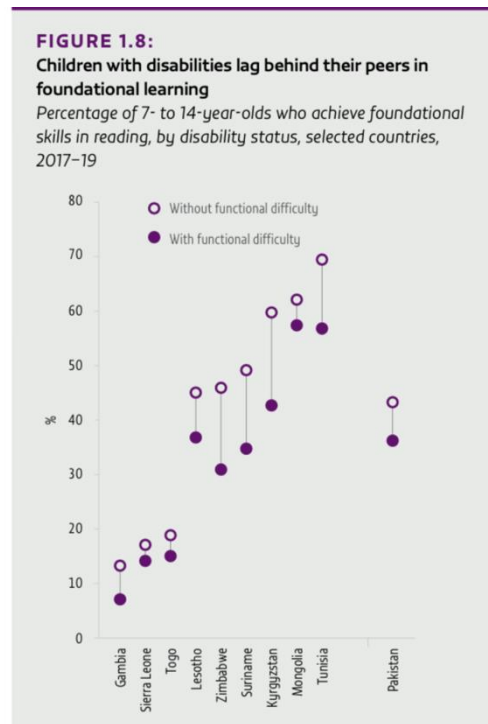
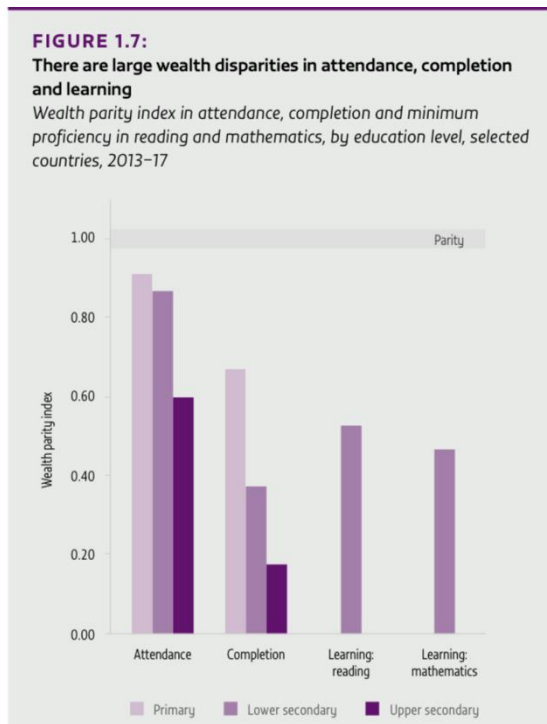


## The Issue of Education Inequality

Education inequality refers to the disparities in opportunities and outcomes in education between privileged and disadvantaged groups ([science direct.com](https://www.sciencedirect.com)) this means that if it were to be present, there would be differences in academic support, achievement, and opportunities which a student has.

According to the inclusion and education 2020 GEM report by UNESCO, it could be argued that the biggest issue facing education globally is inequality. Its causes are numerous, and its effects include disparities in educational access, retention, and most importantly, learning. On a global scale, these variations correspond to the degree of development of different nations and areas. The general well-being of pupils, their socioeconomic origins and cultural backgrounds, the language spoken by their families, whether or not they work outside the home, and, in certain nations, their sex are all factors that influence their ability to attend school in a given state. Reasons which could drive education inequality could be poverty, gender biases and discrimination of any kind, geographical barriers such as living in a remote area which has a lack of schools, times of conflict, and lack of internet ( which has become prevalent in the years of the COVID-19 pandemic which forced many schools to switch to remote learning.



## Background

There have been many policies which have been passed such as “the UN convention on the rights of a child” articles which specifically relate to education are articles 28 and 29 which state that every child has the right to education and that the goals of education

are to “develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full.” In addition to this, the sustainable development goal 4 states the progress we have made so far includes that there was “an increase in worldwide primary school completion, lower secondary completion” between the years of 2015 and 2021 although it was decidedly slower than the 15 years prior. According to the report, the challenges which still remain are that 300 million children and young people are still predicted to lack basic numeracy and literacy skills by 2030. Furthermore, there are still economic setbacks which are prevalent in some disadvantaged areas and conflict zones. The learning crisis is further deepened by underfunding, teacher shortages, and weak education infrastructure. For example, less than half of schools in sub-Saharan Africa have access to computers, power, drinking water, and the Internet. As for children in conflict zones UNICEF have stated that in May 2015, Oslo, Norway, the Safe Schools Declaration was opened for governmental ratification. It is a political commitment to support the continuation of education during times of war, to improve the protection of students, instructors, schools, and universities during armed conflict, and to implement practical steps to discourage the military's use of schools.

The Safe Schools Declaration has been approved by 120 states as of right now. States that have endorsed the Declaration pledge to restore access to safe education and to create conflict-sensitive educational institutions that foster mutual respect among social or ethnic groups. The Declaration serves as a foundation for cooperation and communication, and endorsing states get together frequently to review how the Declaration is being implemented. UNICEF aims to achieve this by “being on the front lines in conflict-affected countries to develop school safety plans, get children back to learning by providing psycho-social support and informal learning opportunities, training teachers, rehabilitating schools, and distributing supplies for teaching and learning.”

Clearly, despite many efforts and steps in the right direction, there is still more advocating for education to be done. Together, we must work on not only continuing the progress which has been seen in the GEM report but strengthening it and ensuring children and young people in marginalised areas too have a quality education with equal opportunities.

Questions to consider:

- What additional steps should be taken in order to educate children in conflict zones?
- Has your country signed the Safe Schools Declaration?

- What is the education system of the country which you represent? Is the system proving to be helpful?
- How should we better help marginalised areas?
- Could phrasing the issue to be equity instead of equality be beneficial? (Due to the fact equity means to provide resources to area in need to level the playing field for an equal chance at education.)

#### Sources/places to find useful information

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373718>

<https://www.un.org/en/un-chronicle/recognizing-and-overcoming-inequity-education>

<https://www.unicef.org/education-under-attack>

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>

<https://ifs.org.uk/inequality/education-inequalities/>

<https://www.education-inequalities.org/>