting opportunities here, but in terms of family support and friends I like to be in my village. I miss my family.”

Still, Yogesh loves his school and believes it is important that he is in the city to study.

“I like to study. I like to talk with my friends. I like the playground. There is nothing I don’t like about school, I even like exams! Education is important in all aspects of our lives.”

While Yogesh faces many obstacles to education, including his rural upbringing, visual impairment, and family circumstances, the resource centre in Kathmandu has allowed him to realise his right to education. It has also helped his confidence and mental health – as he reflects, “I am not sad even if I cannot see.”

Why does inequality in education persist?

There are common barriers to progress that are overlapping and reinforcing, and happen at the household, local, national and international level.

1. Inequitable Education Systems

Too many education systems around the world perpetuate and reinforce inequality:

Education systems are neglecting the critical early years of learning.

Inequality starts before the first day of school and means learning disparities emerge early in life. What happens in the earliest years of a child's life has a huge impact, with 90% of a child's brain development happening before they reach their fifth birthday. Yet 250 million²⁶ children in low and middle-income countries are at serious risk of not reaching their developmental potential by age five, and those who start behind stay behind. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are likely to benefit the most from early education opportunities but are least likely to access them, with 85% of children in low income countries not having access to pre-primary education²⁷.

There is a particularly severe lack of early childhood development services in humanitarian and protracted crisis settings despite the high level of need in these contexts where children experience toxic stress.

A key barrier to advancing early childhood education is significant under investment: low income countries spend on average just 2.9% of the education budget on pre-primary, against a recommendation of spending 10%, and just 0.6% of the total ODA disbursed per year for education between 2012 and 2015 was spent on pre-primary education²⁸. DFID spend only 1.59% of their total basic education spent on early childhood education.²⁹

Poorly supported schools and teachers mean children and young people can be locked out of learning. Schools that serve disadvantaged communities, despite having the greatest needs, have the poorest teaching and learning environments because they are under resourced and under supported.

Teachers are the most important school-based factor in determining the quality of education, yet schools that serve the most marginalised children and young people struggle to attract, train, support, fairly compensate and retain good quality teachers.

69 million new teachers are needed across the globe to deliver SDG4, and the teacher shortage is most acute in the places where education is already difficult, with too few teachers being deployed to remote areas and to the critical early years of primary school³⁰.

A lack of female teachers can also have a significant and detrimental impact on girls' access to education – with evidence also showing that it can negatively affect girls' retention³¹.

Pupil to teacher ratio has a huge impact on a teacher's ability to teach effectively, and in many countries there is no regulation to limit class size³². This is particularly acute in conflict and crisis affected contexts. In refugee settings, for example, the average teacher to student ratio is estimated to be 1:70, with many classrooms exceeding these numbers³³.

²⁶ Black M. M, Walker S. P, Fernald L.C.H, Anderson C.T, et al., 2017, *Early childhood development coming of age: science through the life course* in The Lancet series 'Advancing Early Childhood Development: From Science to Scale'.

²⁷ Theirworld, 2017. *Bright and Early: How financing pre-primary education gives every child a fair start in life*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2Dk9CSA>

²⁸ Theirworld, 2017. *Bright and Early: How financing pre-primary education gives every child a fair start in life*

²⁹ Development Tracker. Online. See <https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/sector/1/categories/112>

³⁰ UNESCO, 2016. *The World needs almost 69 million new teachers to reach the 2030 Education Goals*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2DzkUkD>

³¹ UNESCO, 2006. *The Impact of women teachers on girls' education: advocacy brief*

³² Oxford Human Rights Hubs, 2017. *UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2CJbAco>

³³ Save the Children, 2018. *Time to Act: A costed plan to deliver quality education to every last refugee child*: p.57. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2Mjf2yO>

Training and continuing professional development for teachers is also critical for quality learning environments. However, too many teachers are not trained or supported to deliver basic literacy and numeracy and/or to meet the additional learning and psychosocial skills the most disadvantaged children and young people may have; again this is particularly acute in crisis and conflict affected contexts where many teachers lack even the minimum 10 days of training required by United Nations Human Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Too many schools also teach children and young people in a language they don't understand.

Every child and young person has a right to learn in a language that they understand, enshrined in Article 30 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Yet 40 % of the population globally does not have access to an education³⁴ in a language they speak or understand, and in Nigeria only six of 500 languages were represented among the materials collected. This severely hinders education outcomes, as children and young people tend to learn to read best in a language they speak and understand.

Schools in disadvantaged communities are also likely to **lack quality instructional materials**. There is a shortage of age- and context-appropriate children's titles to support early grade reading globally, and schools in disadvantaged communities are likely to feel this shortage most keenly. Too many schools fail to access the books available due to lack of funds or poor understanding of procurement systems, and even when books are present they are not used effectively or are often locked away so children and young people cannot access them outside of formal lessons.

Poor school infrastructure locks children and young people out from learning.

Disadvantaged communities are most likely to suffer from a shortage of schools, particularly in remote and rural locations and urban slums. Schools that serve these communities are also more likely to be of the poorest infrastructure quality, impacting both access and learning. Worldwide, 620 million children and young people lack access to single-sex, usable toilets at their school³⁵, which particularly hinders girls and female teachers from attending schools and being safe, and 31 % of schools

globally do not have clean drinking water. In conflict and crisis affected contexts, school infrastructure is often destroyed or used for military purposes. In Syria, where years of conflict has seen the proportion of children and young people out of school triple, an estimated one in four schools are "either damaged, destroyed, or were being used as shelter or for military purpose"³⁶.

2. Underinvestment in Education

When government budgets for schools are stretched, schools in areas serving disadvantaged communities are often last to receive adequate financing. Too many governments have a weak revenue base (a low tax to GDP ratio) and fail to meet the internationally recommended allocation of 20 % of national budgets to education. That budget is often spent with little sensitivity to those most in need – and the money allocated too often doesn't arrive in full. When this happens, it creates a situation where households often have to bear a significant financial burden in order to access education. Fees are still a major barrier to education for the world's poorest³⁷.

³⁴ UNESCO, 2016. *If you don't understand, how can you learn?*

³⁵ Unicef and WHO, 2018. *Drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in schools: global baseline report 2018*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2LwyYMu>

³⁶ INEE, 2016. *EiE Crisis Spotlight: Syria*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2S6h4aD>

³⁷ World Bank, 2017. *World Development Report: Governance and the Law*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2k157Pp>

CASE STUDY

The impact of early intervention in unlocking education for all



In Mozambique, close to one third of children¹ are not enrolled in primary school by age 6, and those that do enrol are not always prepared for the demands of school, with children from poor, rural backgrounds in particular showing signs of developmental delays, and only 4% of children in Mozambique accessing preschool².

Save the Children set up a pilot community-based pre-primary program in 12 communities in a rural part of Mozambique in 2006 and expanded the program to 30 new communities in 2008. The program consisted of 15-hours of instruction a week in preschools and monthly parenting sessions for parents and pregnant women.

As part of the expansion of the program, the World Bank conducted a randomised control trial – the first

randomised evaluation of a pre-primary program in a rural African setting – to test the effectiveness of preschool programs on children's enrolment in and readiness for primary school.

The results were extremely promising: children who attended the Save the Children preschools showed gains in school readiness, and were 24% more likely to enrol in primary school and more likely to start at the right age³. Once in school, they also spent more time on homework and other school-related activities⁴.

Based off these significant results, Mozambique's Ministry of Education committed to expanding this model of delivery pre-primary education to 600 communities during 2013–2015.

Four-year-old Osvaldo plays on the playground equipment at his school where he participates in Save the Children's Early Childhood Development (ECD) Program. 250 million children in low and middle-income countries are at serious risk of not reaching their developmental potential by age five, and yet 85% of children in low income countries still do not have access to pre-primary education.

Credit: Susan Warner / Save the Children

¹ The World Bank, 2013. *Is Preschool Good for Kids?* Online. See <https://bit.ly/2DxuHI3>

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

When parents have to pay, whether it is actual school fees, or hidden fees such as uniforms, books, or exams, too often the result is that they have to choose which child to send to school, perpetuating discrimination and exclusion.

While domestic resources for education are the most important, international financing will continue to play a critical role. International financing will need to increase by an annual average of \$44 billion per year till 2030³⁸. However, education's share of global Official Development Assistance (ODA) has fallen from 13% to 10% since 2002³⁹, and education only received 2.7% of sector specific humanitarian aid to education⁴⁰.

3. Discrimination

Many children and young people are locked out of learning because their identities have been culturally devalued and/or lack political representation. Discrimination can be explicit through laws and policies that exclude certain groups of children and young people from learning, such as national education systems that prevent refugee children's access to

education⁴¹, and open hostility that is intended to prevent children and young people from accessing school or stop them from learning in school. Discrimination can also be implicit through social and cultural norms – such as taboos and myths about menstruation that prevent girls from attending school⁴² or the perception that children and young people with disabilities are unable to learn.

4. Lack of accountability

Unless decision makers are held accountable for the progress of the most marginalised in education, the status quo and the learning crisis will persist. But accountability for the most marginalised children and young people in education is difficult given the fact that very few countries collect sufficiently disaggregated data to identify and track the children and young people who are falling furthest behind.

In fragile and conflict affected contexts, many children and young people go unrecorded, and if they are recorded, different organisations may be collecting education data using different tools, making comparable

analysis difficult⁴³. Urban slums are often seen as illegal settlements and the children and young people within them are therefore uncounted and not recognised in national education plans. Similarly, the recording of children and young people with disabilities is hindered by the lack of a common definition of disability, which results in data varying according to the surveys used and questions asked. Children and young people who face multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage are even more likely to be hidden and remain invisible in data management systems.

But collecting disaggregated data is also not enough – decision makers must use this data to map the ways in which forces of inequality are intersecting and overlapping and plan interventions and investment accordingly to address this. Furthermore, excluded groups and children and young people often lack a voice and representation on decision-making bodies, which can exacerbate marginalisation and widen inequality.

³⁸ Save the Children, 2017. *Financing Learning for Every Last Child*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2Wje4qH>

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ 16 of 25 UNHCR priority countries allow refugees full access to their education systems, with the rest placing limits on their access, and 81% of global stakeholders see documentation as a major barrier for refugee children and adolescents. See Save the Children, 2018. *Time to Act: A costed plan to deliver quality education to every last refugee child*: p.57. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2Mjf2yO>

⁴² 1 in 10 girls in Africa will miss school when they have their periods and in Rwanda many girls miss up to 50 days of school or work every year because of their periods. See Action Aid, 'Periods and girls' education' online at <https://bit.ly/2CL2nxV>

⁴³ Save the Children, 2018. *Time to Act: A costed plan to deliver quality education to every last refugee child*: p.57. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2Mjf2yO>

CASE STUDY

Discrimination Locks Rohingya Children Out of Learning



In Myanmar, the Rohingya face violence and discrimination, and often cannot access quality education and other public services.¹ Following conflict in August 2017, over 700,000 people have been forced to flee their homes and take shelter, including in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh. 55% of these refugees are children.

As of late November 2018, 33% of refugee children aged three–14 and 96% of young people aged 15 to 24 had no access to education. While over 5,000 teachers have been trained in foundational skills, there remains a lack of qualified, and particularly female, teachers.² This is in part due to problems of recruitment and retention caused by a lack of training resources and professional development opportunities.

Those who do access education do not participate in the formal Bangladeshi system. Instead, these children's schooling is facilitated through learning centres, provided by international organisations. These centres struggle to achieve quality learning outcomes for all given capacity and resource constraints, and as they only provide two hours

of teaching per day. Establishment of learning centres is itself made problematic by a complicated authorisation process and long delays in approvals from the Bangladeshi Government. The situation is compounded for children and young people with additional support needs, such as children and young people with disabilities, who have largely been forgotten in the education response.

The United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) notes that "many refugees have expressed anxiety about their future, explaining that while they wish to return, they would not agree to do so until questions of citizenship, legal rights and access to services, justice and restitution are addressed."³ This uncertainty adds to the compounding barriers not just to education, but to daily life, for the Rohingya community. Within the camps, there is a lack of formal, if any, education for thousands of children and young people; risks of violence and sexual abuse for women and girls;⁴ and insecurity associated with a makeshift camp – including the major threat of flooding and catastrophic cyclones.

Caption: Ayesha* (12) holds up her work at the Save the Children learning centre at Lambashia Camp, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Ayesha and her family fled Myanmar to Bangladesh due to the persecution of the Rohingya community. Following conflict in August 2017, over 700,000 people have been forced to flee their homes – 55% of these refugees are children – and 33% of refugee children aged three–14 and 96% of young people aged 15 to 24 had no access to education as of November 2018.

Credit: GMB Akash / Save the Children

¹ Kiragu, E., Li Rosi, A., Morris, T., 2011. States of denial: A review of UNHCR's response to the protracted situation of stateless Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2HsbDyW>

² Humanitarian Response, 2018. 'EDUCATION SECTOR- Dashboard on 26 November, 2018.' Online. <https://bit.ly/2sytKsn>

³ Ibid

⁴ UNICEF, 2018. 'When going to the bathroom takes courage.' Online. See <https://uni.cf/2MkbVX4>

Why does addressing inequality in education matter?

Not addressing inequality in education is a violation of human rights and will have devastating, long-lasting and wide-ranging consequences for children and young people, communities and societies.

Education is a human right, enshrined in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. But education is more than a human right; educated children and young people are more likely to grow up healthy, safe and empowered to determine the course of their life and future. Education also promotes gender equality and reduces child marriage, and educated parents are more likely to raise healthy children and young people who go to school, breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty and exclusion.

Marginalisation and inequality in education is not only costly to individual children and their families, but to society as a whole.

Unless the learning crisis is addressed, more than 750 million young people in low and middle-income countries will not have the skills to participate in tomorrow's economy, and 1.5 billion adults in 2030 will have no education beyond primary school⁴⁴. If all children and young people left school being able to read we would see a 12% reduction in world poverty⁴⁵.

The economic costs are far from the only concern – education has a key role in preventing conflict, creating stable societies and in protecting children and young people in the short and long term during and after conflict and emergencies.

In conflict and crisis affected contexts, the case for education is amplified. In the short term, quality education helps to support children's development and wellbeing at a time when they are at their most vulnerable by providing physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection. In the long term, quality education benefits the societies in which forcibly displaced children and young people have sought safety, and plays a vital role in securing economic recovery, social stability and peace in fragile contexts.

Neglecting to address inequality and discrimination in education can be key in fuelling conflict: high levels of educational inequality between groups can double the risk of violent conflict⁴⁶. Conversely, educated populations play a key role in creating stable societies with populations who can demand their rights and understand their responsibilities. In the longer term, education can therefore help prevent conflict and crisis and make a society more resilient.

⁴⁴ The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity, 2016. *The Learning Generation: investing in education for a changing world*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2FXdglM>

⁴⁵ UNESCO, 2013. *Global Education Monitoring Report: Teaching and learning: Achieving quality for all*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2Tfn51Y>

⁴⁶ Save the Children, 2016. *Every Last Child: the children the world chooses to forget*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/23VEcsl>



Nur*, 11, takes part in activities at Save the Children's Child Friendly Space, in a Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh. Nur*, who has been deaf since birth, became separated from his parents after their village was attacked in Myanmar. Education has a key role in preventing conflict and providing protection for children in the short and long term during emergencies. But children with disabilities often remain the most hidden and excluded of all those displaced, and therefore often cannot access quality learning environments.

Credit: Jonathan Hyams / Save the Children

The international response and the UK's contribution to unlocking education for everyone

Bold commitments have been made by world leaders to *leave no child behind* in education. Sustainable Development Goal 4 commits world leaders to ensuring free, inclusive and quality education for all and to promoting lifelong learning. The goal includes specific targets on free, equitable, quality and safe education for all, as well as gender equality and inclusion in education and learning environments that are child, disability and gender sensitive.

The international community has made some headway towards the *leave no one behind* agenda in education. Recent global commitments demonstrate the political will to unlock education for some of the furthest behind groups of children and young people, including: the New York Declaration (2016), and the Global Compact on Refugees (2018) that includes commitments by stakeholders to include refugee children and young people into national education systems; the G7 Charlevoix Declaration on Quality Education for Girls, Adolescent Girls and Women in Developing Countries (2018); and inclusive education commitments generated during the Global Disability Summit (2018).

However, as this report documents, the world is still way off track in unlocking education for all children and young people. These global events and commitments illustrate positive momentum towards achieving free, safe, quality education for all, but real progress has been inadequate due to an inability to turn commitments into actionable plans at scale and a failure to address intersecting disadvantage effectively.

What is the UK's contribution to addressing inequality in education?

Department for International Development (DFID) Education Policy 'Get Children Learning'

In February 2018, DFID released its new education policy, *Get Children Learning* (GCL). The policy highlights three priority areas for the Department:

1. invest in good teaching,
2. back system reform which delivers results in the classroom, and
3. step up targeted support for the most marginalised: children and young people with disabilities, children affected by crises, and hard-to-reach girls⁴⁷.

Where GCL engages most effectively with compounding factors of marginalisation is arguably in its approach to the hardest-to-reach girls. The Department commits to "maintain strong leadership" for "girls with disabilities and those affected by crises", as well as "poor rural girls, pregnant girls and those vulnerable to early marriage"⁴⁸. The recognition that girls do not face barriers to education only because they are girls, but also due to other intersecting factors is critical to achieving education for the hardest-to-reach girls.

DFID should therefore continue and strengthen the efforts begun in GCL to address intersectional marginalisation across intersecting forces of disadvantage, and should ensure that this approach is streamlined through its country-level policies and all Departmental programmes.

However, GCL's inclusion of public-private partnerships (PPPs) that support low-fee private schools (LFPS)⁴⁹ is problematic in relation to unlocking education for all. The ability of LFPS and PPPs to truly deliver on equity is contentious, as recognised in 2017 by the International Development Committee in its report DFID's work on education: *Leaving no one behind?*⁵⁰.

⁴⁷ Department for International Development, 2018. *DFID Education Policy: Get Children Learning*. [service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685536/DFID-Education-Policy-2018a.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685536/DFID-Education-Policy-2018a.pdf).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ House of Commons International Development Committee, 2017. *DFID's work on education: Leaving no one behind?* Online. See <https://bit.ly/2E3bXgz>.

While LFPS within PPP models claim to reach the the most marginalised and disadvantaged children and young people and provide a quality education at an affordable price, this has not been proven in the research. For example, a 2018 review of the Punjab Education Foundation’s PPP initiative found that “very few children and young people in the PPP schools were previously out-of-school”, “very few children and young people with disabilities were accessing the schools in the sample”, and “non-fee expenditures are a significant financial barrier to access for the poorest children and young people”⁵¹.

Girls’ Education

The UK has long been a global leader on girls’ education. Since 2012, its Girls’ Education Challenge programme has been enabling girls to access a quality education. Throughout the last year, the UK Government has extended these efforts beyond its development work and into diplomacy through its cross-Government campaign to ensure all girls receive 12 years of quality education.

Girls’ Education Challenge

The Girls’ Education Challenge (GEC) was launched by the UK in 2012 as a 12-year commitment to improve

learning opportunities and outcomes for the girls around the world. The GEC operates in 15 countries, including several fragile and conflict-affected states and investments have so far reached 2.25 million girls. The GEC also aims to fill global evidence gaps regarding factors that hinder the learning of disadvantaged girls.

However, as the GEC is intended to reach the poorest and most marginalised girls with education, it can do more to address intersecting forces of disadvantage to make progress for the hardest to reach girls. Historically, for example, the GEC has not achieved impact for girls with disabilities at scale, though this is starting to improve.

Leave No Girl Behind campaign

In 2018, the UK Government showed further leadership through the establishment of its cross-Government Leave No Girl Behind campaign. The campaign has sought to complement DFID’s investments in girls’ education by raising the importance of the issue through the diplomatic work of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

So far, it has led or contributed to the success of several important multilateral commitments that have

placed girls’ education at the top of the global agenda. For example:

- The Commonwealth Heads of Government Communique
- G7 Charlevoix Declaration on Quality Education for Girls, Adolescent Girls and Women in Developing Countries
- Statement at the 38th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council
- High-Level Side Event in the margins of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly

The campaign has established the Platform for Girls’ Education. The body is made up of influential global figures and aims to help secure 12 years of quality education for girls across the world. The Platform, which is co-chaired by the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom and the Kenyan Education Minister, will work together during the UK’s 2018–2020 term as Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth. It will present a report before the next meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government to be hosted by Rwanda in 2020, showing progress made and what will need to be done to meet the 2030 goal.

⁵¹ Afridi, M., 2018. *Equity and Quality in an Education Public-Private Partnership: A Study of the World Bank-supported PPP in Punjab, Pakistan*. Online. See <https://bit.ly/2WjFxiP>.

EQUITY BASED STEPPING STONE TARGETS

Equity-based stepping stone targets are intermediate targets set at regular intervals between now and 2030 (either 2022, or 2020 & 2025) that plot a trajectory for reaching SDG4. At the national level these can be broken down to show the different trajectories needed by particular groups

Brief Guide to Setting EBSST

Step 1. Use household survey or other disaggregated data to identify the furthest behind groups, including by age, gender, urban/ rural, economic groups, ethnicity, caste and regions. Data should be nationally representative and include at least two different points in time.

Step 2. Calculate the rate of progress achieved so far by these groups, and the rate of progress that they will need to achieve to meet SDG4 target.

Step 3. Set stepping stone targets at interim dates to monitor whether the furthest behind groups are on track to meet the target. Ideally, progress should be monitored on an annual basis but, where this is not possible, two stepping stone targets could be set

Which groups should EBSST be set for?

Stepping stone targets should be set for the furthest behind groups that have been identified through an open and participatory LNOB assessment process. Criteria for selecting

particular groups for stepping stone targets might include:

- Where inequalities between the most advanced and furthest behind groups are largest.
- Where most groups are clustered near the national average, but one or more groups lag notably behind.
- Where particular disadvantaged groups contain a large population.
- Where groups have seen very little progress over time, meaning gaps are likely to widen.

Data Challenges

Setting EBSST requires countries to have sufficiently robust disaggregated data that are comparable over time. Even for countries that have regular household surveys, the number of ethnic groups included or regional boundaries can change over time. Where there are lots of regional or ethnic groups covered by the survey, sample sizes may be too small to draw statistically significant conclusions. Data for some groups are often lacking entirely. Such data issues should be considered in advance of setting the stepping stone targets, and addressed systematically.

Inclusive Education Initiative and education commitments at the Global Disability Summit

DFID's new Disability Strategy, published in December 2018, has inclusive education as one of four priority areas and commits DFID to ensuring that all of its education programmes are disability inclusive by 2023. It sets out that DFID will work to ensure that all children with disabilities, including those who are currently out of school, can access an education that enables them to learn and thrive. It commits to scaling up DFID's work on disability inclusive education and supporting countries to deliver comprehensive, equitable interventions.

For DFID's ambition on inclusive education to become a reality, the ambitious statements around inclusive education set out in DFID's Disability Strategy must now be put into practice. This must go beyond ensuring that a proportion of children and young people reached in a programme have disabilities and ensure that systems are being designed in a way that promotes inclusive and equitable education.

The Global Disability Summit, hosted by the UK Government, in July 2018 was an opportunity for governments and other development actors to come together and make clear commitments to disability inclusion. The Summit generated a number of commitments on inclusive education including from UNICEF, which will support an additional 30 million children and young people with disabilities to gain a high quality education.

For DFID, the Summit was a public commitment to inclusive education, building upon its commitments set out in GCL. At the Summit, DFID announced that it will set up, fund and lead the new Inclusive Education Initiative (IEI), which is hugely welcomed. The IEI will be hosted by the World Bank, and will collaborate and partner with stakeholders such as UNICEF, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), civil society, and academia. It should also work with Education International and in-country education unions.

This new multi-donor partnership will "pool expertise to support developing countries to realise the promise of truly inclusive schools, teaching and learning. It will support countries to collect data, integrate disability into education sector plans, build capacity to rollout reforms and train teachers".

DFID's financial commitment to the IEI must be in line with its stated ambition on disability, and be sufficient to catalyse the progress that is needed to this hugely under resourced area. DFID must take steps to expand the number of donors involved and broaden the funding base for the initiative. It is also crucial to ensure that the most marginalised children and young people are not left behind in this initiative, and that even the hardest to reach children and young people can benefit. For example, if disability inclusion is truly incorporated into education sector plans, which is one of the target areas of the initiative, we have to ensure that this takes account of children and young people with all types of impairments, including complex needs,

and those who experience multiple forms of discrimination.

The UK's financial support for unlocking education for all

As noted in this report, underinvestment in education is a key barrier to realising SDG4 for all children and young people. We urgently need more, and more equitable, financing for education. The UK has the opportunity to shape the financing agenda for education for all given its standing as one of the largest donors to global education and its relationship with key global funds.

Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

GPE – the world's only multilateral organisation dedicated solely to strengthening education in poor countries – is a key part of the education financing architecture and critical to achieving SDG4. One of the most significant aspects of GPE's funding model for equity is its use of a variable component in its grants: the disbursement of the final 30% of a GPE grant to a developing country partner is contingent on demonstrable progress against indicators in three categories: efficiency, learning outcomes and, crucially for the leave no one behind agenda, equity.

The UK's support of GPE, therefore, is hugely important and valued. The UK is not only a key donor to the GPE, but has also utilised DFID's standards on transparency and accountability to push for reforms in the Partnership that have resulted in improved results and more coherent monitoring and evaluation strategies.



UK aid supports Sammy, ten, to read with his friends at a reading club in Gicumbi district, Rwanda. Without intervention, 387 million children of primary school age will not achieve minimum proficiency levels in reading, two-thirds of whom - 262 million - are in school. Sammy's reading club is a part of the Advancing the Right to Read (ARR) programme. It is a multi-dimensional programme focused on improving literacy and early childhood development, and is in part funded by DfID and delivered with local partners and the Rwandan government.

Credit: Jonathan Hyams / Save the Children

However, the UK can do more. While the UK maintained its position as the largest bilateral donor to GPE with a pledge of £225 million during the fund's last replenishment in February 2018, an almost 50% increase in comparison to the current annual contribution, this commitment fell short of the ambition necessary to tackle the growing crisis in education and the ask from civil society of approximately £360 million.

Furthermore, given the UK's historic success in securing positive reform in GPE's model, the UK is well placed to advance further reform and improvement within the partnership to unlock education for all children and young people. In particular, the UK could champion **Equity Based Stepping Stones Targets (EBSST)** as a methodology that GPE's developing country partners (DCPs) should use to develop their targets on equity. Too often, DCP's targets on equity are not effective enough at incentivising action for the furthest behind children and young people due to inadequate analysis of inequality in the country's national education systems. Therefore, by requiring DCPs to use EBSST, and supporting DCPs to use this methodology effectively, GPE's variable tranche of the grant will be better placed to support national level progress on equity.

Education Cannot Wait (ECW)

The UK was a key founding member of ECW, the world's first global fund dedicated to education in emergencies and protracted crises. ECW has reached more than 765,000 children

and youth with quality education – of which 364,000 are girls – in 19 crisis-affected countries since its start. The Fund is on track to reach over one million children and young people by the end of 2018.

The UK is one of the biggest donors to ECW and its continued support of the fund is crucial. The UK's current investment in ECW finishes in March 2019, and the UK is now reviewing its support of the fund and preparing its business case for the next investment period.

As this report notes, children and young people in emergencies and protracted crises are some of the furthest behind in education. The UK can therefore show action on the *leave no one behind* agenda in education by renewing and increasing its commitment to ECW, replenishing both the overall pooled fund and supporting the financing of country specific multi year resilience plans to ensure that ECW is reaching the most marginalised children.

New Education Financing Mechanisms and Investments

There are two new financing mechanisms proposed to join the education financing architecture: the International Financing Facility for Education (IFFEd) and the Education Outcomes Fund (EOF). The UK should define its position in relation to new funds and investment opportunities through the principle of progressive universalism, evaluating the impact on the furthest behind, and the understanding that free,

public education systems are the most effective way to advance equity.

A key way that the principle of progressive universalism can be acted upon is through ensuring that any new financing mechanisms adopted into the education financing architecture require Equity Based Stepping Stone Targets to be a core requirement in any investment case to apply for funding, accountability mechanisms in place to honour these targets and transparency that allows public scrutiny of funding and policy implementation.

Furthermore, with the growing trend of privatisation of education, it is important to ensure any new mechanisms in the financing architecture are free from commercial interests and do not support for-profit providers that come at a cost to the end user. These undermine the right to a free, quality, safe and inclusive education and do not help enable equitable education systems.

Pre-primary education

DFID spend only 1.59% of their total basic education spend on early childhood education.⁵² As this report has argued, underinvestment in early childhood education is a key reason why inequality persists in education. Therefore, whilst DFID's research led approach on early years education is valid and valuable⁵³, the UK must significantly increase its financial investment in quality, inclusive pre-primary education for all children and young people, including the most marginalised.

⁵² Development Tracker. Online. See <https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/sector/1/categories/112>

⁵³ Department for International Development, 2018. *Get Children Learning*

Recommendations

The UK Government is seen as a champion of global education on the world stage. At the start of 2019, the decade of delivery for the SDGs and with SDG4 under review at the HLPF, being a leader in global education will be defined by the ability to unlock education for those children who have been left behind by education systems around the world.

This year thousands of schools and young people across the UK will be creating paper keys depicting the inequality in education around the world. They will present these keys to their local MP to call on the UK Government to Unlock Education for Everyone. The Send My Friend to School coalition is calling on the UK Government to take the following measures.

LEAD GLOBALLY: The UK Government should reaffirm and champion the *leave no one behind* pledge in education and lead its implementation. The UK should:

- **Use international meetings and events**, including the G7, G20 and the HLPF, to press other governments and international organisations to take action to address intersecting inequalities in education.
- **Engage and collaborate with disadvantaged and marginalised children and their families** at grass-roots level in determining global policy. This should include engaging with development partners and networks, including organisations that represent disabled people, and locally-based

community groups. It should also include engaging with teacher unions and teacher training organisations.

- **Ensure a strong focus on equity and on mapping intersecting inequalities in the newly launched DFID, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and World Bank partnership** that will develop tools governments can use to better monitor the quality of their education systems.

WORK WITH COUNTRIES: The UK Government should work with developing country partner governments and other key stakeholders **to support inclusive, gender and disability responsive education sector plans and budgets to ensure that no child is left behind.** The UK should:

- **Promote the use of Equity Based Stepping Stone Targets methodology** to inform equitable education sector plans and the adoption of progressive funding formulae in national education budgets.
- **Undertake a mapping exercise** assessing the extent to which DFID and FCO country level programmes address intersecting inequalities.
- **Ensure that all UK-funded education programmes, including development and humanitarian programmes disaggregate data** by age, socioeconomic status, gender, immigration status, and disability. Where possible they should also be disaggregated by ethnicity and locality.

- **Build measures for evaluating the impact and effectiveness of programmes in addressing intersecting inequalities in all education programmes.** This should include specific measures to evaluate their impact in including and providing quality education to the furthest behind groups of children in their context.
- **Promote the importance of holistic, cross-Government and cross-sectoral commitment and action to achieve SDG4,** particularly across ministries of education, finance, gender, health and child protection. This should also include working with civil society to capitalise on SDG17 (partnerships) to deliver SDG4.
- **Ensure that all UK programmes, policies and projects are supportive of public education systems and do not support or promote for-profit providers.**
- Support the **Inclusive Education Initiative** and advocate for additional donors to support the initiative.
- Support the **Global Partnership for Education** financially and through critical engagement with its governance and operations, and champion the use of **Equity Based Stepping Stone Targets methodology** in GPE's work with developing country partners when determining indicators for equity.
- **Encourage new mechanisms** in the education financing architecture to deliver on the *leave no one behind* pledge in education, including through adopting Equity Based Stepping Stone Targets.
- Accelerate progress for hard-to-reach adolescent girls **through continued support for the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC), and by strengthening the GEC's** approach to addressing intersecting inequalities.

INVEST MORE AND INVEST EQUITABLY:

DFID and FCO should commit to **progressive universalism and allocation by need and impact** (prioritising the progress of the furthest behind children) when making education-financing decisions. The UK should:

- Renew and increase (ensuring any increase is additional and not at the expense of other Official Development Assistance to education or other public services) the UK's commitment to **Education Cannot Wait** in 2019.
- Increase investment in **pre-primary** education.
- Ensure Official Development Assistance to **education leverages and deepens domestic financing** commitments.
- **Ensure Official Development Assistance to education is free from commercial interests,** does not support for profit providers, and ensures education is free and universally available at the point of use.



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- 3) 22 - twenty two
- 4) 44 -



Irine* attends school in her village in Northwestern Kenya. Irine is a ten year old girl from the Turkana ethnic community; Turkana are traditionally pastoralists but her father has decided to stay in one place so that his children can access school. The nomadic lifestyle often makes it difficult for Turkana children to regularly attend school, and when they do they access education they are often taught in a language they don't understand and a curriculum that is not sensitive to their local context and lifestyle.

Credit: Allan Gichigi / Save the Children



Send My Friend to School is a UK civil society coalition of international development NGOs, teachers unions and charities. The campaign undertakes a range of activities designed to increase community awareness of the state of education internationally and generate the political will necessary to ensure the UK plays an active and effective part in efforts to secure education for all. Send My Friend to School is the UK coalition of the Global Campaign for Education movement which is present in over 80 countries around the world, and aligns its work with the organisation's mission and aims.

The Campaign's UK members are:

CAFOD	Plan International UK
Christian Aid	RESULTS UK
Deaf Child Worldwide	Save the Children
Humanity & Inclusion UK	Sense International
Leonard Cheshire	Sightsavers
NASUWT - The Teachers' Union	Steve Sinnott Foundation
National Education Union	University and College Union
Oxfam GB	VSO

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For more information, please contact Tisha Verma (t.verma@savethechildren.org.uk), Anja Nielsen (anja.nielsen@neu.org.uk) and Ema Jackson (ema.jackson@sendmyfriend.org).

Front cover photo:

Fleur* attends class in Save the Children's partner, St. John Paul II Home for Physical impairment, Lokichar, Kenya. Half of children with disabilities in lower and middle-income countries do not go to school, and both the gaps in primary completion rates and literacy for between children with and without disabilities has grown over time. Credit: Jonathan Hyams / Save the Children

* All children's names have been changed to protect their identity