

Education

DECEMBER 08

Millennium Development Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education.

Target 3: Ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Progress: 89% of children of official primary school age are enrolled in primary education but pace is too slow to achieve to ensure that, globally, children will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015.

Are we on track to meet the target?

		Africa		Asia				Latin America & Caribbean	Commonwealth of Independent States	
		Northern	Sub-Saharan	Eastern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western		Europe	Asia
Progress toward achieving Universal Primary Education		high enrolment	low enrolment	high enrolment	high enrolment	high enrolment	moderate enrolment	high enrolment	high enrolment	high enrolment
Net enrolment ratio in primary education (%)	1991	83	54	98	96	72	80	87	91	88
	2006	95	71	94	95	90	88	96	93	94

Line 1 (progress) - The words describe current levels. The colours show the trend towards meeting the 2015 target.

Key: **Dark Green** = target met. **Light Green** = almost met, or on target. **Orange** = some/negligible progress, but insufficient to meet target. **Red** = no change or negative progress.

Line 2 (level) - Net enrolment ratio in primary education (percentage) – **Key:** Please refer to map key below.

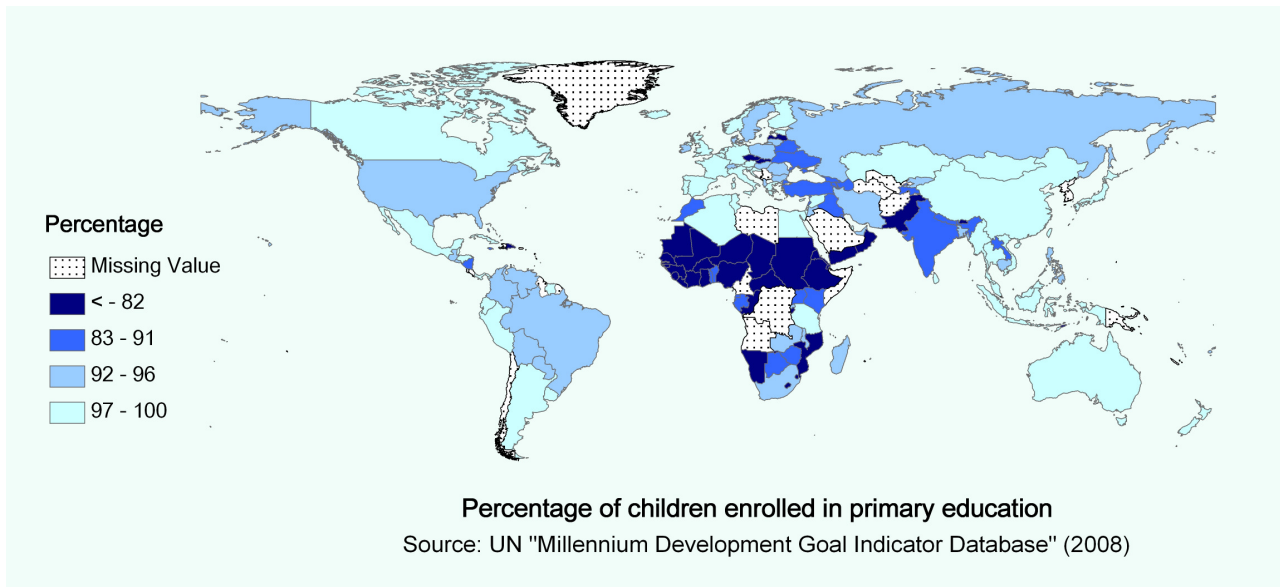
Source: United Nations Statistics Division - UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2008

Progress

- The global **primary net enrolment ratio** (NER) increased from 84% in 1999 to 89% in 2006.²
- 75 million primary school age children remain **out of school**. Seven out of ten of these children live in sub-Saharan Africa or South and West Asia.²
- Recent progress in getting children into school has benefited girls in particular, with 95 girls in school for every 100 boys in 2006 compared with 92 in 1999. ²Significant gender disparities remain in West Asia, Oceania and sub-Saharan Africa, where respectively 91, 89 and 89 girls are enrolled in primary school for every 100 boys.⁴

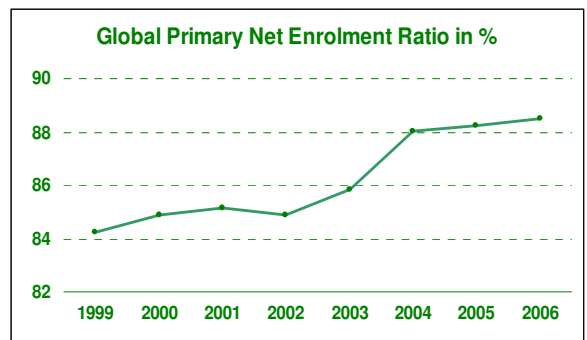
Key messages

- Education is a **basic human right** and should be made available to everyone.
- **Pace is too slow** to achieve the MDG target of ensuring that, globally, children will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015.
- The **quality of schooling and levels of learning achievement** remain major issues everywhere and can have a crucial impact on the frequency and duration of school attendance.
- Educating girls and women has particular **benefits for the health and prosperity** of developing countries. For example in Africa, children of mothers who received five years of primary education are 40 per cent more likely to live beyond age five.
- An increasing proportion of the children remaining out of school are classified as **'hard to reach'** and interventions to reach them will be more costly and challenging.



Facts and figures

- Globally, 609 million primary aged children are enrolled in school. But there are still around 75 million primary aged children who are not enrolled in school.²
- **Girls' net enrolment ratio** (NER) in primary school (as a proportion of boys' NER) has improved from a global average of 88% in 1991 to 97% in 2006.²
- Abolishing primary **school user fees** in Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya has helped more than one million extra children to enrol in primary school, in each country.^{3p.35}
- More than **18 million extra teachers** will be needed over the next decade to provide every child with a quality primary education.⁶
- It is estimated that at least **US\$9 billion aid** is needed annually to achieve the UPE and gender goals alone.⁷



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics

Challenges and Solutions

There is a need for significantly increased investment to improve access to all levels of schooling. Direct aid commitments for basic education increased from US\$2.7 billion in 2000 to US\$3.7 billion in 2005 and peaked in 2004 at US\$5.1 billion.¹ Additional financial investment needs to be within the framework of an overall National Development Strategy, such as a Poverty Reduction Strategy, and tied to a coherent education sector wide approach. Non-state providers of education, including religious organisations and the private sector, can make an important contribution.

Even with additional finance there are still nine main challenges that are hampering access to education:

Fragile States

Over half of primary aged children not in school live in Fragile States² where the government is either unwilling or unable to deliver services. Many of these states are conflict affected.

Bangladesh

More girls than ever before have access to education in Bangladesh. DFID is contributing £100 million to a national primary education programme which will improve the quality of education for over 17 million children and tackle the widespread problem of children dropping out of school early. The government's plan for economic growth gives priority to promoting gender equality in education.

Post-primary education

Greater investment is also needed in secondary, tertiary and vocational education, lifelong learning and skills; in order to increase the ability of governments and the private sector to deliver basic services and to promote sustainable growth.

Gender disparities

In many countries, girls are still given fewer opportunities than boys to complete primary school and enrol in secondary schools.

HIV / Aids

The prevalence of HIV and AIDS, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, reduces the numbers of experienced teachers and forcing children, especially girls, to drop out of school to care for sick family members. Education plays a significant role in the prevention of HIV.

Cost

Costs have a significant impact on whether and which children are educated. Costs can include: tuition fees, PTA fees, uniforms, text books, teachers' fees, school construction and transportation.

Quality

The education received is often of a poor quality and fails to give pupils the skills and knowledge they need to help lift them and their society out of poverty. Retention and completion rates often reflect the state of learning achievement.

Drop-out rates

Getting children to school is one thing, keeping them there is quite another. In sub-Saharan Africa, less than two thirds of pupils reach the last grade in the majority of countries.

Exclusion / Access

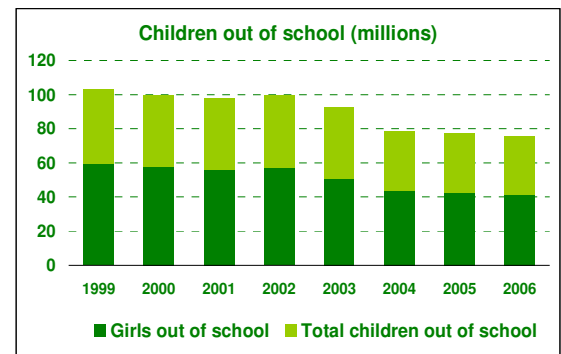
All children, including those with disabilities or living in difficult circumstances, must have equal access to a good quality basic education.

Climate change

Climate change has the potential to erode progress in universal primary education. Extreme weather events will damage education infrastructure and disrupt learning. Reconstruction efforts will mean that education funding is focused on rebuilding to maintain base levels of provision rather than investing overall systems improvement. In the longer term climate change could result in deterioration in family income impacting on school enrolment and retention. Education has an important role in preparing new generations for the emerging economic and environmental challenges.

Afghanistan

DFID is providing support for the education sector through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), which meets the recurrent costs of the salaries of public servants which include the cost of 100,000 teachers. In 2007/08, DFID contributed £55 million to the ARTF and in 2008/09 DFID contributed £60 million. This has increased access to education for the Afghan population since 2001. Six million children are now in schools, around one third of whom are girls (as opposed to none in 2001).



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics

Nigeria

DFID has supported the Nigerian Government to spend debt relief gains on education. This has so far led to the training of 145,000 new teachers and the re-training of 45,000 existing teachers. DFID support to girls' education in Northern Nigeria has increased overall attendance (of both girls and boys) by 40%. DFID funded technical assistance is helping the Federal and State Governments to design and implement 10-year education plans, by strengthening the Education Information Management Systems and reforming inspection services.

What the UK government is doing to help

DFID is providing bilateral support to education programmes in over 30 developing countries, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia.

The UK announced in April 2006 that it will increase its support for education to at least £8.5 billion over the next ten years. This will increase our spending to £1 billion a year by 2010.

The UK's contribution is part of a wider donor community's efforts to get behind agreed country processes and existing funding mechanisms. We use every opportunity to remind our G8 partners and other donors to fulfil their promises to help achieve the education goals by 2015. This helped secure the recent French commitment to support eight million children in school in Africa by 2010, the European Union commitment of €4.3 billion for education by 2010 and G8 commitments to meet the Education for All Fast Track Initiative shortfalls, estimated at US\$1 billion in 2008.

On the 25th September 2008 the Education Partnership event brought together governments, multilaterals, civil society organisations, faith groups, private sector and FIFA to launch the "Class of 2015" to help accelerate progress in achieving the education and gender MDGs. The event delivered over \$4.5 billion of pledges and commitments for education and the UK supported the Global Campaign for Education in making it a success.

DFID has already made ten year announcements for education in Mozambique (£46m), Ghana (£105m), Ethiopia (£240m) and Tanzania (£260m).

Impacts and Results

The UK is the second largest donor to the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI). We support the FTI because it has the potential to provide a pivotal role to achieving the education and gender MDGs. There are 35 countries endorsed by the FTI and eligible for Catalytic Funding with a further 21 in the pipeline for endorsement by end 2009. FTI endorsed countries are making faster progress towards universal primary education than non FTI countries.

The UK is particularly active in 22 countries which form part of its Public Service Agreement. Net enrolment rates for primary education are increasing in these countries and in 6 countries they are now over 90%

Partners and Programmes

- [UN Girls' Education Initiative \(UNGEI\)](#)
- [Fast Track Initiative](#)
- [Development Partnerships in Higher Education](#)
- [Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowship Plan](#)
- [Commonwealth Shared Scholarship Scheme](#)
- [Forum for African Women Educationalists \(FAWE\)](#)
- [Campaign for Female Education \(CAMFED\)](#)
- [Global Campaign for Education \(GCE\)](#)
- [Global School Partnerships](#)

India

The UK government supports the government of India's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) education programme and has committed £410 million to the plan for the period 2005 - 2010. The programme aims to ensure that all of India's estimated 190 million school aged children complete a quality eight year cycle of basic education by 2010.

Sources

1. [UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2008](#)
2. [UNESCO Institute for Statistics \(UIS\) UIS](#) (will appear in the Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2009)
3. [UNICEF "The State of the World's Children" \(2004\)](#)
4. [UN MDG Report 2008](#)
5. [UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2006](#)
6. [UNESCO Institute for Statistics Teachers and Educational Quality: Monitoring Global Needs for 2015 \(2006\)](#)
7. [UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2002](#)
8. For more information on Fragile States, please see DFID's recent paper, "[Why we need to work more effectively in fragile States](#)"
9. [DFID Departmental Report 2006](#)