2010 Education for All Global Monitoring Report - Reaching the marginalized

Education "should never be an accident of circumstance." - Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, launched Reaching the marginalized, the 2010 Education for All Global Monitoring Report, at UN headquarters in New York on 19 January, 2010.

Main themes of the Report

The daily experiences of slum dwellers in Kenya, ethnic minority children in Viet Nam and Roma children in Hungary may appear poles apart. What they have in common are restricted opportunities to realize their hopes and build a better future through education.

A decade has passed since world leaders adopted the Education for All goals. Yet millions of children are still missing out on their right to education. The Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010 – which uses an innovative new tool to identify those who are ‘education poor’ – argues that the failure to reach these excluded children is holding back overall progress on education.

The Report examines why these children are being left behind. Discrimination and inequalities based on poverty, gender, location, ethnicity, disability and language play a key role – and often they combine to reinforce disadvantage. Within education and beyond, governments must adopt targeted policies and practices that combat exclusion. The Report identifies three broad sets of policies that can combat marginalization. These policies can be thought of as the three points of an inclusive education triangle: access and affordability, the learning environment, and entitlements and opportunities.

Facts and figures

• The number of children out of school has dropped by 33 million worldwide since 1999. South and West Asia more than halved the number of children out of school – a reduction of 21 million.
• The share of girls out of school has declined from 58% to 54%, and the gender gap in primary education is narrowing in many countries.
• Malnutrition affects around 175 million young children each year and is a health and education emergency.
• There were 72 million children out of school in 2007. Business as usual would leave 56 million children out of school in 2015.
• Literacy remains among the most neglected of all education goals, with about 759 million adults lacking literacy skills today. Two-thirds are women.
• Millions of children are leaving school without having acquired basic skills. In some countries in sub-Saharan Africa, young adults with five years of education had a 40% probability of being illiterate.
• In twenty-two countries, 30% or more of young adults have fewer than four years of education, and this rises to 50% or more in eleven sub-Saharan African countries.
• Aid to education has been rising, but commitments have recently stagnated. Aid commitments to basic education fell by 22% to US$4.3 billion in 2007.
• The Report estimates the financing gap to meet the EFA goals in low-income countries at US$16 billion annually.
Education systems in many of the world's poorest countries are now experiencing the aftershock of the global economic downturn. After a decade of advances, progress towards the 2015 education goals may stall, or even be thrown into reverse. The Report argues that the crisis could create a lost generation of children in the world's poorest countries, whose life chances will have been damaged by a failure to protect their right to education. Presenting a new estimate of the global cost of reaching the Education for All goals by 2015, it challenges the international community to avert that danger.

About the Report

The EFA Global Monitoring Report is researched and prepared each year by an independent team hosted by UNESCO. It assesses global progress towards the six Education for All goals to which over 160 countries committed themselves in 2000.

The English version of the Report and the Summary in the six UN languages and Regional Overviews are now available in paper or electronic format. Other language versions of the Report will be available soon.

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