

A world ready to learn: Prioritizing quality early childhood education ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

EXCERPTS from the Introduction

A young child's brain is full of innate potential, and the early years offer an irreplaceable window of opportunity to set a path towards success in primary school and later in life. Quality early childhood education generates a positive sequence of learning – while lack of access to pre-primary education widens achievement gaps and restricts opportunities. Children who fall behind at a young age often never catch up with their peers, perpetuating cycles of underachievement and high dropout rates that continue to harm vulnerable children into their youth.

Today, 50 percent of pre-primary-age children around the world – at least 175 million – are not enrolled during these crucial years in pre-primary education. In low-income countries, only one in every five children has access to pre-primary education. Those who are the least likely to attend early childhood education programmes would benefit from them the most.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and target 4.2 specifically, convey a clear objective that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education. This global report confirms the importance of early childhood education in achieving SDG 4 and supports a bold challenge: Provide all children with at least one year of quality pre-primary education by 2030. The reasons for this aspiration are clear, as a solid body of evidence shows that the foundations for learning are largely built in the early years of life, before a child ever crosses the threshold of a primary school.

Related link: UNICEF praises Thailand on early childhood education ^[3]

Region: International ^[4]

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Links

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