



# Universal access to education: We can do better

Education is a fundamental human right. Yet millions of children and adults remain deprived of educational opportunities.

Linda Klaassen

UNESCO

The Covid-19 pandemic affected **the most vulnerable and marginalized people**.

At the height of the crisis, 1.6 billion schoolchildren were affected, as most of the world's schools were closed.

The pandemic has **increased inequalities** and could wipe out decades of progress.

UNESCO estimates that **24 million children and young people are at risk of dropping out of school** due to the economic effects of the pandemic.

Girls and women are particularly impacted.

**131.7 million girls do not go to school**, and two-thirds of the 773 million adults who cannot read or write are women.

Because of the pandemic, **11 million girls are at risk of never returning to school**.

Girls aged 12 to 17 are most at risk of dropping out of school in poor countries.

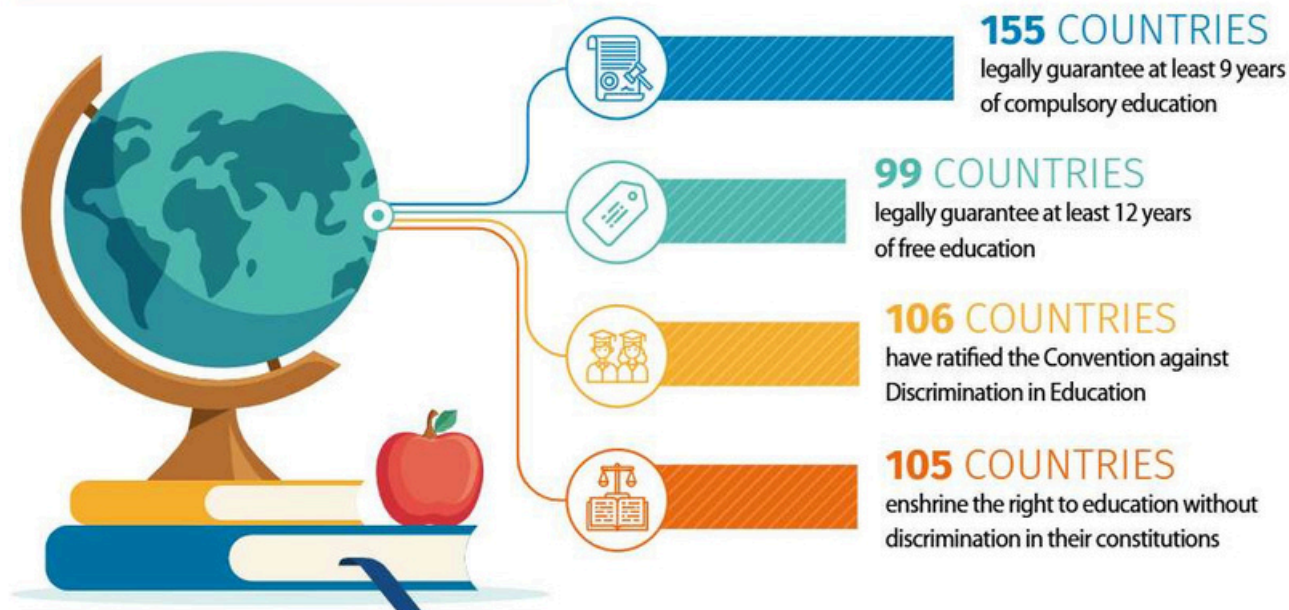
This situation is worrying, because education is so important. It helps poor children and adults to escape poverty and function better in society.



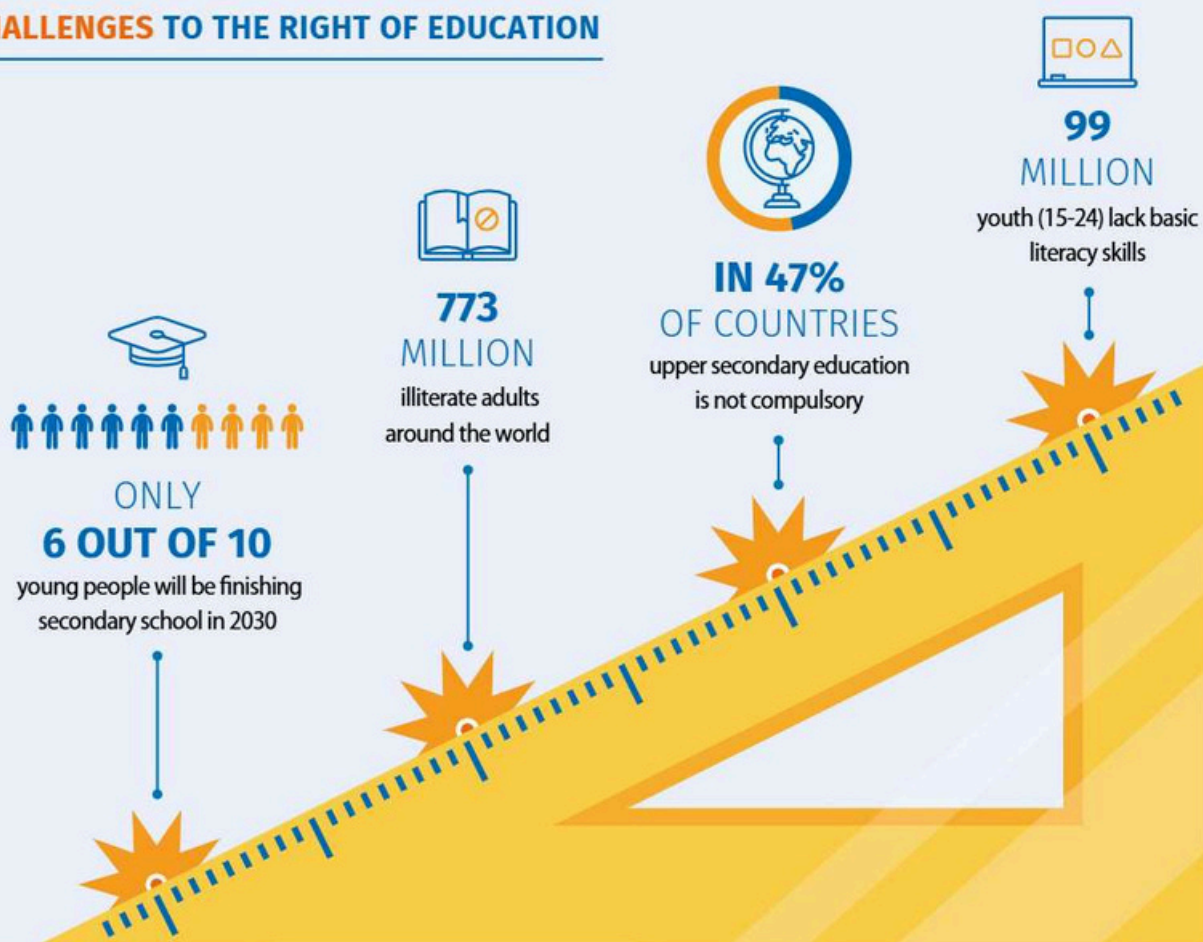
Source : *Guidelines to strengthen the right to education in national frameworks*, UNESCO, 2021. *#HerEducationOurFuture: Keeping girls in the picture during and after the Covid-19 crisis*, 2021.

## WHAT THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION REALLY IMPLIES

### STATE OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION



## CHALLENGES TO THE RIGHT OF EDUCATION



**257 MILLION**  
children and youth were out of school in 2019



**8%**  
of primary school age children were out of school in 2019

**199 MILLION**  
Children of secondary (lower and upper) school age were out of school in 2019

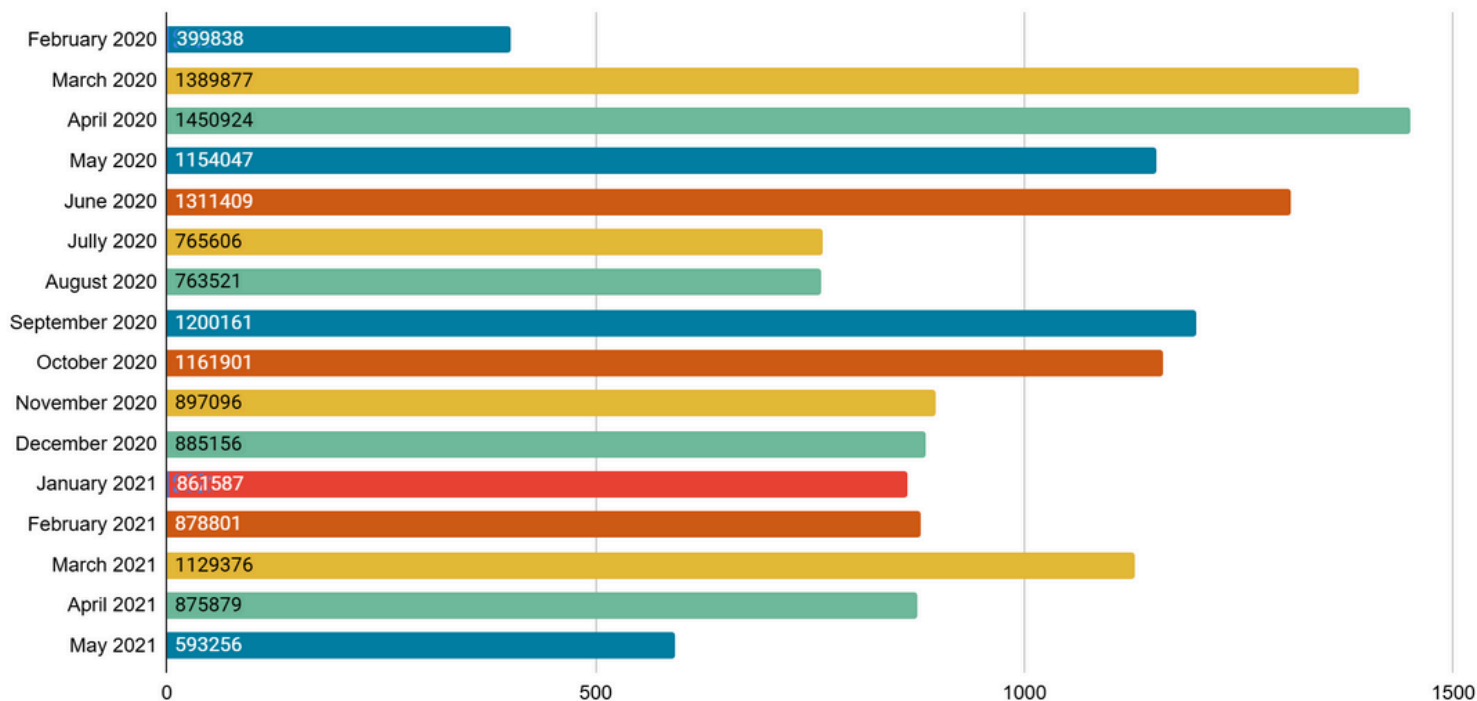
**58 MILLION**  
children of primary school age were out of school in 2019



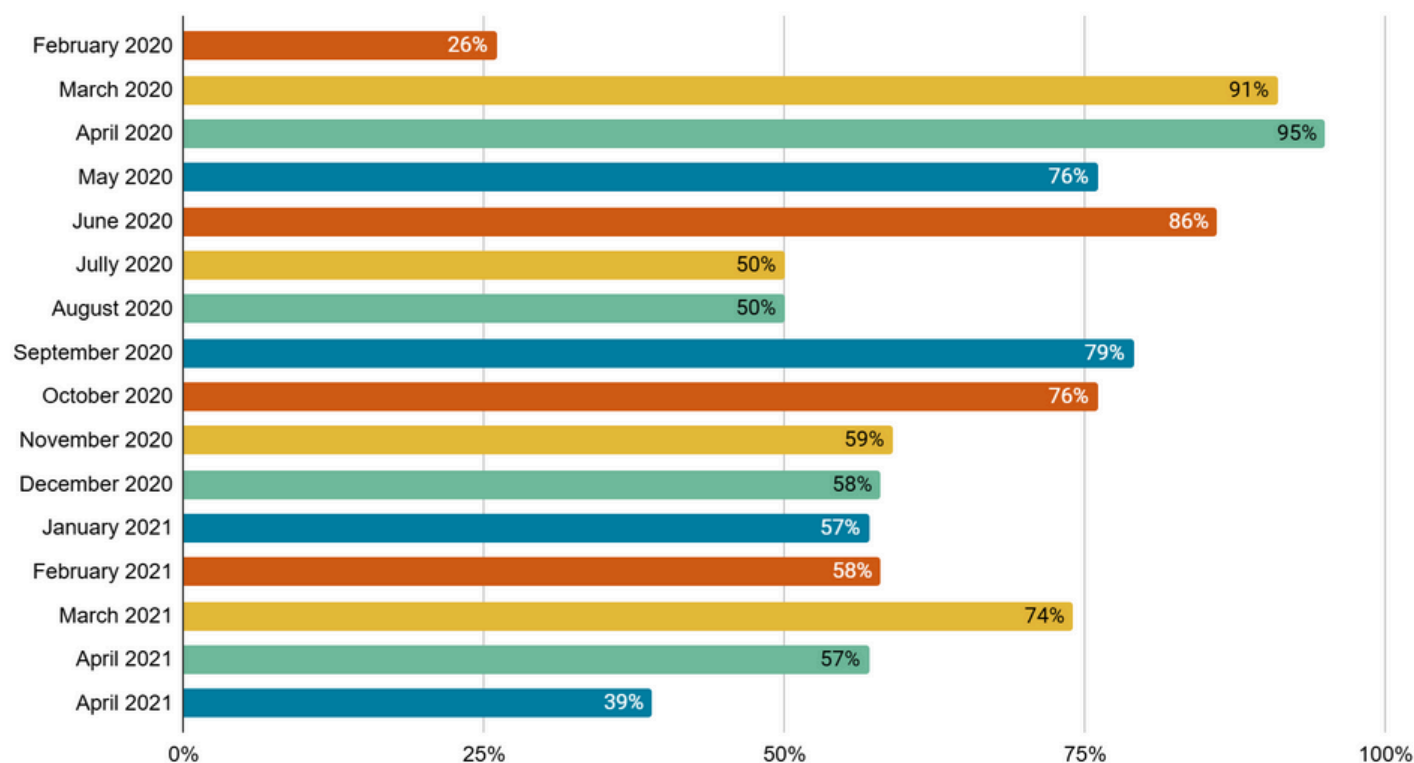
# EDUCATION: FROM DISRUPTION TO RECOVERY

## IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION: MONITORING OF SCHOOL CLOSURES

Number of students affected (thousands)



Percentage of students affected

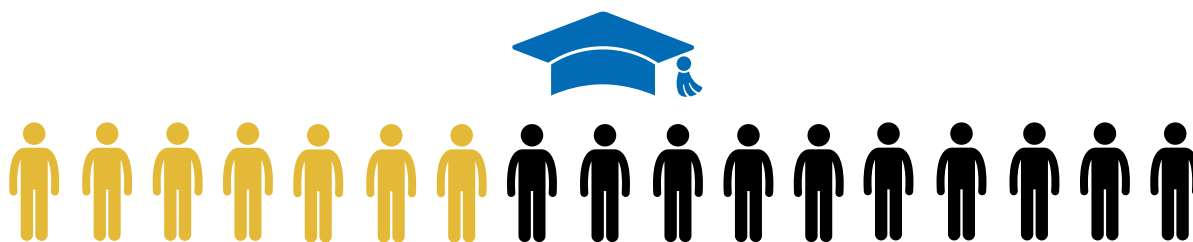


## GENDER EQUALITY: WHERE ARE WE TODAY?



Most developing regions have achieved **gender parity** in primary education.

However, in many countries, gender disparities are widening in secondary and higher education.



Only  
**70 YOUNG WOMEN**  
compared to  
**100 YOUNG MEN**

complete upper secondary education in low-income countries.

**20% MORE INCOME**

For an adult girl, just one additional year of schooling can result in an increase in income of up to 20%.

**TEENAGER PREGNANCY**

10% of girls under the age of 17 would not have early pregnancies in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia if they all received a primary education.

Some countries lose more

**THAN A BILLION DOLLARS A YEAR**

by not educating girls to the same level as boys.

**GIRLS MUST RETURN TO SCHOOL**

More than  
**11 MILLION GIRLS**  
are at risk of not  
returning to school

Up to  
**130 MILLION GIRLS**  
were not in school before  
the Covid-19 crisis

**LET'S NOT  
ALLOW COVID-19  
TO THREATEN GIRLS'  
FUTURES!**

