



Education

Education as a public good, a fundamental human right and a key instrument in reducing poverty

Education plays a fundamental role in human, social and economic development. Investments in good quality education, especially in the education of girls, are of fundamental importance for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Education is also key to building a democratic society, inclusive economic development and promoting gender equality. Sida's support to education amounted to SEK 846 million in 2021, corresponding to 3 percent out of Sida's total support.



MAIN AREAS OF SUPPORT

The focus of Sida's support to education lies on:

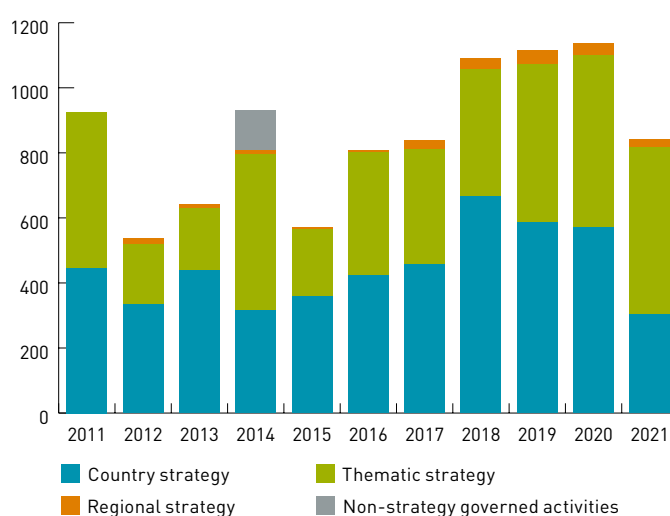
- strengthening equitable and inclusive national education systems for quality education, from early childhood education and throughout life,
- promoting equal rights to education for all girls and boys,
- paying attention to the importance of education and the role of education in conflict and post-conflict situations and in humanitarian crises.

Education and learning encompass strengthening values, knowledge and skills that promote equal rights and opportunities for everyone to make sustainable life choices. Good quality teacher training is a prerequisite to improve quality learning outcomes. A Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA)¹ is applied to understand the barriers in education. The need to support education in conflict, post-conflict situations and humanitarian crises (also called Education in Emergencies EiE), increased for migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons and host communities to make schools safe for children.

DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD

During many years, the number of children attending school has been on the rise. However, learning has become an extraordinary challenge and out of school rates have increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.² During the pandemic, over 1.5 billion children or 90 percent of the

SIDA'S DISBURSEMENT TO EDUCATION 2011-2021 (SEK MILLION)



world's student population have been affected by school closures in more than 190 countries. Particularly vulnerable children, not able to participate in distance learning, have been hit hardest. Humanitarian emergencies and protracted crises disrupt education and only 63 percent of refugee children attend primary school, 24 percent secondary education and 1 percent higher education.³

The full effects of school closures still remain to be seen. Estimates show that some 70 percent of 10-year-old children in low and middle income countries are unable

¹ Sida (2022), *Human Rights Based Approach*

² UNICEF (2022), *Are children really learning? Exploring foundational skills in the midst of a learning crisis*

³ UNHCR (2019): *Refugee Education in Crisis* downloaded 27 may 2021.

THE GLOBAL GOALS

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development include everyone - and we can all contribute. The goals are interdependent and therefore indivisible. Sida's main contribution is to implement development cooperation, thereby reducing poverty and saving lives. Together we can build a better future where no one is left behind.



Results

to read or comprehend a simple story.⁴ The lack of learning is deepened by recent evidence showing that many do not return to school when they re-open.⁵ Additionally, when schools shut down, early marriages increase, sexual exploitation of girls and young women rises, teenage pregnancies become more common, children with disabilities are excluded and child labour grows.⁶

The right to education still remains unfulfilled for many, especially for boys and girls from marginalised and vulnerable groups. Girls are still less likely to begin school whereas boys face a higher risk of dropping out. There is a widening gender gap in reading and literacy skills, where boys increasingly are lagging behind. This was mainly a concern in high-income countries, but now the trend is also evident in many low- and lower middle-income countries.⁷

The magnitude of the global education crisis is still not fully understood, with devastating consequences in terms of learning and earning losses,⁸ which may stretch beyond one generation of students. Economic growth depends primarily on the skills of people,⁹ and a generation of learners could stand to lose as much as USD 17 trillion in lifetime earnings, or 14 percent of today's global GDP.¹⁰ While Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has the highest rates of out-of-school children in the world, the lowest learning outcomes and a growing demand for education¹¹, aid to education in SSA is decreasing. Urgent actions are required to change course, because the future of people depends on the future of the planet, and both are at risk according to UNESCO, proposing a new social contract for education.¹²

SIDA'S SUPPORT

Sida focus on the right to inclusive equitable quality education, promoting and strengthening national education systems, where support to basic education and life-long learning remains priority areas. Support to governments is complemented with support to civil society organisations (CSO) and multilateral organisations. Education is prioritized in three out of Sida's 33 bilateral and regional strategies; and in one out of twelve thematic strategies. During 2021 Sweden's support to education in Cambodia was

4 UNESCO (2022), *Where are we on education recovery? - UNESCO Digital Library*, page 7

5 UNICEF (2022), *Are children really learning? Exploring foundational skills in the midst of a learning crisis*

6 UNESCO 2021 <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/consequences> downloaded March 2022

7 UNESCO (2022), *Leave No child behind: global report on boys' disengagement from education*

8 UNESCO (2022), *Where are we on education recovery? - UNESCO Digital Library*, page 7

9 IMF (2022) *The Basic Skills Gap*, International Monetary Fund, Hanukesh and Woessmann,

10 UNESCO (2022), (in present value) *Where are we on education recovery? - UNESCO Digital Library*, page 9

11 UNICEF *Transforming Education in Africa.pdf*

12 UNESCO (2021), *REIMAGINING OUR FUTURES TOGETHER — A new social contract for education. REPORT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE FUTURES OF EDUCATION*, UNESCO,

phased out after nearly 40 years. In conflict and post-conflict countries multilateral actors play a crucial role.¹³

At bilateral level, the conditions changed drastically in *Afghanistan* in August 2021 to support the national education system when the new de facto authorities took control of the country. Sida closely monitor the situation in the country and adapted the support to community based education, accelerated learning programmes and literacy and capacity building of teachers through non-state actors and multilaterals.

In *South Sudan* education levels are among the lowest in the world. Sida's support focuses on bridging the humanitarian aid, long term development cooperation and peace building to strengthen access and quality education, gender equality in education, technical vocational training (TVET) and governance mechanisms.

In both mainland *Tanzania* and Zanzibar, the bilateral support is provided through a result-based approach to the entire education sector. The most disadvantaged learners are in focus, as well as strengthening basic education systems. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) supports Tanzania and is administrated by Sida having the role as a Grant Agent. Support to CSO's are both strengthening advocacy and offering girls and young mothers who dropped out of school due to pregnancy an opportunity to continue basic education and technical vocation training through Folk Development Colleges (FDC).

At the global level Sida supports UNESCO, GPE, UNICEF and Global Campaign for Education. UNESCO is provided with a non-earmarked funding to the education sector. UNESCO has a normative role in education and leads the coordination of SDG 4. UNESCO also ensures that neglected areas such as Comprehensive Sexuality Education is part of the education agenda.

Sida's support to GPE contributes to education in 68 countries, of which some 75 percent are fragile or conflict-affected countries. GPE COVID-19- related funding reached 355 million children in 66 countries with additional learning materials, support for teachers, lessons through radio/television, measures and campaigns to safely reopen schools.

STORY OF CHANGE

Sida's direct funding to all public schools in Cambodia has made it possible for schools to buy books and school supplies and provide extra lessons. The right supplies and more hours of teaching have a direct impact on students potential to learn.



Kampong Cham.
Photo: Magnus Saemundsson

13 Cambodia is one of five countries in the forthcoming impact and sustainability evaluation of Sida's support to education.

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