

<b>Forum:</b>	Special Conference: Focus on Global Education
<b>Issue:</b>	The issue of primary education in less developed countries
<b>Student Officer:</b>	Dorita Dimitriadou
<b>Position:</b>	Deputy President

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## PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

My name is Dorita Dimitriadou, I am 17 years old and I attend the 11<sup>th</sup> grade in Arsakeia Schools of Psychiko. In the 8<sup>th</sup> session of the Platon School Model United Nations it'll be my honor to serve as the Deputy President of the Special Conference, focusing on Global Education. Altogether I've attended four conferences, and this is going to be my first time chairing. I'm proud to be a part of the MUN community as it has offered me an overall knowledge about the issues of our world and has guided me towards my goals in life.

This year's agenda includes some of the most crucial issues of our era considering Global Education. The delegates are being provided with the chance to debate and introduce implementable measures and solutions on the issue of primary education in less developed countries. This study guide offers you some basic information about the topic. As an expert chair I will guide you through your research, I aspire for a fruitful debate and to make this conference to you a memorable one. However, you should further research the topic and not base it only on the study guide. In case of any questions related to the topic do not hesitate to contact me at my email address [dorita\\_doritos@hotmail.com](mailto:dorita_doritos@hotmail.com).

I'm really looking forward to meeting you all.

Best regards,

Your chair,

Dorita Dimitriadou.

## INTRODUCING TOPIC

The development of basic education in Less Economically Developed Countries (LED's) is contemplated to be a topic of high significance. Proper education in a country is the guide to economic prosperity, the base of social equity and the spread of cultural vitality. But most importantly it's a human right. However, nowadays children's rights to education worldwide consider to be at great risk. It is a situation that keeps deteriorating rapidly, as millions of children and adults are illiterate because of inaccessible education. Lots of children do not graduate from secondary school and even more do not even finish primary school. According to statistics published by Humanium more than 72 million children of primary education age are not in school and 774 million illiterate adults are not aware of how to improve their poor living conditions and those of their children, while ACEI Global stated that 67 million children are still denied the right to primary education.

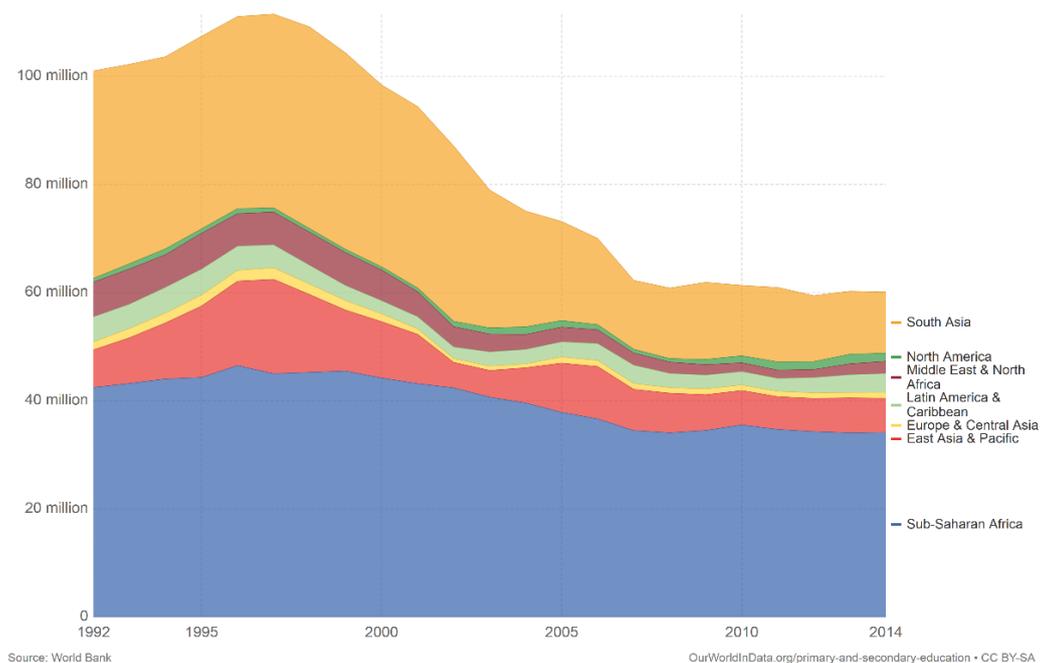
### Marginalization

Many children do not have access to education because of the inequalities and discrimination they're facing. They find themselves on the margins of the education system due to inequalities that originate in sex, health or cultural identity, namely ethnic origin, language and religion.

### Democracy and political stability

In many developing countries governments have no political will to satisfy the educational needs of their citizens and the desire for the provision of universal education is absent in undemocratic societies as the ones that have the power fear that educated inhabitants will have the means to challenge them. However, education in LED's is extremely helpful in order to achieve democracy and political stability. In this way people are being informed about their rights and obtain the skills and knowledge required to exercise them.

**Out-of-school children of primary school age by world region**  
Children in the official primary school age range who are not enrolled in either primary or secondary schools.



### Health

Undeniably, many children from disadvantaged backgrounds are forced to abandon their education due to health problems related to malnutrition or even in impoverished regions where health outcomes are relentless millions of children die every year from controllable diseases such as respiratory infections and malaria. In addition, many parents in poor countries send their offspring to do household chores or take care of their sick relatives. For instance, in African countries extensively affected by AIDS, children may not attend school so as to nurse their sick parents or siblings.

With education people are better equipped to avoid diseases and to use health services successfully.

Educated mothers have healthier children and the ones who complete primary education are less likely to be exposed to illnesses, such as HIV, in comparison with the ones that have received little to no education.

### Financial deficit

Financial deficit is indissolubly related with the issue, as developing countries face a sizeable problem concerning their economy. Funds are poorly controlled, the continuous corruption prevents the right use of their resources and the demand-side, supply-side impediment has as an outcome the shortage of education. As a result, LED's do not dispose the



financial resources necessary in order not only to create schools and provide schooling materials but also to recruit and train teachers. In addition, funds that the international community guaranteed to such countries are not sufficient to allow the establishment of ameliorated education systems for all children. Even when tuition is free, there are often expenses for lunch, books, schooling materials, transportation and uniforms.

When the problem is the lack of supply because a government's resources and volition are absent to construct schools, and provide it with personnel for children from poor families, user payments are a way in which it is in the parents' hands to provide an education for their kids. That, however, is an unbearable burden for the parents as this is usually referred to adults who lack basic skills and have greater complications in finding jobs with a high wage and in escaping the misery of poverty. It is confirmed that user payments increase demand for schooling as they ameliorate significantly the quality of education received, thus encouraging parents who were previously willing to pay for their children's education to do so.

Furthermore, in LED's with the help of education people earn higher wages and this income contributes to the continuous and rapid economic growth of the country.

### Gender gap

Girls make up more than 54% of the non-schooled population in the world, as they are being discriminated by the education system and have the least access to it, due to social, traditional, cultural and religious beliefs. This preconception is especially indicated in South Asia and Africa. People are unaware of the benefits provided by educated girls in the community and the society in general.

Educated women are well informed, thus they are more likely to look for prenatal and postnatal care decreasing this way the risk of maternal and child mortality and as mothers, they vaccinate their offspring, in order for them not to contract any diseases and illnesses. Moreover, the fact that the bulk of farmers in less developed countries are women means that the more education received by women the better for the farming production, therefore, the country's economic growth. The decline of 40% in malnutrition has also been achieved since 1970, due to women farmers.



Children with disabilities are also greatly underprivileged as they need special education. It is estimated that in Africa only 5% of disabled children are enrolled in school, while 70% of them cannot attend because of dearth of the appropriate facilities. In this case, many parents decide to send their children on the streets to beg.

### Rural and urban schooling

Children in rural areas are contemplated to be more difficult to educate as there is no encouragement by their parents who care more about their help with agricultural tasks. They do not recognize the value of schooling since they have a lower level of education and they are not well informed about the benefits of introducing their children to it and the opportunities that exists for them because they might think that well payed jobs do not require academic skills and that they rely on personal connections. Due to the fact that parents are not educated they are not able to support their children and they might even be embarrassed to talk about school because of their own lack of knowledge. Furthermore, even if children living in rural areas went to school they would have a really hard time to study as dwellings are poorly equipped and there is often lack of basic needs, such as electricity. The marginalization of girls concerning the access to education is greater in rural areas.

Another problem countryside regions are facing is lack of personnel. Teachers prefer to work in urban areas because of the better opportunities that exist. Thus, rural areas are left with empty posts and their filling is done with unqualified and less experienced teachers, who are unfamiliar with the sociocultural environment and concern a lot about the diseases and illnesses that go around. Then again because of parents' level of education they are not aware of the situation and are unable to take suitable actions.



As a result, there is educational failure. Instructors are poorly trained, there is lack of basic teaching tools (books, blackboards, pens, paper etc.) and there are overcrowded classrooms, where many different educational levels are forced together. That does not allow each individual child to benefit from an education adapted to their needs and abilities.

Education is able to provide the next generation with the right tools so as to fight poverty and help themselves into prosperity. School offers children a safe, supportive environment, where they can socialize and interact with their peers and other people. So, when that fails and children do not obtain the knowledge necessary to act like a productive and responsible member of society, the community as a whole, loses.

## DEFINITION OF KEY-TERMS

### Education

Education is the process of acquiring general knowledge, skills such as the ones of reasoning and judgment, values, beliefs, habits and generally the preparation of oneself mentally for adult life. Any experience that affects the way someone thinks, feels or acts is contemplated to be educational.

### Primary education

Primary education, also called elementary school, is a school in which children are being introduced to the education that furnishes the foundation of knowledge, namely literacy and numeracy skills, from the age of about five to twelve. It's the first phase of compulsory education, coming after preschool.

### Secondary education

Secondary education is the last stage of compulsory education, following primary education and leading to college or university, from the age of about thirteen to eighteen.

### LED's

Less Economically Developed Countries or developing countries are the ones of which socioeconomic development is lower than other's (More Economically Developed Countries/ MED's) mainly because of the way the use of money, goods and trade is being organized. Less developed countries are being characterized by poverty, weakness in human resources (concerning nutrition health and education) and economic vulnerability.

### Net Enrollment Ratio (NER):

It's the ratio of students in the official school age group that are enrolled in education to the total number of students in the official school age group.

### Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER):

It's the ratio of enrolled students of all ages in a given level of education to the official school age group equivalent to the same level of education.

### User payments:

User payments are one way parents can provide education for their children when the problem is a failure of supply and includes the requirement to pay for their offspring's learning.

### GDP on education:

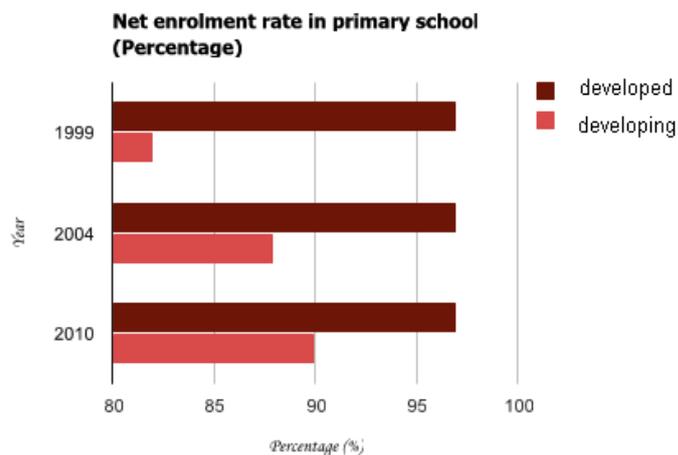
Local, regional or central government expenditure on education (current, money). Expenditure funded by international sources to government are also included.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The first Universal Primary Education (UPE) system was established in 1717. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century many countries had followed, while others had been much slower concerning the adoption of the UPE model. For example, India passed laws proposing free and mandatory education in 2009 and there are still many countries, where laws haven't been introduced making attendance mandatory.

In the Third World only the wealthiest families could afford to send their children to school. In 1820 more than 4 out of 5 pupils had not received any formal education, which was reformed completely during the last 2 centuries, when substantial progress has been made and today fewer than 1 out of 5 children have not received any education at all, however, school attendance in LED's is by no means universal.

Furthermore, international initiatives are trying to accomplish UPE since the end of World War II, yet there is an enormous amount of children worldwide unable to access primary education, as they were poisoned by the lack of funding and the improper international policies.



### Background of rural and urban schooling

One of the most significant imbalances of the Third World, which is significantly linked with their colonial past, is the one concerning schooling in rural and urban areas in less developed countries. A large amount of colonial authority was established in urban regions; therefore, the residents of rural areas were not given the privilege of education and were forced to work on the cultivated lands of the affluent colonizers. This educational gap endures until today.

## MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

### Niger (GDP on education 6.7%)

Niger constitutes the nation with the lowest education level in the world as only 23.52% of children have any literacy skills, 5.1% of citizens have received secondary education and 31% students have dropped out in primary school. The situation is even worse for young women, children in nomadic areas and children with disabilities. Even though the small amount of refugees entering the country and the relatively stable political system, Niger is continuously oriented at the bottom of UN indexes for almost

every category of analysis, such as Adult Literacy Rate or Education Development Index.

#### Burkina Faso (GDP on education 4.1%)

Burkina Faso is one of the countries that face the biggest problem concerning education. Children from 15 to 24 years old that haven't completed primary education constitute about 72%, 56% of which are completely illiterate. However, significant improvements have been made in reducing the discrimination of girls in education as not only the government provided a lot of support and established policies but also the nation was chosen as one of the 11 countries in which Michelle's Obama initiative called "Let Girls Learn" focuses.

#### Central African Republic (GDP on education 1.2%)

Africa is a country with a really poor education system, caused by the lack of funding. Children between the age of 15 to 19 that haven't received any education constitute 52.79% of the population and the discrimination of girls is intense. Schools are closing, the unqualified and inexperienced teachers are going unpaid, pupils lack of learning materials and the initiatives focusing on these hardships are being challenged by the population's constant relocations and weakness of infrastructure and security.



#### Mali (GDP on education 3.7%)

Although schooling in Mali is free and compulsory, parents cannot afford the expenses for books, uniforms and other supplies. Therefore, attendance is really difficult for children especially the ones living in rural areas, where there are no schools. Girls are also most likely to miss out on school, in order to help their family with daily tasks. Moreover, only 52% of teachers are well trained, thus more than half of the young people in Mali are illiterate.

#### Guinea (GDP on education 3.4%)

The basic problem pupils in Guinea face is school fees. Thus, they are not able to attend school and 41% of them drop out at the primary level. Even though education is compulsory laws are not enforced by the government whose focus is far from educational improvement. Schools are understaffed and there's shortage of

educational materials. Furthermore, the discrimination against women is excessive as there are 27% illiterate women above 15 years old.

### UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is a specialized agency aiming to enhance peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to increase universal respect for justice, the rule of law, human rights and essential freedoms, which are asserted for the people of the world besides race, sex, language or origin, by the Charter of the United Nations.

By the cooperation of the members educational activities are being developed and equality of educational opportunities furthers. Suitable educational methods are also suggested in order to prepare children all over the world become responsible and engaged citizens.

The organization came into force in 1946. It consists of 195 members and 10 associate members.

### UNICEF

United Nations Children’s Fund was established in 1946 and is active in at least 190 countries. Its main goal is to help children all around the world fulfill their needs, exert their rights and expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. One of their activities is supporting basic education and gender equality, aiming to the amelioration of primary and secondary education quality, the encouragement of early childhood learning and the enhancement of equivalent access to education for both boys and girls.

### ACEI

The Association for Childhood Education International is a worldwide community that consists of educators and advocates for educational improvement. Their aim is to create exciting and interesting educational environments for children and to provide them with the knowledge and skills needed so as to confront the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In order to achieve its goals, ACEI hosts 3 programs: Center for Education Diplomacy, Global Schools First and Innovation Exchange.



The organization is making an effort to ameliorate the situation of education for children and youth worldwide since 1892.

### GPE

The Global Partnership for Education is a multi-stakeholder partnership and funding platform established in 2002. It supports that education is a human right and its goals is to strengthen education systems. GPE aids 65 developing countries to make sure that children around the world enroll in school and receive quality, basic education. Their priority are the poorest, most vulnerable and those living in countries affected by fragility and conflict.

## RELEVANT UN TREATIES, RESOLUTIONS AND EVENTS

### Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26, 1948

Treaty supporting that “everyone has the right to education.”

### General Assembly Resolution A/RES/56/116, 88<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting, 19 December 2001

“Reaffirms the Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum,/10 in which commitments were made to achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015 and to improve the quality of education;”

“Appeals to all Governments to redouble their efforts to achieve their own goals of education for all by developing national plans in accordance with the Dakar Framework for Action, setting firm targets and timetables, including gender-specific education targets and programs, to eliminate gender disparities at all levels of education, to combat the illiteracy of women and girls and to ensure that girls and women have full and equal access to education, and by working in active partnership with communities, associations, the media and development agencies to reach those targets;”

### General Assembly Resolution A/RES/54/122, 83<sup>rd</sup> plenary meeting, 17 December 1999

“Appeals to all Governments to intensify their efforts to eradicate illiteracy and to direct education towards the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms;”

” Welcomes the convening of the World Education Forum, to be held in April 2000 in Senegal with a view to assessing the implementation of the goals of education for all and adopting an agenda for education in the twenty-first century;”

### Convention against Discrimination in Education, 14 December 1960

Convention that has the purpose of “impairing equality of treatment in education.”

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
1892	The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) was established.
1946	The establishment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
1948	Inclusion of education in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
1960	Convention against Discrimination in Education
1968	International Year of Human Rights
1970	International Education Year
2002	The creation of the International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNEVOC) by UNESCO in order to “assist Member States develop policies and practices concerning education for the world of work and skills development for employability and citizenship.
2004	Creation of the International Centre for the education of girls and women in Africa (AU/CIEFFA)
13 December 2006	Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
2009	International Year of Human Rights Learning
12 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup> 2017	October The World Conference on Education

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

As previously mentioned, education is one of the most vital implements in the contemporary world as it has the capability to alleviate most of the challenges faced in life and is continuously offering various opportunities, especially to less developed countries. Therefore, delegates can take into account some of the following measures in order to enhance the situation.

Firstly, the collaboration of governments must be achieved in order for developed countries to help developing countries by providing money. They could help them build schools and they could also donate them used books that are maintained in good condition or computers, which will expose pupils to a world of knowledge and information. Furthermore, education must be made compulsory because if it is required by law, parents will encourage their children to attend school so as to avoid punishment. Thus, obligatory, universal and publicly financed education will be provided, which will allow people to develop basic skills and will improve significantly the situation in less developed countries.

Moreover, because of the fact that much of the solution lies on the supply-side, the provision of adequate numbers of appropriately trained, motivated and engaged teachers must be ensured. This could be achieved by the organization of seminars and

workshops in order for unexperienced teachers to be coached by skilled and qualified ones. Also, teachers should be supervised and meetings with them should be frequently arranged.

The information of people living in developing countries about nutrition is of high importance. It could be achieved by social programs and this way people not only will be able to take care of themselves properly but it will also lead to human happiness and well-being. Furthermore, it makes an important contribution to economic progress as poverty is being reduced and the population lives longer and becomes more productive.

*"The biggest enemy of health in the developing world is poverty." Kofi Annan*

Lastly, the presence of female teachers will be beneficial for the purpose of making school a safer environment for girls, as administrators are insensitive and unaware of many affairs of sexual abuse and intimidation. Most importantly, the presence of females in positions of responsibility and leadership will create role models, which will help to eliminate discrimination against girls and women and will offer them access to education.

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