Education transforms lives
Developed by an independent team and published by UNESCO, the Education for All Global Monitoring Report is an authoritative reference that aims to inform, influence and sustain genuine commitment towards Education for All.

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Education transforms lives
Education lights every stage of the journey to a better life, especially for the poor and the most vulnerable. Education’s unique power to act as a catalyst for wider development goals can only be fully realized, however, if it is equitable. That means making special efforts to ensure that all children and young people – regardless of their family income, where they live, their gender, their ethnicity, whether they are disabled – can benefit equally from its transformative power. Education empowers girls and young women, in particular, by increasing their chances of getting jobs, staying healthy and participating fully in society – and it boosts their children’s chances of leading healthy lives.

To unlock the wider benefits of education, all children need the chance to complete not only primary school but also lower secondary school. And access to schooling is not enough on its own: education needs to be of good quality so that children actually learn. Given education’s transformative power, it needs to be a central part of any post-2015 global development framework.
EDUCATION TRANSFORMS LIVES

- Education reduces child marriages
- Education reduces early births
- Educated people are more tolerant
- More equal education leads to faster growth
- Education leads to more concern about the environment
- Education increases women’s and men’s job opportunities
- Maternal education improves child nutrition
- Mothers’ education saves children’s lives
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Education saves mothers’ lives.
A mother’s education is crucial for her own health. Every day, almost 800 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, including pre-eclampsia, bleeding, infections and unsafe abortion. Educated women are more likely to avoid these dangers, by adopting simple and low cost practices to maintain hygiene, by reacting to symptoms, and by making sure a skilled attendant is present at birth.

Education reforms increased education attainment among young women by 1.8 years in Kenya, accounting for a 34% decline in the maternal mortality ratio.

In Nepal, 49% of literate mothers have a skilled attendant at birth, compared with 18% of mothers who are not literate.

The benefits of being literate when it comes to having a skilled attendant at birth can be far greater for mothers from poor households. In Cameroon, 54% of literate mothers from poor households have the benefit of a skilled attendant, compared with 19% of mothers who are not literate.
A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH
Educated mothers are less likely to die in childbirth

Why does education reduce maternal deaths?

Educated women are more likely to avoid complications during pregnancy, such as pre-eclampsia, bleeding and infections by:
1. adopting simple and low-cost practices to maintain hygiene
2. reacting to symptoms such as bleeding or high blood pressure
3. making sure a skilled attendant is present at birth

Educated women are more likely to:
1. use public health care services
2. not give birth as teenagers
3. have fewer children

Note: Maternal mortality is defined as the death of a woman while pregnant, or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management, though not from accidental or incidental causes.
Educating girls can save millions of lives. There are few more dramatic illustrations of the power of education than the estimate that the lives of 2.1 million children under 5 were saved between 1990 and 2009 because of improvements in girls’ education. Education is one of the most powerful ways of improving children’s health. Educated mothers are better informed about specific diseases, so they can take measures to prevent them. They can recognize signs of illness early, seek advice and act on it.

India and Nigeria account for more than a third of child deaths worldwide. If all women in both countries had completed secondary education, the under-5 mortality rate would have been 61% lower in India and 43% lower in Nigeria, saving 1.35 million children’s lives.

In Burkina Faso, if all women completed primary education, the under-5 mortality rate would fall by 46%; if they completed secondary education, it would fall by 76%.

In low income countries, mothers who have completed primary school are 12% more likely than mothers with no education to seek appropriate health care when their child has symptoms of diarrhoea.

In sub-Saharan Africa, which accounts for 70% of the world’s HIV infections, 91% of literate women know that HIV is not transmitted by sharing food, compared with 72% of those who are not literate.

In the Arab States, a one-year increase in maternal education is associated with a 23% decrease in the number of children under the age of five dying from pneumonia.

In Cameroon, where the female secondary gross enrolment ratio was 47% in 2011, if all women had had secondary education, the incidence of malaria would have dropped from 28% to 19%.
SAVING CHILDREN’S LIVES
A higher level of education reduces preventable child deaths

Number of children under 5 that died in low and lower middle income countries in 2011

If all women had primary education

If all women had secondary education

Reduction in deaths in low and lower middle income countries:

If all women had primary education

If all women had secondary education

Saving 0.9 million lives

Saving 3 million lives
EDUCATED MOTHERS, HEALTHY CHILDREN
Higher levels of education for mothers lead to improved child survival rates

How children under 5 died in 2011

- Pneumonia: 1.2 million
- Birth complications: 1 million
- Diarrhoea: 0.8 million
- Birth asphyxia: 0.6 million
- Malaria: 0.5 million

A literate mother is on average:
- 23% more likely to seek support from a skilled birth attendant

Pneumonia

One additional year of maternal education would decrease child deaths from pneumonia by:

14%

Equivalent to:
- 170,000 lives saved per year

Maternal education reduces factors putting children at risk of pneumonia such as:

1. malnutrition and low birth weight
2. failing to carry out measles vaccination in the first 12 months
3. burning fuel that gives off harmful smoke

Birth complications

Educated mothers, healthy children
Higher levels of education for mothers lead to improved child survival rates
EDUCATED MOTHERS, HEALTHY CHILDREN
Higher levels of education for mothers lead to improved child survival rates

Diarrhoea

Educated mothers are more likely to:
1. properly purify water
2. seek care from a health provider when a child has diarrhoea
3. administer rehydration solutions, increase fluids, and continue feeding

Reduction in diarrhoea in low and lower middle income countries if all mothers had primary education:
- 8%

Reduction in diarrhoea if all mothers had secondary education:
- 30%

Malaria

In areas of high transmission, the odds of children carrying malaria parasites is 22% lower if their mothers have primary education than if their mothers have no education:
- down 22%

In areas of high transmission, the odds of children carrying malaria parasites is 36% lower if their mothers have secondary education than if their mothers have no education:
- down 36%

Immunization

Increase in vaccination for diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough (DPT3) in low and lower middle income countries if all mothers had primary education:
- 10%

Increase in DTP3 vaccination if all mothers had secondary education:
- 43%
Education is vital to eliminate malnutrition in the long term – especially education that empowers women. Malnutrition is the underlying cause of more than a third of global child deaths. Educated mothers are more likely to ensure that their children receive the best nutrients to help them prevent or fight off ill health, know more about appropriate health and hygiene practices, and have more power in the home to make sure children’s nutrition needs are met.

In **South Asia**, 22 million fewer children would be stunted if all mothers reached secondary education.

In **Honduras**, the chances of children being stunted – short for their age – is 54% if they are born to mothers with less than primary education, falling to 33% for those born to mothers with primary education, and to 10% if they are born to mothers with at least secondary education.

By age 1 – when adverse effects of malnutrition on life prospects are likely to be irreversible – in **Viet Nam**, children whose mothers have reached lower secondary education are 67% less likely to be stunted than those whose mothers have no education.

In the **United Republic of Tanzania**, children aged 6 months to 23 months whose mothers had at least secondary education were almost twice as likely to consume food rich in micronutrients as children whose mothers had less than primary education.
EDUCATION KEEPS HUNGER AWAY
Mothers’ education improves children’s nutrition

Stunted children* in low income countries: 47 million

Reduction in stunting in low income countries:

- 4% If all mothers had primary education: 45.3 million
- 26% If all mothers had secondary education: 34.8 million

1.7 million children saved from stunting
12.2 million children saved from stunting

*Stunting is a manifestation of malnutrition in early childhood.
Education enhances job opportunities, helping households to escape poverty. Educated men and women are more likely not just to be employed, but to hold jobs that are secure and provide good working conditions and decent pay. By benefiting women in particular, education can help narrow gender gaps in work opportunities and pay. As well as helping lift households out of poverty permanently, education guards against them falling – or falling back – into poverty.

If all students in low income countries left school with basic reading skills, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty, which would be equivalent to a 12% cut in world poverty.

In El Salvador, only 5% of working adults with less than primary education have an employment contract, compared with 47% of working adults with secondary education.

In Jordan, 25% of women with only primary education who live in rural areas work for no pay, compared with 7% of those with secondary education.

In Pakistan, working women with good literacy skills earn 95% more than women with weak literacy skills.

In the United Republic of Tanzania, 82% of workers who have less than primary education live below the poverty line. By contrast, working adults with primary education are 20% less likely to be poor, while secondary education reduces the chances of being poor by almost 60%.

In rural Indonesia, an additional year of schooling reduced the chances of falling back into poverty by 25%.
WAGE GAPS
Education narrows pay gaps between men and women

JOB SEARCH
Educated men and women are more likely to find work
**Education empowers women to overcome discrimination.** Girls and young women who are educated have greater awareness of their rights, and greater confidence and freedom to make decisions that affect their lives, improve their own and their children’s health and chances of survival, and boost their work prospects. One in eight girls is married by the age of 15 in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, and one in seven has given birth by the age of 17. Ensuring that girls stay in school is one of the most effective ways of averting child marriage and early birth. Education is also a key factor in hastening the demographic transition to lower birth and mortality rates.

In **Ethiopia**, 32% of girls with less than primary education were married before the age of 15, compared with less than 9% of those with secondary education.

In **Angola**, the fertility rate of a woman with no education was **7.8 children**, compared with **5.9 children** for a woman with primary education and **2.5 children** for a woman with secondary education or more.

In **Pakistan**, while only 30% of women with no education believe they can have a say over the number of children they have, the share increases to **52%** among women with primary education and to **63%** among women with lower secondary education.

If all countries expanded their school systems at the same rate as the **Republic of Korea** and **Singapore**, there would be almost **850 million fewer people** in the world by 2050 than if enrolment rates remained at 2000 levels.
LEARNING LESSENS EARLY MARRIAGES AND BIRTHS

Women with higher levels of education are less likely to get married or have children at an early age.

### Child marriage

Child marriages for all girls by age 15 in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia:

- No education: 2,867,000
- Primary education: 2,459,000
- Secondary education: 1,044,000

14% fewer marriages if all girls had primary education
64% fewer marriages if all girls had secondary education

### Early births

Early births for all girls under 17 in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia:

- No education: 3,397,000
- Primary education: 3,071,000
- Secondary education: 1,393,000

10% fewer girls would become pregnant if all girls had primary education
59% fewer girls would become pregnant if all girls had secondary education

### Fertility rate*

Average number of births per woman in sub-Saharan Africa:

- No education: 6.7
- Primary education: 5.8
- Secondary education: 3.9

*Fertility rate is the average number of children that would be born to a woman over her lifetime.
Education is indispensable in strengthening the bonds that hold communities and societies together. Education helps people understand democracy, promotes the tolerance and trust that underpin it, and motivates people to participate in politics. Education’s role is especially vital in regions and countries where lack of tolerance is associated with violence and conflict.

Across 18 sub-Saharan African countries, those of voting age with primary education are **1.5 times more likely** to express support for democracy than those with no education, and the level doubles among those who have completed secondary education.

In Tunisia, while only **22%** of those with less than primary education agree that democracy, despite its drawbacks, is the best system of governance, **38%** of those with secondary education do so.

In Turkey, citizens with secondary education are around **twice as likely** as those with only primary schooling to sign a petition and participate in a peaceful demonstration.

In Central and Eastern Europe, those with secondary education are **16%** less likely than those who have not completed secondary education to express intolerance towards immigrants.

In India, those with secondary education were **19%** less likely to express intolerance towards people speaking a different language compared with those with less than primary education.

In countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the risk of conflict in the areas with the highest education inequality is **almost double** that of the areas that have the lowest education inequality.
LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR
Education increases tolerance

The difference between a primary and a secondary education

Increase in tolerance towards...

*Answers are in response to the question:
"Who would you prefer not to live next door to?"
Equal education boosts economic growth. Education not only helps individuals escape poverty by developing the skills they need to improve their livelihoods, but also generates productivity gains that boost economic growth substantially. For growth to reduce poverty, however, it needs to overcome inequality by improving the lives of the poorest and marginalized the most. Education is vital to achieve this goal because it can help ensure that the benefits of growth are fairly shared.

In 1965, adults in East Asia and the Pacific had, on average, spent 2.7 more years in school than those in sub-Saharan Africa. Over a 45-year period, average annual growth in income per capita was 3.4% in East Asia and the Pacific, but 0.8% in sub-Saharan Africa. The difference in education levels explains about half of the difference in growth.

In Guatemala, adults just had 3.6 years of schooling, on average, in 2005. If Guatemala had matched the regional average, it could have more than doubled its average annual growth rate between 2005 and 2010.

If education inequality in sub-Saharan Africa had been halved to the level of Latin America and the Caribbean, the annual per capita growth rate over 2005–2010 would have been 47% higher.
Equality in education can be measured using the Gini coefficient.*

Perfect equality:

0.0

Gini coefficient

Complete inequality:

1.0

Gini coefficient

0.1

improvement in education equality

Over forty years, income per capita is **23% higher** in a country with more equal education

$1,104

$1,358

Pakistan

4.5 years

Viet Nam

4.9 years

The average years an adult had spent at school were very similar in 2005...

...but fewer had been to school in Pakistan...

...and education inequalities were more than double in Pakistan

More equality in education in Viet Nam improves economic performance

*A statistical measure of inequality. Perfect equality (where everyone goes to the school for the same amount of time) would equal 0 and perfect inequality (where only one person goes to school) would equal 1
Education is part of the solution to global environmental problems. People with more education tend not only to be more concerned about the environment, but also to follow up that concern with action that promotes and supports political decisions that protect the environment. By improving knowledge, instilling values, fostering beliefs and shifting attitudes, education has considerable power to change environmentally harmful lifestyles and behaviour. Education can encourage people to use energy and water more efficiently and recycle household waste. In poor countries affected by climate change, education helps people adapt to its effects.

Across 29 countries, 25% of people with less than secondary education expressed concern for the environment compared to 37% of people with secondary education and 46% of people with tertiary education.

In Germany, 46% of people with tertiary education had signed a petition or taken part in a demonstration in relation to the environment over the previous five years, compared with 26% of those with secondary education and 12% of those with less than secondary education.

Investing between US$11 billion and US$14 billion per year in basic education for girls globally would help their households make better choices to counter the effects of expected weather-related disasters.

In Ethiopia, six years of education improve by 20% the chance that a farmer will adapt to climate change by adopting techniques such as soil conservation, variation in planting dates and changes in crop varieties.
SCHOOLING CAN SAVE THE PLANET
Higher levels of education lead to more concern about the environment.

"We worry too much about the future of the environment and not enough about jobs and prices today"
1 – A matter of life and death


Nepal: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations, based on the 2011 Demographic and Health Survey.

Cameroon: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations, based on the 2011 Demographic and Health Survey.

Infographic:


2 – Saving children’s lives


Low income countries and sub-Saharan Africa: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations, based on Demographic and Health Survey data from 2005–2011.

Infographic [Saving children’s lives]:


Infographic [Educated mothers, healthy children]:


3 – Education keeps hunger away


United Republic of Tanzania: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations, based on the 2010 Demographic and Health Survey.


Infographic:


EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations, based on Demographic and Health Survey data from 2005–2011.

4 – Wage gaps and job search


**Infographic:**

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**5 – Learning lessens child marriage and early birth**

Ethiopia: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations, based on the 2011 Demographic and Health Survey.


**Infographic:**
EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations, based on Demographic and Health Survey data from 2005–2011.

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**6 – Love thy neighbour**


Tunisia: Prepared for *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2013/14* by the Arab Barometer team.


Sub-Saharan Africa: Fjelde, H. and Østby, G. 2012. Economic Inequality and Inter-group Conflicts in Africa. Oslo, Peace Research Institute Oslo. (Unpublished.)

**Infographic:**

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**7 – Educated growth**


**Infographic:**

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**8 – Schooling can save the planet**


**Infographic:**
www.education-transforms.org
www.efareport.unesco.org
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