

## EDUCATE ALL GIRLS AND BOYS IN SOUTH ASIA The Global Out-of-School Children Initiative

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### Introduction:

The South Asia Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) is part of the global initiative launched by UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) in 2010. The goal of the initiative is to make significant and sustained reduction in the number of out-of-school children around the world by

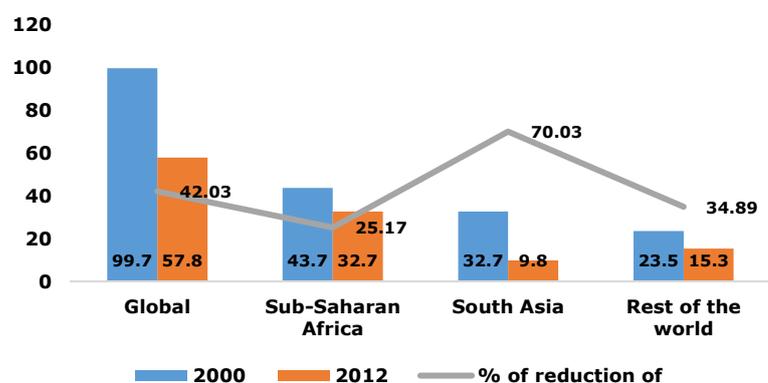
- developing comprehensive profiles of excluded children using consistent and innovative statistical methods;
- linking these profiles to the barriers and bottlenecks that lead to exclusion; and
- identifying, promoting and implementing sound policies that address exclusion from a multi-sectorial perspective.

*WHEN IS A CHILD CONSIDERED TO BE "OUT OF SCHOOL"? The OOSCI defines as "out of school" children of primary or lower secondary school age who are not enrolled in primary or secondary education. Out-of-school children can be categorized into those who have never enrolled in school and those who enrolled but left school before completing the full primary and lower secondary education cycle. The OOSCI also aims to get in-depth information on children who are in school but are at risk of dropping out and becoming the out-of-school children of tomorrow. The OOSCI uses both administrative data (i.e. data from Education Management Information Systems) and household surveys to analyze where and who out-of-school children are.*

### Regional context:

- 36 million out-of-school children aged 5 to 14 live in South Asia.
- 1 in every 4 primary school-age child in the world lives in South Asia
- There are 100.6 million adolescents of lower secondary school-age in South Asia, 52% of whom are boys
- 168 million children of primary school-age live in South Asia, 52% of whom are boys. This is the highest number of any region in the world
- The region accounts for 13.3% of the total global adolescents' population.

**REGIONWISE NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN, 2000-2012 (in millions)**



### Progress since 1999:

#### Improving child nutrition:

Stunted children are also more likely to experience difficulty in learning. In South Asia, 38% of children under five were stunted in 2013 as compared to 50% in 2000.

#### Expanding pre-school education:

55% of young children in South Asia are enrolled in pre-schools as of 2012 (up from 22% in 1992) with no major disparities in access of boys and girls.

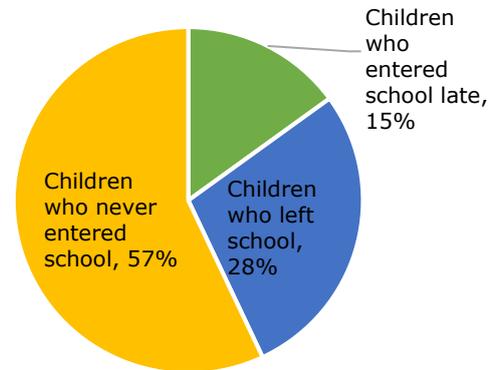
## Highlights

### Getting more children to school:

South Asia achieved the biggest reduction in the numbers of primary school-age out-of-school children globally to 9.8 million in 2012 from 36.7 million in 1999. There has also been substantial reduction in the numbers of out of school adolescents to 26.5 million in 2012 from 38 million in 1999, although progress has stagnated since 2007.

Since 1999, more and more children are attending primary and secondary schools in South Asia. The male female gap has continuously narrowed, except in upper secondary education. However, greater efforts are required to expand secondary education.

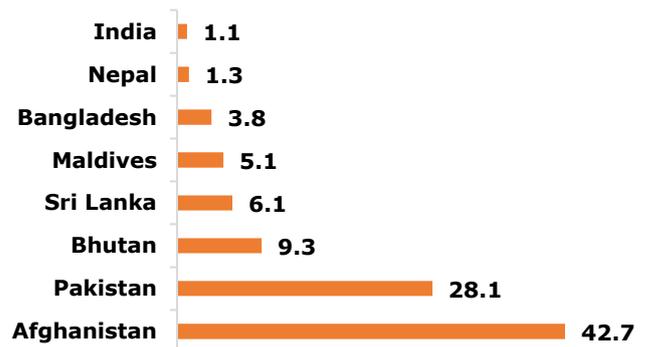
### CHILDREN OF PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE ARE OUT OF SCHOOL IN SOUTH ASIA



### Education Scenario in South Asia:

- 9.8 million children of primary school-age are out of school.
- 26.5 million lower secondary school-age adolescents are out of school.
- 5.3 million children out of school as a result of conflict.
- In South Asia, for every 100 children who start primary education, 36 will not reach the last grade, this is the highest rate of attrition in the world.
- 14.5 million children dropped out before reaching the last grade of primary education in 2012.
- 10.4 million children enrolled in primary schools repeated a grade in 2012.
- 1/3 of children reach grade 4 and achieve minimum learning standards basics
- 1/3 of children do not reach grade 4
- 1/3 of School Life Expectancy (SLE) in South Asia for males is 11.6 years.
- Although the eight countries children reach grade 4 but do not learn the basics
- On average, children in South Asia spend only 11.3 years of formal schooling from primary to tertiary education compared with the average in developed countries of 16.4 years.
- School Life Expectancy (SLE) in South Asia for females is 10.9 years.
- Although the eight countries of South Asia have shown significant success in bringing more children to school since 1999, progress has been stagnating. Assuming the 1992-2012 trend has continued, there are an estimated 27.4 million primary and lower secondary school-age out-of-school children in the region in 2015.

### COUNTRYWISE RATE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE OUT-OF-SCHOOL (%)



### Common factors keeping children from school:

1. Poverty
2. Gender
3. Remote Location
4. Social discrimination
5. Disability
6. Conflict emergencies

Considering the context in India, 50% out of school children are in rural, 41% are in urban and 34% of the 2.9 million children with disabilities aged 6-14 years.

## Highlights

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### **Projected year of achieving a primary completion rate in excess of 97% for girls, South Asian countries:**

- Maldives is expected to achieve in the projected year of 2015 (earliest among the eight countries).
- Pakistan is expected to achieve in the projected year of 2090 (farthest among the eight countries).
- India is expected to achieve in the projected year of 2068.

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*Research from India confirms that good information for parents on the long-term benefits of girls' education helps to keep girls in school and delays their marriages.*

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### **CHANGE IS POSSIBLE:**

- Strengthen education sector-wide approaches (SWAps) with increased investments for marginalized groups and alternative pathways to basic education and ensure legislation for compulsory education are in place and implemented.
- Ensure that children who are out of school or at risk of dropping out receive special attention and more resources from Ministries of Education and from private and community partnerships. Provision of quality education where children are actually learning is crucial.
- Implement both large-scale holistic and targeted child-level interventions to address multiple barriers to schooling.
- Ensure interventions are evidence-based, which requires strengthening the education monitoring system to improve the availability of reliable, relevant and disaggregated data. This is a prerequisite for better identifying out-of-school children, understanding why they are out of school, and investigating how their needs and can best be addressed.

### **Read the full report at the official website,**

[https://www.unicef.org/rosa/EducateAllGirlsandBoys-UNICEF\\_ROSA.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/rosa/EducateAllGirlsandBoys-UNICEF_ROSA.pdf)

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