

# The Learning Generation

## Fact Sheet

**The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity has set forward a proposal for the largest expansion of education opportunity in modern history. Achieving the Commission’s Learning Generation vision would mean that all children in low- and middle-income countries would have access to quality preprimary, primary, and secondary education within a generation, and a child in a low-income country would be as likely to reach the baseline level of secondary school skills and participate in post-secondary education as a child in a high-income country today.**

### A global education crisis

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- 263 million children and young people around the world are out of school
- Only half of primary school children and little more than a quarter of secondary school children in low- and middle-income countries are learning basic skills
- 330 million primary and secondary school students who are in school do not achieve even the most basic learning outcomes
- The crisis is growing as populations grow – there will be an estimated 1.4 billion school-age children in low- and middle-income countries by 2030
- Without urgent change, more than 1.5 billion adults will have no education beyond primary school in 2030 Up to half of today’s jobs – around 2 billion – could disappear due to automation in the coming decades, radically altering the demand for skills and making learning even more important
- 40 percent of employers globally are already finding it difficult to recruit people with the skills they need
- The disadvantaged suffer most – the gap between the chances of children in the poorest quintile and richest quintile completing primary school averages 32 percent in low- and middle-income countries
- Twice as many girls as boys will never start school

## If the world fails to get all children learning, then by 2050:

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- GDP per capita in low-income countries will be almost 70 percent lower than it would be if all children were learning – low-income countries alone will lose \$1.8 trillion
- The number of lives lost each year because of lower levels of education will equal those lost today to HIV/AIDS and malaria, two of the most deadly global diseases
- Population growth will be at least 15 percent higher than if all children were learning
- More than one-quarter of the population in low-income countries will be living in extreme poverty

## Investing in education pays big economic returns

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- A dollar invested in a one-year increase in the mean years of schooling generates more than \$5 in additional gross earnings in low-income countries and \$2.5 in lower-middle income countries
- A dollar invested in a one-year increase in mean years of schooling, especially for girls, generates a combined earnings and health-inclusive benefit of \$10 in low-income countries and nearly \$4 in lower-middle income countries
- Achieving the Learning Generation would mean that a child in a low- or middle-income country starting preschool in 2017 could expect to earn almost five times as much as their parents over his or her lifetime, a value that would exceed the total costs of their education by a factor of 12

## Education delivers substantial health and stability benefits

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- Higher levels of education, especially girls' education, have significant impacts on life expectancy and mortality; one-third of the reductions in adult mortality and nearly 15 percent of the reductions in infant mortality – 30 million child deaths and 100 million adult deaths averted – between 1970 and 2010 can be attributed to gains in female schooling
- The mortality reductions from education improvements in 2050, measured in years of life gained, would almost be equivalent to eradicating HIV and malaria deaths today or to reducing the two main causes of death in 2050 – cancer and cardiovascular disease – by two-thirds. Each additional year's increase in average years of girls' schooling reduces adolescent birth rates annually by 8.5 births per 1,000 girls
- A child whose mother can read is 50 percent more likely to live past the age of five, 50 percent more likely to be immunized, and twice as likely to attend school.
- Every additional year of schooling reduces an adolescent boy's risk of becoming involved in conflict by 20 percent
- Reducing educational inequality reduces conflict – in countries with twice the levels of educational inequality, the probability of conflict more than doubles

## Action to achieve the Learning Generation

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- Countries will need to improve the performance of their education systems and cut waste -- low- and middle-income countries spend an average of 2 percent of GDP on education costs that do not lead to learning
- Countries will need to facilitate innovation – in the poorest countries, less than one in 10 schools are connected to the Internet
- Countries will need to maximize returns by refocusing investment in education on those most at risk of being left behind – today in low income countries, 46 percent of public education resources are allocated to educate the 10 percent most educated students
- Countries will need to mobilize more financial resources – spending on education will need to increase from \$1.2 trillion per year today to \$3 trillion by 2030 across all low- and middle-income countries

## A “Financing Compact” for success

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- Low- and middle-income countries will need to increase domestic public expenditures on education from an estimated \$1 trillion in 2015 to \$2.7 trillion by 2030, or from 4 to 5.8 percent of GDP
- International finance for education will need to increase from today's \$16 billion per year to \$89 billion per year by 2030, but will account for only 3 percent of the total financing needed
- A new Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) investment mechanism for education could potentially mobilize \$20 billion or more annually from MDBs for education by 2030 (up from \$3.5 billion today)
- The international community will give priority support to countries committing to raise needed revenues and make needed reforms

