



# EDUCATE ALL GIRLS AND BOYS IN SOUTH ASIA

## The Global Out-of-School Children Initiative

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 1) developing comprehensive profiles of excluded children using consistent and innovative statistical methods; 2) linking these profiles to the barriers and bottlenecks that lead to exclusion; and 3) identifying, promoting and implementing sound policies that address exclusion from a multi-sectorial perspective.



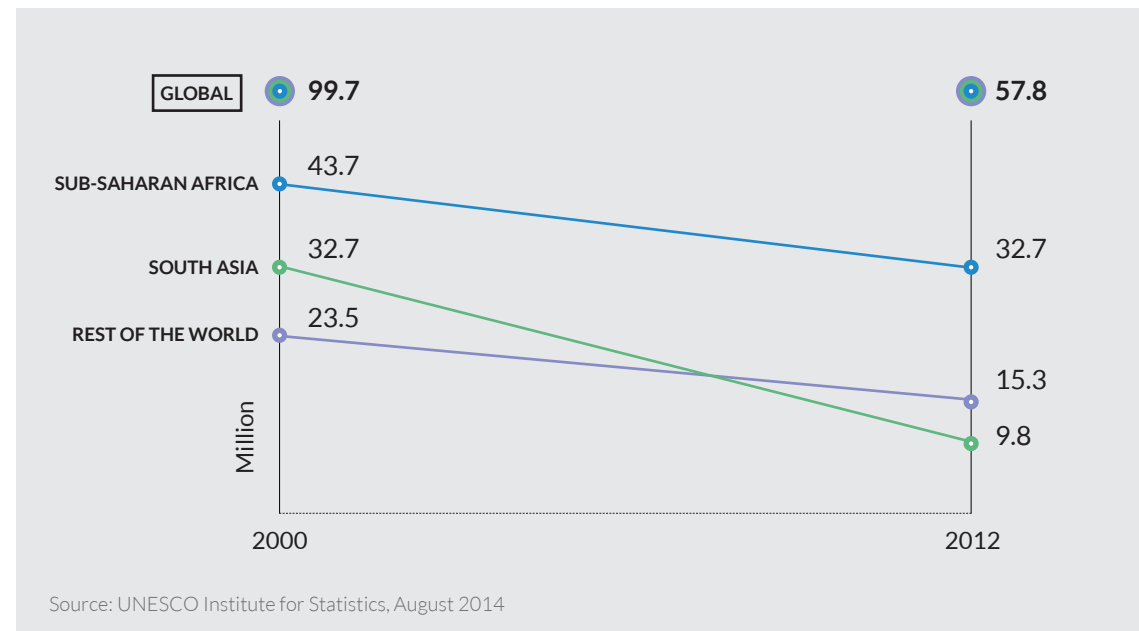
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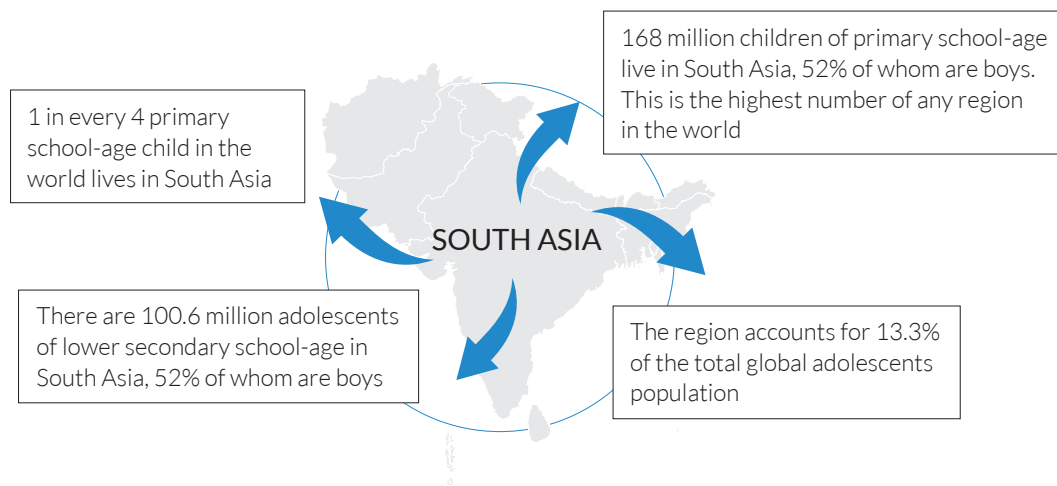
# MOST OF THE WORLD'S OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN LIVE IN SOUTH ASIA

36 MILLION OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AGED 5 TO 14 LIVE IN SOUTH ASIA

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN BY REGION, 2000-2012 (in millions)



## REGIONAL CONTEXT



# PROGRESS SINCE 1999

## PROGRESS IN:

### IMPROVING CHILD NUTRITION<sup>1</sup>

Stunting, due to chronic nutrition deprivation in utero and/or during early childhood and poor sanitation, affects physical growth. Stunted children are also more likely to experience difficulty in learning. In South Asia, 38% of children under five were stunted in 2013. While this is an improvement from 50% in 2000, there is still a long way to go.

*Coordinated interventions combining nutritional support, responsive feeding and stimulation, and early learning can fight the effects of poor diet. Stimulation and learning can be as crucial as the right foods. - EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015*

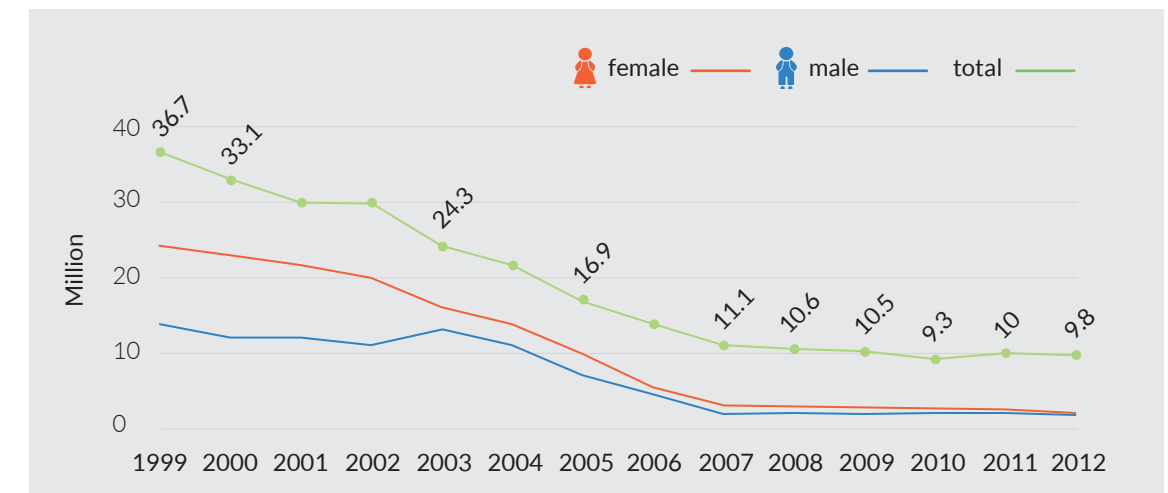
### EXPANDING PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

55% of young children in South Asia are enrolled in pre-schools as of 2012 (up from 22% in 1992)<sup>2</sup> with no major disparities in access of boys and girls. Children's exposure to early learning is crucial in getting them ready for formal schooling. Children who have pre-school experience are less likely to repeat or dropout from the early grades of primary education. Research has shown that early childhood care and education is the most cost-effective period for investment in terms of closing equity gaps and future economic returns.

### GETTING MORE CHILDREN TO SCHOOL<sup>3</sup>

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.

NUMBERS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN BY SEX, SOUTH ASIA, 1999-2012

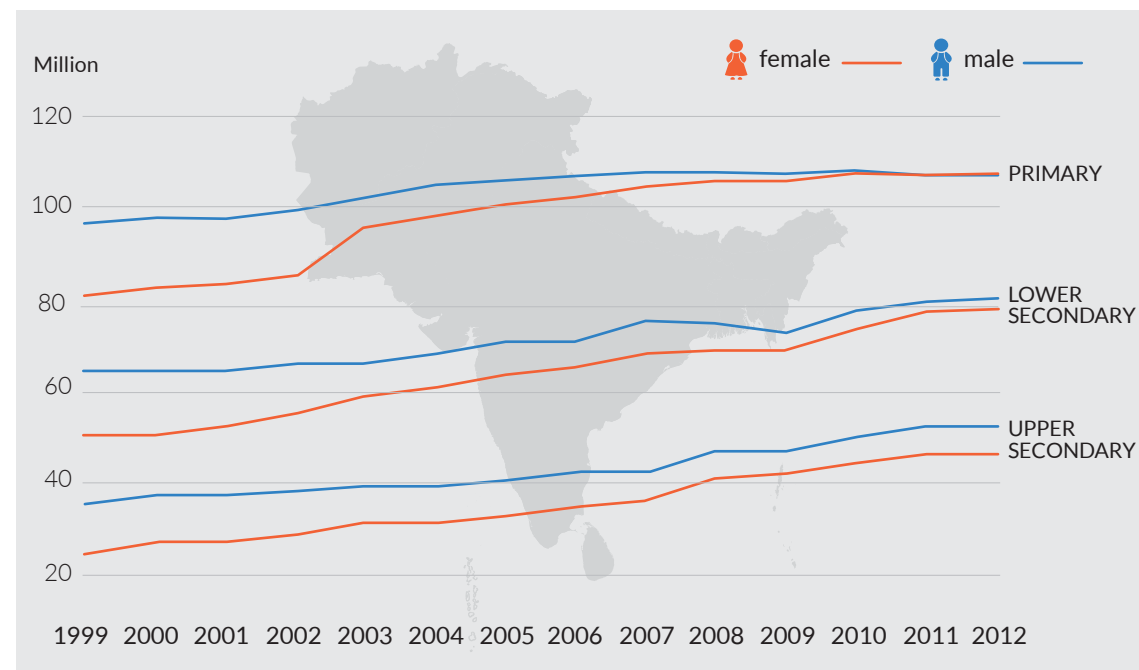


1 - UNESCO. 2015 EFA Global Monitoring Report; Undernutrition from a poor and unvaried diet can lead to delays in gross and fine motor development, and even increased risk of mortality (Britto et al., 2013). While health may appear to be the most pressing concern at this stage of life, education also has a major role to play. Good nutrition is not enough. Children who are not stimulated cognitively and are underdeveloped socio-emotionally are also at greater risk of malnutrition and, ultimately, diminished life chances (Grantham-McGregor et al., 2007)

2 - UNESCO. 2015 EFA Global Monitoring Report; UIS online database accessed 15 April 2015

3 - UNESCO. 2015 EFA Global Monitoring Report; UIS online database accessed 15 April 2015

GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO BY SEX AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION, SOUTH ASIA, 1999-2012



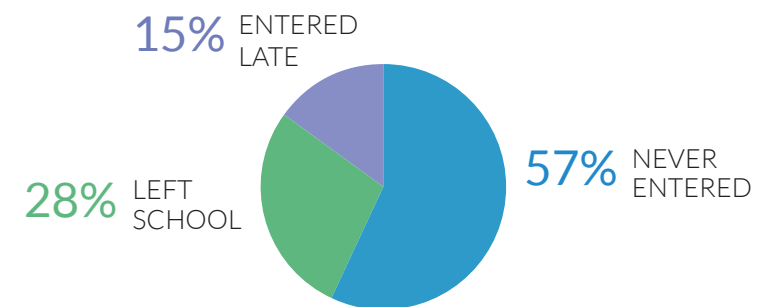
Since 1999, more and more children are attending primary and secondary schools in South Asia. The male-female gap has continuously narrowed, except in upper secondary education. However, greater efforts are required to expand secondary education.



# EXCLUSION IN EDUCATION IN SOUTH ASIA

## MILLIONS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS OUT OF SCHOOL

**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



### 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.<sup>5</sup>

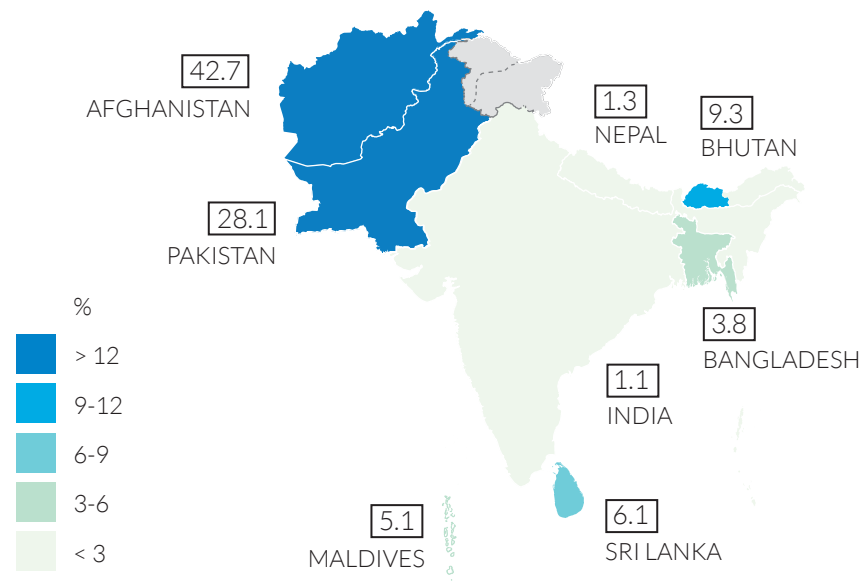


4 - UIS-UNICEF, 2015. Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All: Findings from the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children. Data is for South and West Asia

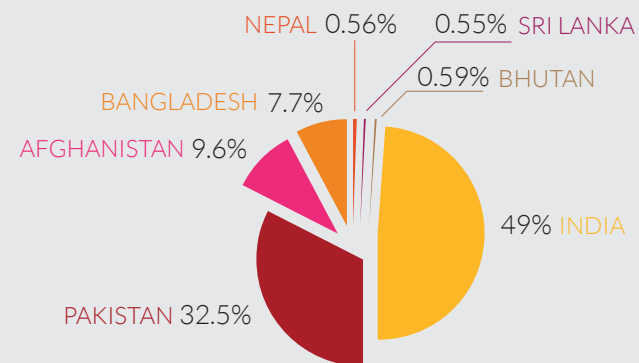
5 - UIS-UNICEF, 2015. Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All: Findings from the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children.

# WHERE ARE THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN IN SOUTH ASIA?<sup>6</sup>

PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE OUT-OF-SCHOOL RATE BY COUNTRY (%)



COUNTRY SHARE OF PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN IN SOUTH ASIA, 2012 (%)



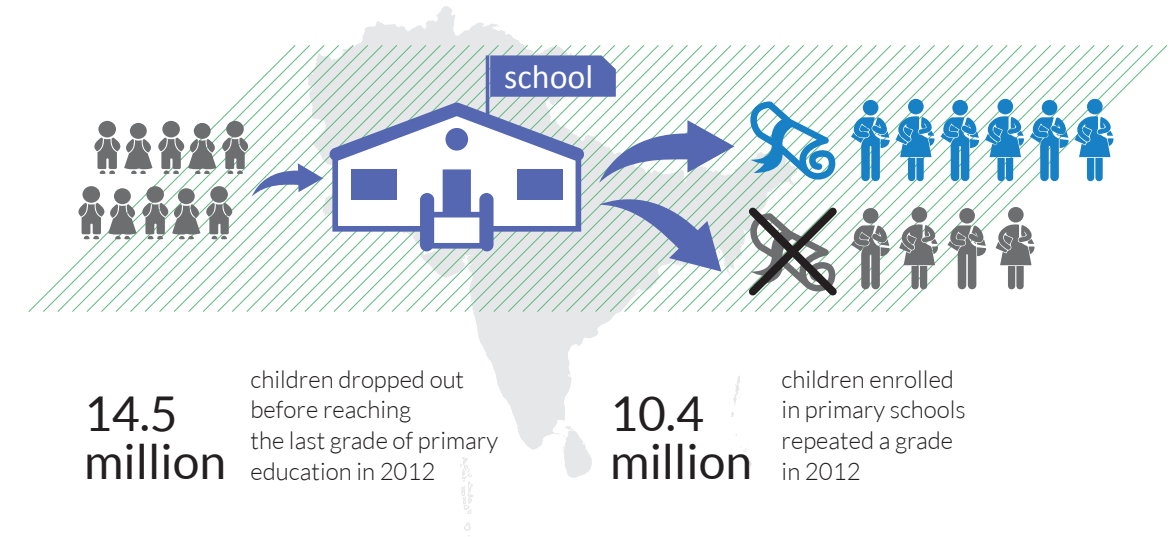
Source: UIS for data on numbers of out-of-school children. Some countries, however, may officially use slightly different numbers due to different population sources and methodological differences.

6 - UIS online database accessed June 2015

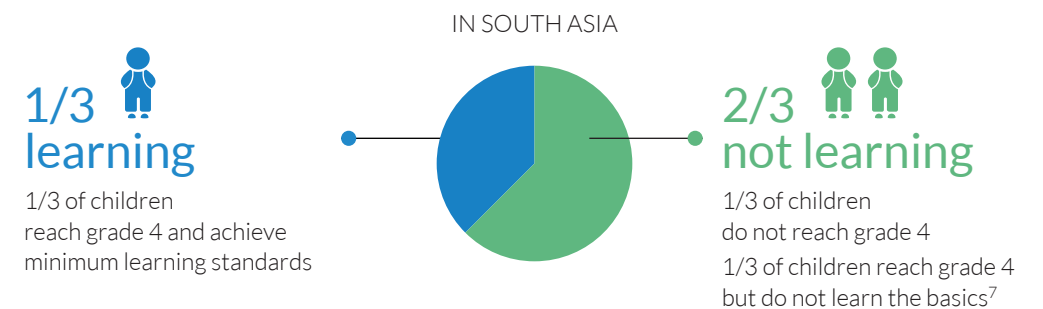
# THE LEARNING CRISIS

Getting children to school is only the start. The journey of completing a full cycle of basic education is as difficult for many children in South Asia. Being in school is also not a guarantee that children are learning.

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.



CHILDREN COULD BE IN SCHOOL BUT ARE NOT NECESSARILY LEARNING



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.<sup>8</sup>



7 - UNESCO. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2013/14, p. 191

8 - UNESCO. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015, data for 2011

# WHO ARE THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL-CHILDREN IN SOUTH ASIA?

**77 MILLION CHILDREN IN SOUTH ASIA ARE ENGAGED IN CHILD LABOUR, A MAJOR FACTOR KEEPING CHILDREN FROM GOING TO SCHOOL**

## INDIA

50% of the out-of-school children in rural areas and 41% in urban areas will never enter school<sup>9</sup>; out of 2.9 million children with disabilities aged 6 to 14 years, 34% are out of school.<sup>10</sup>

## PAKISTAN

Primary school-age children from the poorest quintile are almost 5 times more likely to be out-of-school compared to the wealthiest quintile; around 70% of primary school-age girls in the poorest quintile are out of school; 43% of the out-of-school girls and 20% of the boys will never enter school<sup>11</sup>; 88% of out-of-school children are engaged in child labour.<sup>12</sup>

## AFGHANISTAN

Almost 70% of primary school-age girls in the poorest quintile are out of school; In this age range, around 50% more girls than boys are out of school.

## NEPAL

A child from the poorest quintile is 6 times more likely to be out of school compared to a child from the wealthiest quintile; Children with disabilities are around 4.5 times more likely to be out of school.<sup>13</sup> According to the Nepal MICS 2011 girls are twice as likely to be out of school compared to boys, although administrative data paints a very different picture.

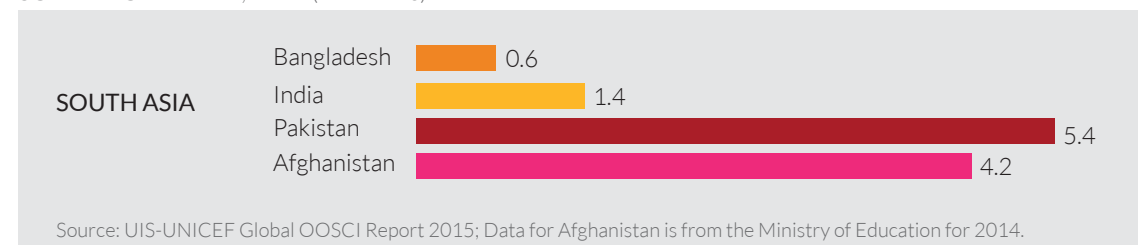
## BANGLADESH

A child from the poorest quintile is twice as likely to be out of school as a child from the wealthiest quintile. Around 45% of the poorest urban boys and 40% of the poorest rural boys are out of school. In comparison, less than 30% of the poorest rural and urban girls are out of school.<sup>14</sup>

## SRI LANKA

Children living in the tea estates are 3 times more likely to be out of school than those in other areas.<sup>15</sup>

**SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES WITH MORE THAN HALF A MILLION PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN, 2012 (in millions)**



9 - OOSCI interactive database: [www.allinschool.org](http://www.allinschool.org)

10 - UIS-UNICEF. 2015. Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All: Findings from the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children. Data from SRI-IMRB Survey 2009

11 - OOSCI interactive database: [www.allinschool.org](http://www.allinschool.org)

12 - UIS-UNICEF. 2015. Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All: Findings from the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children.

13 - Analysis based on NLSS III 2010-11

14 - Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2011

15 - UNICEF. 2014. South Asia OOSCI Report

# WHAT IS KEEPING CHILDREN FROM EDUCATION?

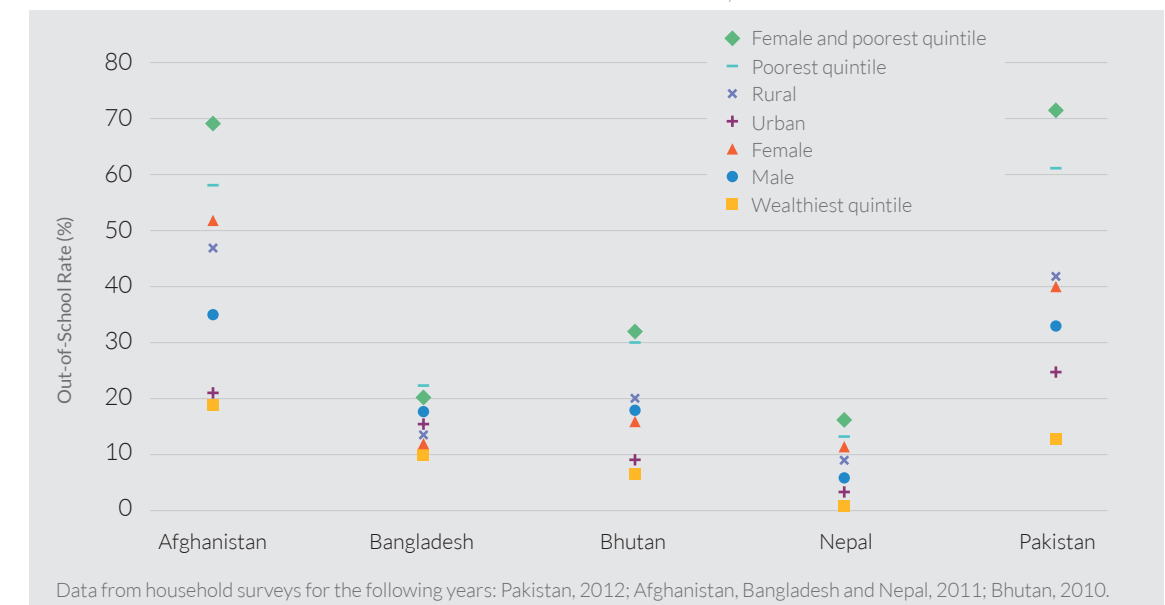
**COMMON FACTORS KEEPING CHILDREN FROM SCHOOL**



**WHO ARE THE MOST EXCLUDED CHILDREN FROM EDUCATION?**

Household survey data indicates that girls, children in rural areas and poor children are generally much more likely to be out of school. Children in the poorest quintile are consistently the most likely to be out of school, while gender and rural/urban differences vary significantly from country to country.

**OUT-OF-SCHOOL RATE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN, 2010-2012**



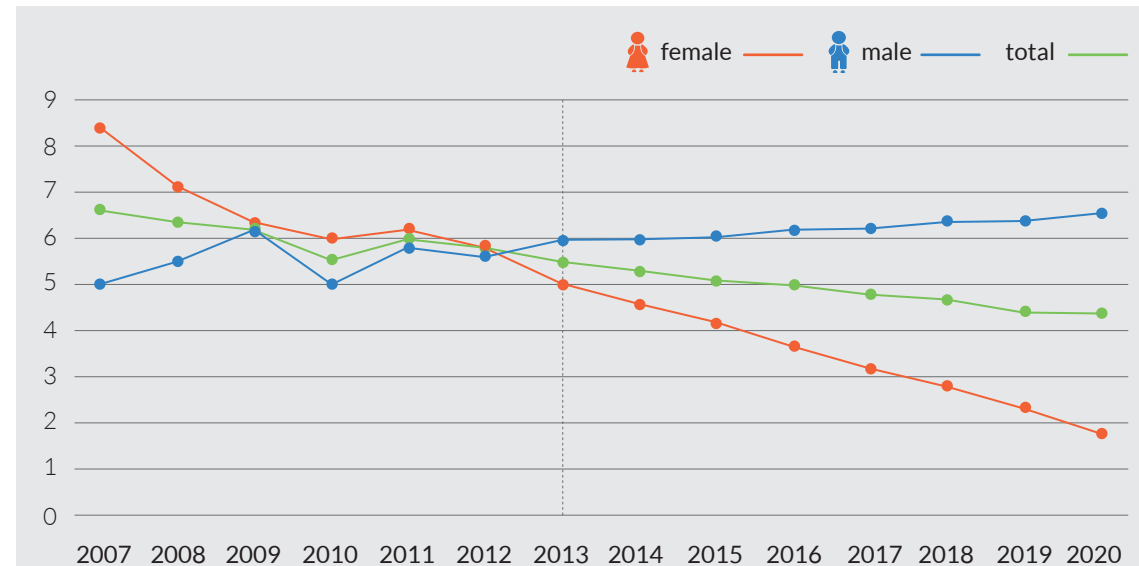
*The barrier to participation in education is often a bigger problem than the disability itself. - Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All: Findings from the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children*

# MILLIONS WILL REMAIN OUT OF SCHOOL WITHOUT ACCELERATED EFFORTS

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.

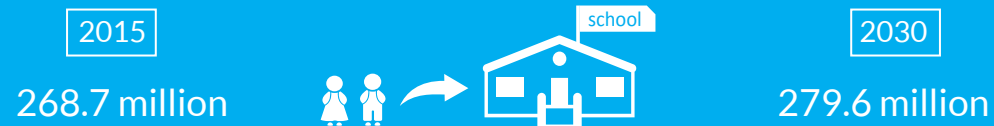
IF CURRENT TRENDS CONTINUE, MORE PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE BOYS IN SOUTH ASIA WILL BE OUT-OF-SCHOOL

PERCENTAGE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN, SOUTH ASIA, 2007-2020



Source: UIS data and projections. Figures from 2013 onwards are projected numbers.

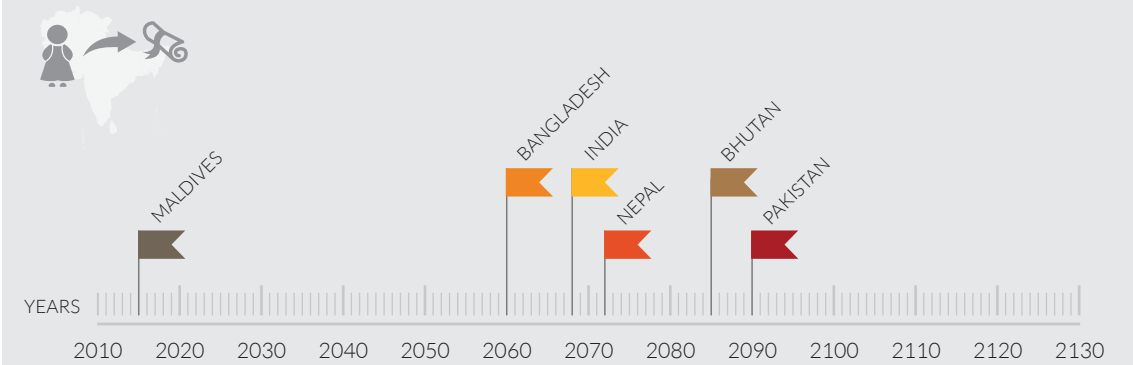
268.7 million: the primary and lower secondary school-age population in South Asia in 2015. By 2030, the projected number of children aged 4-14 will be 279.6 million, accounting for 21% of the region's total population. There are more males of school-age than females in South Asia. Only Nepal and Sri Lanka has a sex ratio under 100 while Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives and Pakistan all have a sex ratio over 100 indicating more males than females in the population.<sup>16</sup>



16 - UNICEF. 2015. Investment Case for Education. Data from the UN Population Division. 2012

## HOW LONG BEFORE ALL GIRLS FROM THE POOREST FAMILIES CAN COMPLETE PRIMARY EDUCATION?

Projected year of achieving a primary completion rate in excess of 97%, South Asian countries with data



Source: 2013/14 EFA Global Monitoring Report.

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. - Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All: Findings from the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children



# CHANGE IS POSSIBLE

*Most countries need a policy framework combining three priorities: broad investment to strengthen and expand education systems, a sharp focus on inclusion and the quality of the education on offer, and targeted interventions for the children who are the very hardest to reach. - Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All: Findings from the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children*

1. 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. Examples: Ensure SWAps and sector-plans include out-of-school focused interventions; improve the diversity spectrum of non-formal education opportunities; invest in training for non formal education teachers/facilitators.
2. 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. Examples: Integrate data relevant to OOSC into the Education Management Information System; undertake awareness and behaviour change campaigns in areas with high rates of exclusion in education, including children with disabilities; monitor whether children are learning and measure learning outcomes.
3. Implement both large-scale holistic and targeted child-level interventions to address multiple barriers to schooling: Examples: Integrated Early Childhood Development programmes, pro-poor economic incentives like food-for-education programmes and conditional cash transfers.
4. 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.



More information on effective interventions aimed at reaching out-of-school children and children at risk of dropping out can be found in a literature review on this topic commissioned by UNICEF ROSA and which can be downloaded at [www.unicef.org/rosa](http://www.unicef.org/rosa).





unite for children

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