

Forum: Special Conference on Children’s Rights in the 21st Century
Issue: Education in less developed countries
Student Officer: Anna Giapitzi-Papandreou
Position: Deputy President

Personal Introduction

Dear Delegates,

My name is Anna Giapitzi-Papandreou and it is my honor to be a Deputy President of the Special Conference. I have participated in several MUN conferences including the 4th PSMUN, SIMUN in Russia and DSAMUN in Athens. I am really glad that I have been given the opportunity of attending this year’s conference as a student officer.

I am a Grade 10 student in high school and for as long as I remember, I have heard and seen many times children that have no food, no sanitation and suffer from various diseases. I am very sensitive on the subject of children’s rights violation so this is why I chose the Special Conference.

As Deputy President my role is to reinforce your efforts in researching, forming your final resolutions, introducing your ideas and to resolve any of your queries. This is what I am trying to achieve with this study guide. So, I hope that you will find this study guide constructive and beneficial. However, you should not rely only on this. As the issue of education in Less Developed Countries is massive, you will undeniably need to do more research, particularly in order to adjust the ideas to your country’s policy. I strongly encourage you to contact me, if you need any help.

I look forward to meeting you at the Conference.

Regards,

Anna Giapitzi-Papandreou

Introducing Topic

Education is the most powerful weapon against all kinds of problems and in these parts of the world it is really difficult for young people to attend school, because of vital ordinary obstacles.

Without a good development of knowledge, they will be less apt to find a job and take care of their families in the future. With minor people in work and a majority of people in need of aid, they will strive to thrive, repressing their own countries and eventually the worldwide economy.

Superiority in education can change this, by helping citizens to collaborate and create strong, open associations and communities. Further education can make impoverished countries prosperous and less in need of foreign aid – and more capable to commerce.

Based on researches, worldwide, 69 million children are not in school and 60% of them are girls. Around 67.4 million children aren't even in school and twice that number is illiterate. More than 57 million children around the world do not attend primary school and at least 250 million children cannot read or count, although they have spent four years in school. One in four young people in developing countries cannot read at all. Adult literacy has remained really high over the past ten years. In 2011 there were 774 million illiterate adults, with a decline of 1% since 2000. This is estimated to fall only marginally, to 743 million, by 2015.

UNESCO director-general has claimed: "Access [to education] is not the only crisis – poor quality is holding back learning even for those who make it to school."

Key Terms

1. Education

Education improves health, relations, productivity and generally everyday life. When educational institutes open their doors wider to both sexes, boys and men, as well as to girls and women, the benefits multiply.

2. Women

Poor undeveloped countries have an extremely large gender gap which leads to a low level of female education. There are though, some exceptions.

3. Conflicts

Algeria, Sudan, the West Bank, Gaza and Iraq have faced war in recent years. As a result lots of schools closed, drop-outs increased and teachers were lost.

4. Economic pressure

Sub-Saharan Africa includes over 30 heavily indebted countries and governments spend as much on debt repayment as on health and basic education combined.

South-Asia nearly half the population lives in severe poverty, earning less than \$1 a day.

Child labour is a persistent problem, a cause and consequence of low enrolment and high drop-out rates in Asia, as well.

Historical Information

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Adoption: by the General Assembly of the United Nations on the December 10th 1948, as the beginning of a new era in the history of mankind and in the international law, - literally true her- “the law of nations”.

2. Convention on the Declaration of the Rights of the Child

Adoption: by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular in articles 23 and 24), in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (in particular in article 10)

3. The U.N. Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination

Adoption: by the General Assembly on 12 December 1960 Resolution 1510, condemning all manifestations and practices of racial, religious and national hatred In the political, economic, social, educational and cultural spheres of the life of society, aw violations of the Charter of the I=United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

4. National Commission on the International Year of the Child. 1979

Adoption: by the United Nations General Assembly resolution on 21 December 1976 and by the President of the United States, Jimmy Carter on 14 April 1978

5. World Conferences on Adult Education, UNESCO

- a) Elsinore, Denmark, 1949
- b) Montreal, Canada, 1960
- c) Tokyo, Japan, 1972
- d) Paris, France, 1985

6. Fifth International Conference on Adult Learning in Hamburg, UNESCO, 1997

7. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Adoption: by the United Nations General Assembly on December 18th 1979 entering into force as an international treaty on September 3rd 1981 after the twentieth country had ratified it.

8. The UN's Third Conference on Women

Adoption: by the Conference in June 1985

9. The World Conference on Education for all

Adoption: by the delegates in March 1990

10. The Convention on the Rights of the Child

Adoption: by governments worldwide except for the United States, Somalia and South Sudan. The UK signed it in 1990.

Countries involved in the issue

<i>Country group or region</i>	<i>Females</i>		<i>Males</i>	
	<i>1965</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>1965</i>	<i>1988</i>
Low-income	0.2	1.1	0.7	2.8
Lower-middle-income	2.1	10.3	3.6	14.1
Upper-middle-income	3.1	15.6	5.9	18.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.1	1.1	0.6	3.3
South Asia	0.6	2.0	2.0	5.2
East Asia	4.1	14.6	6.7	18.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	3.1	16.2	5.7	16.4
Middle East and North Africa	2.1	11.8	5.6	16.2

The criteria of determining if someone is literate or not defer from country to country. We consider a person literate if he can both read and write a short, simple everyday text.

The data reported are from UNESCO and show the literacy level of people in less developed countries between 1980 - 1985.

The gender disparities are obvious. The enrolled girls are less than the enrolled boys, with the poorest countries having the widest gap.

Enrollment rates have been rising in all school levels in recent years, without question.

COUNTRY	WOMEN	MEN
Burkina Faso	6%	23%
Benin	12%	26%
Mali	16%	35%
Somalia	8%	27%
Nepal	9%	31%
Niger	12%	32%
Chad	13%	36%
Pakistan	15%	38%
Haiti	32%	39%
Afghanistan	10%	39%
Sudan	10%	39,50%
Bangladesh	18%	40%
Mozambique	12%	44%
Central African Rep.	19%	45%
Togo	18%	46%
Yemen	21%	46%
Burundi	32%	53%
Morocco	30%	54%
India	26%	54%
Nigeria	31%	54%
Uganda	30%	57%
Ruanda	32%	59%
Egypt	30%	59,50%
Tunisia	41%	61%
Cameroon	36%	62%
Côte d'Ivoire	34%	63%
Algeria	37%	64%
Ghana	42%	63%
Dominican Rep.	68%	72%
Zimbabwe	54%	69%
Libya	40%	69%
El Salvador	66%	73%
Brazil	73%	76%
Kenya	54%	78%
Indonesia	58%	78%
China	53%	79%
Zaire	54%	79,50%
Malaysia	64%	80%
Bolivia	65%	81%
Botswana	60,50%	82%
Philippines	83%	85%
Myanmar	72%	86%
Colombia	83%	87%
Ecuador	81%	88%
Turkey	65%	89%
Viet Nam	79%	90%
Peru	74%	91%
Paraguay	85%	91%
Sri Lanka	82%	92%
Thailand	84%	93%

Timeline of Events

1948: (Dec.) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is adopted by the GA of the UN. Education is declared a basic right of all people.

1959: (Nov.) The Declaration on the Rights of the Child is adopted by the UN GA. Education is declared the right of every child.

1960-66: UNESCO holds four World Regional Conferences on Education that help establish time-bound regional goals, to provide free and compulsory primary education to all children.

1969: (Jan.) The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination enters into force, proclaiming the right of all to education, regardless of race or ethnicity.

1976: (Jan.) The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights enters into force, guaranteeing the right to education for all.

1979: The International Year of the Child is designated to reinvigorate the principles of the Declaration on the Rights of the Child and raise awareness of children's special needs.

1980: Primary enrolment doubles in Latin America and Asia and triples in Africa, but the goal of universal primary education by 1980 is unmet. Of all 6- to 11-year-olds, approximately one third in developing countries and about one twelfth of industrialized countries are not in school. The target year of 1980 had been set by the UNESCO World Regional Conferences on education, held between 1960 and 1966.

1981: (Sep.) The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women enters into force, calling for the elimination of discrimination against women and for equal rights in education.

1982: Debt crisis begins. Commercial banks stop lending to developing countries after several countries announce that they will suspend debt service payments. IMF and the World Bank begin to refinance existing loans, requiring structural adjustments. Public-sector services, including education, are severely affected.

1985: (July) The Third World Conference on Women (Nairobi). Education is declared the basis for improving the status of women. Participating governments agree to encourage the elimination of discriminatory gender stereotypes from educational material, to redesign textbooks to present a positive image of women and to include women's studies in the curriculum.

1990: (Mar.) The World Conference on Education for all (Jomtien). The Conference, co-sponsored by UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank, and later, UNFPA, presented a global consensus on an expanded vision of basic education.

(Sep.) The Convention on the Rights of the Child enters into force, codifying the right to education for all children into international law.

(Sep.) The World Summit for Children (NY). 159 countries agree on a series of goals for education, including universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80% of primary school age children by the year 2000.

(Dec) The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, adopted by the UN GA (but not yet in force), declares education as a right of the children of all migrant workers and guest laborers.

1993: (Dec.) The E-9 Education Summit (New Delhi). Representatives of the Governments of the nine most populous nations in the developing world (Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan) pledge to achieve the goal of universal primary education by the year 2000. Together, these countries account for half of the world's population and 70% of illiterate adults.

(Dec.) The United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the UN GA, declares that States should recognize the principle of equal educational opportunities at all levels for children, youths and adults with disabilities.

1994: (June) The World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Equality (Salamanca). Participants declare that all countries should incorporate special need education into their domestic education strategy.

(Sep.) The International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo). Participants call for the provision of universal access to high-quality primary, technical and non-formal education by 2015, with a particular emphasis on girl's education.

1995: (Mar.) The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen). Participating States commit themselves to promote and attain universal and equitable access to quality education to help eradicate poverty, promote employment and foster social integration, with a particular emphasis on girl's education.

(Sep.) The Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing). The Conference calls for the elimination of discrimination in education at all levels, for the creation of all gender-sensitive education systems and for equal educational and training opportunities for women. The critical impact of girl's education is emphasized.

1996: (June) Mid-decade meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All (Amman). Meeting assesses progress towards the year 2000 goals set at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All.

1997: (Oct.) The International Conference on Child Labour (Oslo). Participating governments declare all work that interferes with the child's education unacceptable and agree to create time-bound programs for high-quality universal and compulsory basic education, with a particular emphasis on girl's education.

Possible Solutions

- Foreign study opportunities should be expanded by all developed countries;
- The significance of creating funds to reinforce education, especially for women and girls, should be highlighted;
- All teachers should be accurately educated and qualified;
- More chances outside of school, for education, should be developed, especially for women;
- Any organizations created by the State to develop equal education would be helpful so as to solve the issue;
- Schools should be built in less developed areas for both sexes;
- Education should be made compulsory for ages six to eighteen disregarding sex, nationality, and race;
- Public schools have to be advanced with finance from organizations, government funds, or taxes;
- Funding from government income should be endorsed, for supplementary training courses for teachers and educational staff;
- More government funded summer schooling should be encouraged as well as government funded mentors to subsidize education;
- 25 of donations to UNESCO could go to uphold education for all as well as a divert a portion of military spending could go to UNESCO to support this cause;
- Transportation networks should be revamped so that rural populations can reach urban centres freely and thus improve admission to education and information;
- Creating funds should be emboldened and the State should obtain donations from any person or country agreeable to support this cause;
- According to the Human Rights Council - UN Resolution 8/4 (The right to education), all states should understand that the right to education is of vast significance and they should guarantee that this right is acknowledged and exercised without prejudice of any kind;
- All states should assure that primary education is mandatory, available and free to all; (The Human Rights Council - UN Resolution 8/4, The right to education)
- The recurrence and expansion of basic formal education of good quality should be encouraged, which includes both early adolescence care and education and primary education, using comprehensive and inventive approaches, including adjustments, to increase admission and participation for all; (The Human Rights Council - UN Resolution 8/4, The right to education)
- All countries should recognize and promote lasting learning for all, and to support internal literacy projects, including education elements and non-formal education, in order to reach diminished children, youth and adults, particularly girls and women, and people with infirmities, to safeguard that they enjoy the right to education; (The Human Rights Council - UN Resolution 8/4, The right to education)

- Effective measures should be ratified so as to encourage regular participation at school and decrease school dropout percentage; (The Human Rights Council - UN Resolution 8/4, The right to education)
- Appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational efforts should be done, to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental assault, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation in schools, and to take measures to eliminate physical punishment in schools, and to consolidate appropriate penalties for violations and the arrangement of compensation and overhaul for victims; (The Human Rights Council - UN Resolution 8/4, The right to education)

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- Women's Education in developing countries: Barriers, benefits and policies, E.M. King, M.A. Hill, 1997
- Adult Education and Learning in a Precarious Age: The Hamburg Declaration Revisited, Tom Nesbit, Michael Welton, 2013

Multimedia Resources

- <http://www.canadianfeedthechildren.ca/what/education>
- <http://blog.alfalit.org>
- <http://www.theguardian.com>
- <http://montessori-mun.org>
- http://ap.ohchr.org/Documents/E/HRC/resolutions/A_HRC_RES_8_4.pdf
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- www.un.org
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- www.unicef.org.uk