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4 QUALITY EDUCATION



QUALITY EDUCATION: WHY IT MATTERS

What is the goal here?

Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.

Why does education matter?

Education enables upward socioeconomic mobility and is a key to escaping poverty. Education is also essential to achieving many other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

When people are able to get quality education

they can break from the cycle of poverty. Education helps to reduce inequalities and to reach gender equality. In fact, one extra year of education is associated with a reduction of the Gini coefficient by 1.4 percentage points.

Education empowers people everywhere to live more healthy and sustainable lives. Education is also crucial to fostering tolerance between people and contributes to more peaceful societies.

262 million children and adolescents remain out of school.
617 million lack minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics

How much progress have we made so far?

Despite years of steady growth in enrolment rates, non-proficiency rates remain disturbingly high. Globally, an estimated 617 million children and adolescents of primary and lower secondary school age—more than 55 per cent of the global total—lacked minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics in 2015. Non-proficiency rates are highest in sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia, where more than 80 per cent of children of primary and lower secondary school age were not proficient in reading.

Where are people struggling the most to have access to education?

Adequate infrastructure and teacher training play a critical role in the quality of education. Sub-Saharan Africa faces the biggest challenges in providing schools with basic resources. The situation is extreme at the primary and lower secondary levels, where less

than one half of schools in sub-Saharan Africa have access to drinking water, electricity, computers and the Internet.

Another important step towards the goal of good quality education for all is getting enough trained teachers into classrooms. Here again, sub-Saharan Africa lags behind.

Are there groups that have a more difficult access to education?

Yes, women and girls are one of these groups. About one-third of countries in the developing regions have not achieved gender parity in primary education.

In sub-Saharan Africa, Oceania and Western Asia, girls still face barriers to entering both primary and secondary school. These disadvantages in education also translate into lack

of access to skills and limited opportunities in the labour market for young women.

What can we do?

Ask our governments to place education as a priority in both policy and practice. Lobby our governments to make firm commitments to provide free primary school education to all, including vulnerable or marginalized groups.

Encourage the private sector to invest resources in the development of educational tools and facilities. Urge NGOs to partner with youth and other groups to foster the importance of education within local communities.

To find out more about Goal #4 and other Sustainable Development Goals, visit:

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS