

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) supports the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in many ways. UNESCO particularly focuses on making sure that all children in the world – boys and girls – can go to school (MDGs 2 and 3).

EDUCATION FOR ALL

You might not think so (!) but you are lucky to be able to go to school and get an education. Even though all children have the right to go to school, 67 million children across the world are still missing out on their education. The majority are girls.

Education is key to fighting poverty. It provides children with skills and knowledge to improve their health and their lives. It also gives children the power to reflect and make informed choices so that they can enjoy a better life.

Education doesn't only benefit the child who receives it. It can improve the health and welfare of entire families and communities. For example:

- When girls are educated, they are more likely to earn higher wages and obtain better jobs, to have fewer and healthier children and to enjoy safer childbirth
- A single year of primary school increases the wages people earn later in life by 5-15% for boys and even more for girls
- A child of a Zambian mother with primary education has a 25% better chance of survival than a child of a mother with no education



BRAINSTORM

UNESCO is leading the way to ensure 'Education for All' – that every child has the opportunity to go to school. As you have learned, millions of children are still not getting an education. Many more girls than boys miss out on primary and secondary education. In regions like sub-Saharan Africa and Oceania, and in some former Soviet Republic countries, the ratio of girls to boys in secondary school has actually dropped during the last ten years. Think about what reasons there could be for girls missing out on their education (e.g. child labour, early marriage, poverty).

