



**WHEN WILL
EVERY CHILD
HAVE EDUCATION?**



FREE. SAFE. EDUCATED.

EDUCATION BRIEF

WHY ISN'T EVERY CHILD IN SCHOOL?

Quality education is proven to be the most effective way of empowering children, strengthening societies and ending exclusion for good. For example, if everyone completed secondary education, 420 million people would be lifted out of poverty – cutting the number of people living in poverty worldwide by more than half. Girls who complete education are six times less likely to be forced into an early marriage.

Unfortunately, it has become clear in recent years that too many children are missing out. **258 million children aged 6-17 are currently out of school**, and these are mainly children who are the hardest to reach – including children on the move due to conflict and climate disaster, children with disabilities, and children who do not speak the language which is used in their schools. But it is **children from the poorest families who are most likely to be affected** – and many of them will be in child labour or even forced marriages instead. Predictions made by the UN suggest that by 2030 there will still be 225 million who are not in education. Why is this?

- **Global policies to ensure every child is included are not being delivered by national or local governments.** For example, schools which can teach children regardless of disability, or which have adequate sanitation for girls to participate.
- **There are not enough trained teachers**, and some countries are not paying trained teachers a decent living wage.
- **Not enough money is spent on education.** Even when low-income countries spend a high proportion of their national budgets – around 20% - on education, the national budget overall is too small for the education system to provide quality schooling for everyone.

WHY IS THIS IS AN INJUSTICE?

Every child has the right to free education of good quality. This is in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since then governments have repeatedly committed to deliver this right.

They have also made further pledges to tackle the challenges faced by the most marginalised children, but it's becoming increasingly clear that these repeated commitments are not being delivered.

Being shut out of education – with no schooling, too little schooling, or poor-quality schooling – can lead to a spiral of exclusion over a lifetime. In practice, this means:

- **Exclusion from better-paid jobs**, due to few or no qualifications or insufficient training
- **Exclusion from participating in democracy** – even if everyone has the right to vote, it is difficult to do this if you do not understand what you are voting for
- **Exclusion from better health** for you and your family. Education provides you with skills to understand nutrition and basic healthcare and enables you to better care for your family.

258 MILLION
children are out of school. That is
1 in 6
of school-aged children in
the world.

Between the years
2000–2018
the number of out-of-school
children declined by
118,900,000

Predictions show that between
2018–2030
the number of out-of-school
children will only decline by
33,000,000

Out of school children
by education level:
1 in 12
children of primary school-age

1 in 6
children of lower-secondary
school-age

1 in 3
children of upper-secondary
school-age

HOW CAN EVERY CHILD GO TO SCHOOL?

From 2000-2008, a huge amount of progress was made in reducing the number of children out of school. This was achieved due to increased pressure from citizens, and more money spent by national governments.

The increase in money came from a combination of a **higher share of national budgets being allocated to education** in lower-income countries, and **more overseas aid** given by wealthier countries to lower-income countries. But in the last ten years that progress has slowed.

The main reason money is critical to delivering the right to education is because good quality schooling can only happen if it is provided by trained teachers – which requires paying regular salaries. More and better quality schools are also needed, particularly in poorer or more rural communities, as these are usually the places which have the fewest resources allocated to them.

- Even though it is the UN-recommended amount, 20% of a small national budget is not enough to cover a good quality education system. Budgets overall can be increased if **international businesses pay their fair share of tax** in these countries.
- Countries which provide aid need to increase this, and make sure their **aid is targeted at the children most in need**.
- If every low-income country increased its national spending on education to 20% of the budget, and if overseas aid continues at the same level as today, **an additional \$39 billion will still be needed every year to get every child into school**.

These all seem like huge challenges, but take a look at some of the other ways governments are spending public money – do you think some of this could go to education?



Globally, countries spend **\$1.8 trillion on the military every year.**

8 DAYS

of military expenditure could cover the gap in education financing.



Corporate welfare is money given to businesses by governments. In the US, just

6 COMPANIES

including Boeing & Intel received more in welfare than the cost of sending every child to school.



Smoking causes **\$1.4 trillion in annual economic damage worldwide.**

10 DAYS

of expenditure on smoking damage would fill the education financing gap.



Every year, the world loses at least **\$500 billion** due to corporate tax dodging.

28 DAYS

of tax dodging is the equivalent of the cost to get all children into education.

GETTING EVERY CHILD IN YOUR COMMUNITY IN SCHOOL

Every child CAN have free and quality education if enough pressure is put on our leaders – not only at national and international levels, but also those in our local communities.

As individuals, especially in times of international political turmoil, it can feel impossible to change the way in which our communities operate. But democratic governments are, ultimately, chosen by and for the people – and they are obliged to respond to our concerns, regardless of our age. This is especially true in the case of local decision-makers, because they have a specific responsibility to deliver your rights in your community as well as to represent you in national decision-making processes.

There are some key principles everyone can take to make sure change happens:

- Find out what's happening in your community (look at the section below for some ideas on where to start)
- Identify who can make a difference.
- Ask them to take a specific action.
- Work out the best way to ask your question.
- Give clear reasons for asking them to take action.
- Monitor their response and any commitments they make.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR AREA?

Children who are out of school live in most countries around the world, but the problem is particularly acute for primary school-aged children in low-income countries, and children of all ages in much of Asia and across Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa. In almost all contexts, girls are the affected the most, which is one of the major root causes for wider gender inequality.

Are there children who are out of school in your community?

If so, have a conversation with them about the reasons they are not in school. Ask them if they are happy to have their answers recorded and shared as part of a campaign for everyone in the community to have access to good quality education. If they are willing to join you, make sure their stories are at the forefront of the campaign – it is difficult for decision-makers to ignore the young people who are being excluded by their poor delivery of services.

Do you live in a community where every child and young person is already in school or college?

You can help raise awareness in the community about the children in other parts of the country and around the world who are not. You can also ask your local decision-maker what the national government is doing to help every child get their right to quality education – are they collecting enough data on children at risk of dropouts and following up accordingly? Are they giving aid to education? If so, is the aid focused on the most marginalised children?

CAN I REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?



In Sweden, youth activists from the 100 Million campaign have already successfully lobbied their government to increase the amount of budget their country allocates to aid for education.

How did they do this?

- Organising events in schools and inviting their local politicians to take part – one third of Sweden's politicians took part
- Presenting politicians with their arguments for every child to have quality education
- Following up and asking for an opportunity to meet politicians again in parliament.

The government agreed to increase funding, and donated it to the Global Partnership for Education, which is focused on supporting low-income countries to deliver education for every child. Now, the activists are demanding quality education for children who are refugees in Sweden – their fight continues!

WHAT NEXT? HOLD A RALLY FOR EVERY CHILD!

Take your activism further by joining the 100 Million campaign's Rally for Every Child, starting on 17 October. On this day, young people all over the world will be asking, loud and clear: 'WHEN WILL EVERY CHILD HAVE JUSTICE?' You can join them – go to www.100million.org to find out more.