



Fighting Social Inequality
CalsMUN 2023

Research Report

Forum: General assembly 3

Issue: Creating Educational Programs in LEDCs to Pursue a More Literate and Well-Educated Future Generation

Chairs: Margarita Sanchez Donayre and Nour-elhoda Rezgui





Introduction

Creating educational programs in LEDCs is important for the future development and success of these countries. Education is a key factor in improving literacy rates, providing job opportunities, and increasing the overall quality of life. A well-educated population is better equipped to drive innovation and productivity, which are key factors in the growth of an economy. Additionally, education can help reduce poverty and income inequality, as individuals with higher levels of education tend to have higher earning potential and are more likely to secure good paying jobs.

Definition of Key Terms:

LEDC: Less Economically Developed Country. Countries with a lower GDP and a lower standard of living than MEDC (More Economically Developed Country) countries. Indicators used to classify countries as LEDC or MEDC include industrial development and education.

Literacy: The ability to use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge.

Gender Parity: Gender parity concerns relative equality in terms of numbers and proportions of women and men, girls and boys, and is often calculated as the ratio of female-to-male values for a given indicator.

NGO: Non-Profit Organization that is independent of any government. NGO activities include, but are not limited to, **environmental, social, advocacy and human rights work**. They can work to promote social or political change on a broad scale or very locally. NGOs play a critical part in developing society, improving communities, and promoting citizen participation.

Background Information

Education is a human right as well as one of the development goals of the United Nations. This is by reason that education is essential for economic growth and literacy. Literacy is essential to function properly and grow in the 21st century. While most developed countries have a 99% literacy rate, many underdeveloped countries do not even reach half of that percentage. There are currently 773 million adults worldwide, of whom two-thirds are women, that lack basic literacy and numeral abilities. Education does not only provide children with the necessary skills to learn and develop, but also has an immense impact on poverty.

Therefore, governments should invest in education for a brighter future, especially governments of LEDCs. LEDCs, however, face many challenges when it comes to trying to invest in education:



First, it is to mention that these countries have limited resources, which makes it difficult for them to provide education for all children. This is caused by the lack of government funds available to invest in education. This makes resources such as schools, teachers and educational materials unavailable. Besides that, many governments of LEDCs tend to be corrupt and do not invest enough in education. Political instability can also disrupt the economy, and it can make it difficult for the governments to allocate funds to education. The weak economies of LEDCs also make it difficult for governments to invest in education. Furthermore, many children live in poverty. This causes them to be incapable of having resources that they need to attend school, such as uniforms, books and transportation. Note that NGOs sometimes also provide schools in foreign countries with books in English, which makes it difficult for students to understand, and takes away its use.

Another big issue is gender inequality. In some LEDCs, girls do not acquire the same rights as boys do for education. Worldwide, there are 129 million girls out of school. In countries that have been affected by conflict, girls are twice as likely to be out of school than girls in non-affected areas. In primary education, only 49% of countries have reached gender parity. In lower secondary education 42% of countries do, and in higher secondary education only 24% of countries have gender parity. The inequality between girls and boys within education has various reasons. In some LEDCs cultural and social norms could hinder the access of girls to education. Which is also why it is important to inform women about the importance of education and their right to education. Poverty could also be a cause, considering that girls are more likely to be kept out of school to be married off. Girls may also face violence or harassment while trying to attend school. Equality in education is critical for the development of individuals and societies.

A study found that seven-out-of-ten of children in LEDCs are unable to read and understand a short text by the time they finish primary education. This lack of literacy causes students to be more likely to drop out of school. Yet more children than ever are currently in school. This learning crisis is generally found all over the world. Students are falling behind in their education, especially in LEDCs. Covid-19 has made this crisis even worse, acknowledging that the crisis was already deepening before the pandemic. While some countries were quickly able to open schools, other countries were still struggling and therefore were unable to re-open the schools. At least 463 million children worldwide were digitally unreachable. Of that number, three out of four were children who came from poor households or rural areas. Countries that had poor education prior to the pandemic also had to close schools for a long period of time. This made their lack of education even worse, and in the long run will be unfortunate for the future of the economy.

To conclude it all, we have three major issues. The first issue to tackle is inequality. Education should be available to all, regardless of gender. The second is quality education. The learning crisis should be solved and students should not only be present, but also learn. The third issue is financing. LEDCs do not always have enough money to fund education in their country, and some governments of LEDCs do not invest in education by choice.



Relevant UN treaties, Resolutions and Reports

“Convention against discrimination in education” *United Nations*, Dec 14 1960
<https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20429/volume-429-I-6193-English.pdf>

“Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education”
UNESCO, Nov 25 2019
<https://www.unesco.org/en/education/higher-education/global-convention>

“Learning crisis” *World Bank*
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2022/09/16/learning-in-crisis-prioritizing-education-effective-policies-to-recover-lost-learning>

Previous Attempts of Resolve the Issue

Around the year 2000, the United Nations made the goal to ensure that 100% of all primary students will be in school by 2015. In 2015, 91% of children were in primary school. The goal was not reached and therefore the UN has created another goal. In 2015, the United Nations created the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are 17 goals that are meant to serve as a “shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet now and into the future”. The fourth goal of the SDGs is to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. The goal fits perfectly with our issue and therefore is very important. If we look at the progress, it is noticeable that the Covid pandemic has caused tremendous damage to children all over the world. “School closures have affected girls, children from disadvantaged backgrounds, those living in rural areas, children with disabilities and children from ethnic minorities more than their peers.” was reported in 2022. This is a goal that is aimed to be reached by 2030. But this goal will not be reached if action will not be taken soon. It is a matter of how much governments can fund education in their countries, and whether governments are willing to do so in the first place. It is recommended to read more about the progress on the website: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4> .

Since the learning crisis has gotten worse after the Covid-19 pandemic, there are a lot of recently formed programs to solve the issue. The World Bank has established a recovery program in 2022 along with many other NGOs, including the United Nations. This program can be found in the [RAPID Framework for Learning Recovery and Acceleration](#). The program has five steps, and is ongoing. The first step is to reach every child and keep them in school. The second is to assess learning levels regularly. The third step is *prioritizing* teaching fundamentals. Fourth is to increase the efficiency of instruction, including through catch-up learning. And the last step is to develop psychosocial health and wellbeing.

As simple as these steps seem, they may not always be realistic and maintainable for LEDCs. Reaching every child in LEDCs can be difficult, due to bad infrastructure and the financial situation of parents. The governments could provide poor families with cash transfers, but this can not be ensured. Besides that, assessing every child (at national/sub-national level) can also be very challenging. Teachers would have to be provided with



instruments to do so. Though the question is how this will be maintained, and where these funds will come from. Although it must be mentioned that this plan has not been implemented long enough for us to judge whether it has or hasn't worked. It also has many good sides which could be used in the resolution.

Possible Solutions

In order to solve the learning crisis, a recovery program needs to be made and implemented. This plan however, needs to be realistic, and structured. At the end of the day, governments still have the power over their country's policies. First, education needs to be accessible and it should be free for everyone. Besides that, the importance of education needs to be promoted among parents and girls. Parents are responsible for their children, and women in LEDCs tend to participate less in education. Since the learning crisis has caused students to fall behind, surveys need to be conducted to decide what needs to be worked on. This should be done at national, and classroom level. Then schools should support initiatives that increase the amount of learning. This can be the focus on recovery learning, investing in teachers and longer learning time.

Bibliography

"United Nations General Assembly reaffirms UNESCO's leading role in promoting literacy." *UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning*, 29 Nov 2018, <https://uil.unesco.org/literacy/united-nations-general-assembly-reaffirms-unescos-leading-role-promoting-literacy>

"Definition of Literacy." *National Assessment of Adult Literacy*, 2003 https://nces.ed.gov/naal/fr_definition.asp

"LEDC and MEDC Education Comparison." *Mission 2015 biodiversity*, 2011, https://web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2015/2015/ledc_medc_edcomparison.html#:~:text=The%20LEDC

"Quality Education." *United Nations sustainable development goals*, 2022 <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>

"Quality Education: why it matters." *United Nations sustainable development goals*, 2022 https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/4_Why-It-Matters-2020.pdf

"Education in the Developing World." *The Human Journey*, 2023 <https://humanjourney.us/health-and-education-in-the-modern-world/education-in-the-developing-world/>



“Introducing human rights education” *Council of Europe*, 2023
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/introducing-human-rights-education#:~:text=Article%206%20of%20the%20Universal,human%20rights%20and%20fundamental%20freedoms>.

“Literacy rate, adult total (% of people ages 15 and above) - Least developed countries: UN classification.” *UNESCO institute for statistics*, 24 Oct 2022
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?locations=XL>

“Taliban ban women from university education.” *The Guardian*, Dec 20 2022
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/dec/20/taliban-ban-afghan-women-university-education>

“Girl’s Education” *UNICEF*, -
<https://www.unicef.org/education/girls-education>

“The Problem of Education in Developing Countries” *Oxford academic*, march 2019
<https://academic.oup.com/book/35237/chapter/299774411>

“Learning crisis” *World Bank*
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2022/09/16/learning-in-crisis-prioritizing-education-effective-policies-to-recover-lost-learning>

“Let me learn” *UNICEF*, -
<https://www.unicef.org/learning-crisis>

“Education for all” *United Nations, Irina Brokova*
<https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/education-all-rising-challenge>

“What is an NGO? What role does it play in civil society?” *Candid learning*
<https://learning.candid.org/resources/knowledge-base/ngo-definition-and-role/>

“Gender Parity” *European Institute for Gender Equality*
<https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1195>

“To solve the learning crisis, start with the problem” *Marla Spivack, Rise*
<https://riseprogramme.org/blog/solve-learning-crisis-start-problem>