**Education**

**Education as a public good, a fundamental human right and a key instrument in eradicating poverty**

Education plays a fundamental role in human, social and economic development. Investments in good quality education, especially in the education of girls, are of fundamental importance for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Education is also key to building a democratic society, inclusive economic development and promoting gender equality. Sida’s support to education amounted to SEK 1.05 billion in 2019, that corresponds to 4 percent out of Sida’s total support.¹

**MAIN AREAS OF SUPPORT**

The focus of Sida’s support to education lies on:

- strengthening national education systems for quality education, from early childhood education and throughout life,
- promoting equal rights and inclusive education and
- paying attention to the importance of education and the role of education in conflict and post-conflict situations and in humanitarian crises.

Education and learning encompass strengthening values, knowledge and skills that promote equal rights and opportunities to make sustainable life choices. The inclusion of good quality pre-service teacher training and further in-service training are prerequisites to improve quality learning outcomes.

Sida supports a sharper attention to education as a critical human right. This includes enhanced efforts to the importance of education in conflict, post-conflict situations and in humanitarian crises, targeting both migrants, refugees and Internally Displaced Persons and host communities, and to make schools safe for children. There is emphasis on gender equality and equal rights to education, in education and through education.

**SIDA’S DISBURSEMENT TO EDUCATION 2009–2019 (MSEK)**

**DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD**

More children are in school around the world than ever before. However, after an initial decline of the number of the out-of-school children in the years after 2000, there has been barely progress in reducing the number of out-of-school children in recent years.² Girls are still more disadvantaged and children with disabilities are disproportionately represented among out-of-school children.

**THE GLOBAL GOALS**

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development include everyone - and we can all contribute. The goals are interdependent and therefore indivisible. Sida’s main contribution is to implement development cooperation, thereby reducing poverty and saving lives. Together we can build a better future where no one is left behind.

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¹ Support to e.g. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) at regional level, environmental education, Civil Society Organisations, multi-sectorial support also including education, such as child protection is not always included. Education related to specific sectors, e.g. Trade, Energy, Water and Sanitation, Health, Agriculture and Forestry is not included.

² http://uis.unesco.org @UNESCOstat 2 UIS Fact Sheet No. 56 | September 2019; the total number of out of school children has declined by a little more than 1 million per year since 2015. 59 million children (23 percent of the total) do not attend primary education, 62 million (24 percent) lower secondary and 138 million (53)
Humanitarian emergencies and protracted crisis disrupt education and only 63 percent of refugee children attend primary school, 24 percent secondary education and 1 percent higher education.3

The last years, the inequalities in learning opportunities especially in low income countries, have received global attention. In Sub-Saharan Africa 87 percent of all children do not have basic reading skills. In Central and Southern Asia this is the case for 81 percent of the children.4

If not addressed, the inequalities in learning opportunities will seriously hamper most of the goals in the 2030 Agenda and leave many people behind thus failing to achieve an inclusive development.5

Governments in low income countries spend, on average, 16 percent of their budgets on education, far more than richer countries, but many are off track meeting even the 2015 target of universal primary education. The level of aid to education continues to stagnate, growing by only 1 percent per year on average since 2009. These figures raise questions about the global commitment to achieving the global education goal SDG 4.6

SIDA’S SUPPORT

Sweden promotes country-level processes and strongly advocates for an emphasis on national ownership and support to local education groups and other stakeholders engaged in the education sector. Sweden support the implementation of national policies, plans and programs, complemented with support to CSOs. Education was a prioritized thematic area in four countries; Afghanistan, Cambodia, South Sudan and Tanzania. The Swedish support has been provided in close coordination with other donors. The primary education sub-sector has remained the main priority area for support. In conflict and post-conflict countries, cooperation with multilateral actors such as the World bank and UNESCO is crucial.

In Afghanistan, Sida supports the strengthening of the national education system through capacity building, curriculum development and literacy, and support to Education in Emergencies. In Cambodia, the improved capacity on national level and flexible school grants have improved quality and national investments in education. In South Sudan, Sida’s new education strategy focuses on bridging the humanitarian and development nexus and support prerequisites for a national education system. Sida has a strong focus on gender in education in South Sudan.

In Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar, Sweden is the Grant Agent for Global Partnership for Education (GPE). In addition to the GPE support to basic education, Sweden provides its main support through a result-based approach to the entire education sector in Tanzania Mainland. Support is also provided to CSOs active in the education section. In Zanzibar both the GPE and the bilateral support is directed towards basic education.

To complement the bilateral support, Sida is supporting education through global initiatives, such as UNESCO, GPE and Education Cannot Wait (ECW). Sida is providing UNESCO with non-earmarked funding to enable them to continue leading SDG implementation and follow-up. UNESCO also ensure that neglected areas such as Comprehensive Sexuality Education is pursued as part of the education agenda. GPE has supported an estimated 22.2 million students in 67 countries, of which 47 percent were girls, as well as 347,000 teachers in partner countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, where the largest shortfalls and challenges exist in education, Swedish bilateral support to basic education is present only in Tanzania and South Sudan and through global initiatives such as GPE and ECW. Sida supports the global fund ECW to transform the delivery of education in emergencies and to enable humanitarian and development actors to act rapidly to the educational needs of children and youth affected by crises.

Sida is working actively to link the global and bilateral work in education to find synergies.

STORY OF CHANGE

More than 3 million children came to school after Tanzania decided that education is free of charge in 2015. These children come from the poorest families who could not afford to send their children to school earlier. In Upendo Primary school in Mpuata, Songea, there are only 4 teachers for 392 students. The head teacher Laika does the best she can with very scarce resources. Sida supports the education sector through a Results Based Program, rewarding the government when results are achieved. One result is the monthly payment of the capitation grant (skolpeng) from the government of Tanzania to all public schools. The head teacher Laika confirmed that Upendo primary school now receives the capitation grant monthly. The monthly payment to schools have been institutionalized, which means that the state of Tanzania will continue to pay the capitation grant in the future, even after Sida ends its support.

4 https://www.education-progress.org/en/articles/learning/