

Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children

East Asia and
the Pacific
Regional Office



REGIONAL SYNTHESIS EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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ABBREVIATIONS

4Ps	Programming Pantawid Pamailyang Pilipino (Philippines)
5DE	Five Dimensions of Exclusion
ANAR	Adjusted net attendance rate
APIS	Annual Poverty Indicator Survey
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BEIS	Basic Education Information System
BESRA	Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda
CMF	Conceptual and Methodological Framework
CSES	Cambodia Social-Economic Survey
CYS	Child and Youth Survey
DepEd	Department of Education
DORP	Drop Out Reduction Program
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EAP	East Asia and the Pacific
ECCE	Early childhood care and education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EDN	End of Decade Notes
EFA	Education for All
EFA-FTI	Education for All – Fast Track Initiative
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EHCP	Essential Health Care Program
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDP	Gross domestic product
GER	Gross enrolment rate
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GPI	Gender parity index
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
ILEGI	Indonesia Local Education Governance Index
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
LGUs	Local Government Units
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MLE	Multi-lingual Education
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MTB	Mother-Tongue Based
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NRP	Nutritional Rehabilitation Programme
NSOs	Non-State Organization
NTT	Nusa Tenggara Timur (Province in Indonesia)
ODL	Online Distance Learning
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OOSC	Out-of-school children
OOSC	Out-of-School Children Initiative
PDL	Printed Distance Learning
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PPP	Purchasing power parity

PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
SBM	School-based Management
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
SHNP	School Health and Nutrition Program
SIPs	School Improvement Plans
SSAs	School Self Assessments
STRIVE	Strengthening the Implementation of Basic Education in Selected Provinces in Visayas
SUSENAS	Survei Sosial Ekonomi Nasional (Indonesian Household Income and Expenditure Survey)
TIMMS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Funds
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

The Out of School Children (OOSC) Global Initiative is a joint effort by UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). The Initiative aims to accelerate efforts towards the goal of universal primary education, placing the issue of out-of-school children (hereafter, OOSC) as a priority for realizing Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals.

Specifically, the goal of the OOSC Initiative is to address these challenges and to support countries in achieving a breakthrough in reducing the number of out-of-school children. The specific objectives are to:

1. Improve the statistical information and analysis regarding out-of-school children and develop complex profiles of these children that reflect the multiple deprivations and disparities they face in relation to education; and
2. Identify bottlenecks, analyze existing interventions related to enhanced school participation and develop context-appropriate policies and strategies for accelerating and scaling enrolment and sustaining attendance rates for the excluded and marginalized.

Twenty-five countries¹ globally agreed to undertake the OOSC process in 2010. In the East Asia and Pacific (EAP)² Region, the four participating countries are Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Timor-Leste. In addition, Thailand and Viet Nam have also initiated the OOSC and have carried out the initial statistical analysis, which are referred to separately in a few sections as appropriate. While this Regional Report does provide an initial overview of the current situation on out-of-school children in the EAP region, primarily as reported in GMR and the UIS Education Statistical Digests, it focuses mainly on the findings from the four participating OOSC countries, drawing upon the in-depth analysis as provided in the OOSC Country Reports.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The East Asia and Pacific (EAP) region encompasses one-third of the world's population – or around 2 billion people. It also contains over one-quarter of the world's children – around 580 million children in

¹ The participating countries are: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Sri Lanka, Sudan (North and South), Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Turkey and Zambia.

² UNICEF's East Asia Pacific region is comprised of the 14 countries in the East Asia region and 14 Pacific Island Countries, as follows: Cambodia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Korea DPR, Laos PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste and Viet Nam; Pacific Island countries include: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Niue, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Under UNESCO-UIS grouping, EAP region also includes New Zealand and Australia, while Mongolia is part of Central Asia region. In this report, East Asia Pacific refers to countries in UNICEF's

total. The region stretches from Mongolia in the north to Tonga in the south, and from Western China to the Cook Islands. The smallest country in East Asia and the Pacific, Niue, has 1,700 people while the largest, China, has 1.3 billion people. There are around 30 million children born in the region every year. The region has significant diversity and includes some of the fastest-growing economies in the world as well as ten of the least-developed countries – six in the Pacific and four in East Asia. The Pacific is a distinct sub-region within the wider region, with its unique characteristics, dynamics and challenges.³

The global financial crisis continues to affect the economies in the East Asia and Pacific region in varying ways. Following an expansion of 9.7 percent in 2010, GDP in developing East Asia and Pacific is estimated to have slowed to 8.2 percent in 2011, and further easing to further to 7.8 percent is expected in 2012 and 2013.⁴ Recovery from the Tohoku earthquake, tsunami in Japan and the flooding in Thailand has been fairly quick, but weaker demand in developed countries for the region's exports has begun to influence regional growth. However, despite the persistently gloomy global environment and the anticipated economic slowdown, growth in the East Asia and Pacific region is expected to remain relatively robust due to strong domestic demand, substantial fiscal space for policy interventions, and others.⁵

Poverty rates have declined in many countries, but inequality remains a critical issue throughout the region. The Gini Index in Middle Income Countries, such as the Philippines and Thailand, is over 40, while less developed countries in the region have an Index just over 30 (although Cambodia as over 40%).⁶

Furthermore, inequality manifests in dimensions other than income poverty, particularly for children. According to a recent UNICEF study on child poverty in seven EAP countries ⁷, a considerable proportion of children are persistently deprived in one or more of non-monetary dimensions, such as shelter, food, water, sanitation, education, health and information, which can have significant negative consequences on a child's development and future. In the seven EAP countries in the Study, over 30 million children suffer from at least one severe deprivation, and certain segments of the population suffer acute deprivation across several dimension. Inequities between different ethnic groups, between small and large households and between well-educated and poorly educated adults were some of the most notable dimensions of inequity found.⁸

³ <http://www.unicef.org/eapro/about.html>

⁴ World Bank (2012). Global Economic Prospects: Uncertainties and Vulnerabilities. Vol.4, January, 2012. World Bank: Washington, D.C.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ World Bank Data. <http://data.worldbank.org>

⁷ Seven participating countries in the study included: Cambodia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam and Vanuatu. See UNICEF (2011). Child Poverty in the East Asia and Pacific: Deprivations and Disparities, a Study of Seven Countries. UNICEF EAPRO.

⁸ *ibid*

OVERVIEW OF EDUCATION IN EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The region is also diverse in terms of its provision of education, with significant numbers of children who are either out of school or at risk of dropping out due to poverty, ethnicity, or for other reasons as outlined below. Based on existing regional data, one could believe that OOSC is not a major issue in the region, and that achievement of MDG education targets in the majority of countries means that all children are receiving their rights to basic education. This is far from the case.

NOTABLE TRENDS

In the past decade, the regional education focus has been to target those learners who are still out of school and have not completed the full cycle of primary education.⁹ Less focus has been placed on providing quality education leading to successful education outcomes for all. From UIS data, it is estimated that 5% of all primary aged children in East Asia and the Pacific are out of school¹⁰. UIS estimates that 58% of these children will enter school late, and over-age enrolment is a significant factor for children becoming OOSC in the region. In Lao PDR, primary enrolments of children of primary school age had risen to around 89% in 2008, but due to the high repetition and dropout rates reported, only 67% of students are estimated to complete the full five years of primary schooling¹¹. Widespread repetition and late age of enrolment in Cambodia has also resulted in a low survival rate to the last grade of primary school. Though EMIS shows primary net enrolment for 2009 near 96%, high rates of overage enrolment and repetition leading to drop out have led to a lower secondary gross enrolment ratio of just 56%.¹²

Overall, trends in education attainment have varied considerably across the region, as exemplified by the comparisons that can be made between Cambodia and Indonesia. Cambodia has had little increase in educational attainment among the 25- to 44-year age group. These people were of school age during the years of the civil war in Cambodia and during the Khmer Rouge regime. Men between 45 and 54 years old have even lower educational attainment than those who are older or younger, because many educated men in this age group were victims of Khmer Rouge purges. A study by UIS (2011b) found that the period of conflict in Cambodia not only interrupted the increase in educational attainment levels that can be observed among older age groups, it also contributed to lowering the levels of attainment among their children.¹³ Cambodia has managed to overcome gender disparity in educational attainment among the youngest age group and has made important progress in improving access to education, especially in rural areas but the country has education standards that lag behind other countries in the region. In rural Cambodia, many children combine work with education, often to

⁹ UNESCO (2011) Regional Report on progress towards education for all in Asia and the Pacific Tenth Meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All Jomtien, Thailand 22-24 March 2011 p 9.

¹⁰ UIS (2011) Global Education Digest 2011, Montreal: UIS

¹¹ UIS (2011) Global Education Digest 2011, Montreal: UIS

¹² UIS (2010) Global education Digest 2010, Montreal: UIS

¹³ UNESCO-UIS (2011) Technical Paper No. 7: The Quantitative Impact of Conflict on Education.

the detriment of their educational development. Improving the education of girls and women remains a real challenge.¹⁴

PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Although pre-primary access is increasing, there are still many children aged 3-5 (or other appropriate ages based on the country's ISCED¹⁵ 0 classification) in the region without educational opportunities at this level. Overall participation in pre-primary education for children over 3 has increased in East Asia and the Pacific from 38% to 52% between 2000 and 2008.¹⁶ Among countries, gross enrolment ratios range from less than 10% (e.g. Myanmar) to above 90% (e.g. Cook Islands, Thailand and Tuvalu). However, the range of disparity within a country is equally large. Most countries view pre-primary education as a necessary preparation for formal schooling, as an introduction to the mores of schooling and especially as an introduction to literacy. Extending coverage of pre-primary education is a priority education goal in most countries in East Asia and the Pacific.

Private pre-primary provision accounts for more than 99% of services in Fiji; Samoa; China, Hong-Kong SAR; and Bhutan. Private provision encourages parental choice, competition and efficiency but risks the exclusion of poor and marginalised children and may lead to the proliferation of poorly regulated low quality preschools and increasing gaps in opportunity for the poor. . In all countries with significant numbers of ethnic minorities, pre-primary provision for these groups is sadly lacking even though most countries in the region have as national goals plans to increase pre-primary education coverage, specifically for disadvantaged groups.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Most countries are reaching or have reached universal primary education as defined by EFA. However there are serious exceptions. GERs for primary education in the region ranged from 60% in Papua New Guinea in 2008 to 127% in Cambodia The GPI for this region has remained stable at about 1.01, indicating gender parity on average in primary education. Across the region, 18 out of 26 countries with data for 2009 have achieved primary gender parity at national levels of education. Within this group, four countries or territories - Cook Islands; China, Hong Kong SAR; Palau; and the Solomon Islands - have been able to eliminate disparities that previously favoured boys¹⁷

TRANSITION TO LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION

¹⁴ UNDP (2011) Human Development Report Cambodia <http://www.un.org.kh/undp/knowledge/publications/cambodia-human-development-report-2011-the-future-for-rural-livelihoods-in-the-face-of-climate-change> p 141

¹⁵ ISCED is the International Standard Classification of Education designed by UNESCO to facilitate comparisons of education statistics and indicators of different countries on the basis of uniform and international agreed definitions.

¹⁶ UNESCO (2011) Regional report on progress towards education for all in Asia and the Pacific Tenth Meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All Jomtien, Thailand 22-24 March 2011 (Figure 3, p8)

¹⁷ UNESCO (2011) Global Education Digest 2011

In terms of transition from primary to secondary education there is a wide range of country experiences in East Asia and the Pacific. In Myanmar, 77 percent of pupils complete primary school and make the transition to lower secondary education.¹⁸ The transition from primary to lower secondary education is a point of drop out for children. In addition to the additional costs, children and families also face concerns over safety, quality and relevance, leading to doubt as to whether the returns on investments justifies staying in school. Distances to secondary schools increase and the costs to be borne by families for transportation, new uniforms, textbooks and additional school fees - even in countries where schooling is legislated to be free of charge (Asia-Pacific EDN 2 and 3).

SECONDARY EDUCATION

At secondary level there have been huge increases in school populations across the region. The 2011 Global Education Digest states: 'For East Asia and the Pacific¹⁹, between 1990-2009, enrolment in secondary education increased from 96 million to 163 million. On the other hand, the secondary school-age population for the region, mainly influenced by the increasing population in China, totaled 210 million in 2009, slightly less than the 214 million recorded in 1990. GER [Gross Enrolment Rate] rose from 45% in 1990 to 78% in 2009 across East Asia and the Pacific, with participation of young women's secondary GER reaching 80% compared to 76% for young men. China doubled its education system's capacity over this period (100 million secondary students in 2009, compared to 52 million in 1991). Indonesia and Viet Nam also increased secondary enrolment by 9 million and 6 million, respectively.'²⁰ In East Asia and the Pacific, half of countries with available data have lower secondary education graduation ratios exceeding 70%. Low graduation ratios (45 %or below) are found in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vanuatu. In the region, girls complete lower secondary education at a higher ratio than boys in most countries with available data. The reverse is observed in Cambodia and Lao PDR.

GENDER

In East Asia and the Pacific, the number of expected years of schooling rose from 10.3 to 12.0 between 1999 and 2009. In 2009, boys could expect 11.8 years of schooling compared to 12.1 years for girls – meaning that in EAP, girls can now expect more years of schooling than boys. Only a few countries are at gender parity in educational attainment for their entire population, including Fiji, Australia, Samoa and Tonga. In most other countries of the region, older women are less likely to have completed primary, lower secondary or upper secondary education. The Philippines stands out as the one country amongst UNICEF's programme countries in EAP where women of all ages

¹⁸ UNESCO (2011) Global Education Digest 2011

¹⁹ "East Asia and the Pacific" region in the GED is the UNESCO regional grouping of EAP which excludes Mongolia and includes other countries such as New Zealand and Australia.

²⁰ UNESCO (2011) Global Education Digest 2011, p.18

http://www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/global_education_digest_2011_en.pdf p 18

have higher educational attainment than men at both primary and secondary levels, which is the result of a long-running trend of higher school enrolment and retention rates among girls than boys.

Overall, in the past decade, there has been a reversal in gender patterns resulting in a small advantage for girls. Out of 22 countries with data, 5 reached gender parity in 2009. This includes countries such as Indonesia, which successfully removed barriers to girls' secondary education, offering them equal opportunities. However, gender disparities against girls remain acute in Cambodia (GPI of 0.9), Lao PDR (0.81)). Even though they are less extreme than the barriers generally facing girls, it is nonetheless important to note the disparities against boys. This is the case in China (GPI of 1.07), Cook Islands (1.10), Fiji (1.07), Malaysia (1.07), Samoa (1.14), Thailand (1.08), the Philippines (1.08) and Mongolia (1.08)²¹.

ETHNICITY

Numerous studies show that, across the region, ethnic minorities are among the most disadvantaged in terms of access to education. In Cambodia, Viet Nam, Timor-Leste and Indonesia, education for ethnic minorities is often of lower quality than in urban areas and equalities of opportunity are lost. For example the UNICEF Cambodia publication, *The Situation of women and children (2009)* noted the following, especially in two mountainous ethnic minority provinces, Ratanakiri and Mondulkiri:

1. Indigenous children are not provided with a culturally relevant curriculum and teachers provide instruction exclusively in Khmer, not in local languages.
2. Consistent teacher absence, lack of teaching/learning materials, desks and other basic equipment and lack of in-service training for teachers are widespread. Educational facilities are inadequate or incomplete in seven of the villages with minimal infrastructure, and many lack water and toilets. Children in the majority of the villages do not have access to the higher grades of primary school.
3. Females have fewer educational opportunities. This was due to the emphasis on girls' contribution to domestic chores and the livelihoods of their families, as well as early marriage. As one study noted: "geographical remoteness aggravates girls' disadvantages in schooling because it is there where there is a deficit of schools, classrooms, teachers and teaching materials on top of the poverty that afflicts most households in remote areas" (*Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in Education 2006-2010*)
4. Indigenous communities have a low health status, particularly among women and children, who experience high mortality and morbidity rates. High levels of poverty and food insecurity are also apparent.

²¹ UNESCO (2011) *Global Education Digest* <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/ged-2011.aspx>

These findings are paralleled across a number of countries in the region. Governments need to respond to the specific needs of students from different ethnic groups, although more and more countries in the region, governments are rising to the challenge and their responsibilities in this area.

THE FIVE DIMENSIONS OF EXCLUSION

This paper employs a model of the Five Dimensions of Exclusion from Education (5DE). Based on the definition of Out-of-School Children (OOSC), the Five Dimensions of Exclusion include two dimensions that capture the out-of-school population of primary school age (Dimension 2) and lower secondary school age (Dimension 3). Pre-primary education is represented by Dimension 1, which highlights children of pre-primary school age who are not in pre-primary or primary education. The approach includes Dimensions 4 and 5 that focus on children who are in school but at risk of dropping out. Understanding more about these groups of children is key to preventing them from becoming the out-of-school children of tomorrow (Lewin 2007). Dimension 4 covers children in primary school who are considered at risk of dropping out, and Dimension 5 covers children in lower secondary school who are considered at risk. In summary, Dimensions 1, 2 and 3 are age specific populations who are out-of-school while Dimensions 4 and 5 refer to the level of schooling in which a child is currently enrolled, but at risk of drop-out (and non-learning). The Five Dimensions are listed below in the box and displayed in Figure 1.

The Five Dimensions of Exclusion (5DE)

Dimension 1: Children of pre-primary school age who are not in pre-primary or primary school

Dimension 2: Children of primary school age who are not in primary or secondary school

Dimension 3: Children of lower secondary school age who are not in primary or secondary school

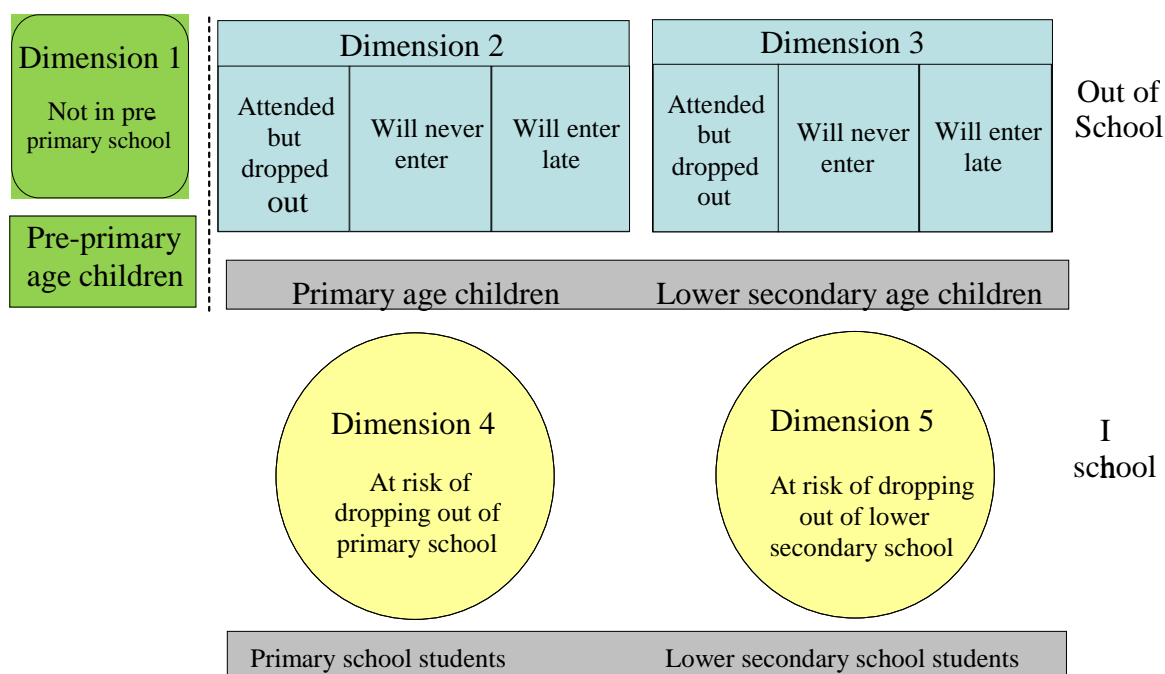
Dimension 4: Children who are in primary school but at risk of dropping out

Dimension 5: Children who are in lower secondary school but at risk of dropping out

There are several important aspects to note regarding the 5DE. The distinct shape and colour of **Dimension 1** in Figure 1 below reflects the notion that while pre-primary school is important as preparation for primary education, it is also distinct from formal programmes at primary or higher levels of education. Dimension 1 represents a group of children are not not enrolled in pre-primary education and who may therefore not be adequately prepared for primary education, placing them at risk of not entering into primary education or, if they do enter, at risk of dropping out. . However, the OOSC Conceptual and Methodological Framework (CMF) defines those children of pre-primary age enrolled in primary school as ‘in-school’, which means that in the case of Indonesia, where 71% of

children age 6 enrol underage in Grade One, they are considered 'in-school' and therefore not included in Dimension 1, even though they are not enrolled in age appropriate pre-primary school.

Figure 1: Five Dimensions of Exclusion (5DE)



Each of the out-of-school **Dimensions 2 and 3** is divided into three mutually exclusive categories based on previous or future school exposure: children who attended in the past and dropped out, children who will never enter school, and children who will enter school in the future. Some OOSC of primary and lower secondary age may be in pre-primary or non-formal education and these children should be identified separately.

Children in **Dimensions 4 and 5** – those in school but at risk of exclusion from education – are grouped by the level of education they attend, regardless of their age: primary (Dimension 4) or lower secondary (Dimension 5). This is different from Dimensions 2 and 3, which group out-of-school children by their age: primary age (Dimension 2) and lower secondary age (Dimension 3). The framework thus covers two different types of populations: the population of out-of-school children of school-going age, and the population of at-risk pupils of any age in primary or lower secondary school.²²

Reasons are found for barriers and bottlenecks for children out of school or at risk of dropping out. In each of the OOSC National Reports and are summarized here are descriptions of various education

²² UNICEF & UIS (2011) Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children Conceptual and methodological framework (CMF) March 2011 Unpublished

policies and strategies related to out of school children is provided, along with a description of current social protection programs. Ways forward are also suggested for children in East Asia and the Pacific who are out of school and those at risk of dropping out, based on the National Reports and on existing research. The methodology used in this study follows a life cycle approach. In Dimensions 1, 2 and 3, children are included according to age. In Dimensions 4 and 5 children are included according the stage of education, (i.e. primary or lower secondary), which they are currently attending. This regional analysis will show patterns of exposure or otherwise to schooling or the lack of it, and describe the reasons why children have never attended, have dropped out or at risk of dropping out of school in East Asia and the Pacific.

CHAPTER 2: PROFILES OF EXCLUDED CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the profiles of Out of School Children in the East Asia and the Pacific Region. It is the result of an exercise that extends the individual Country Reports carried out in recent months under the OOSC programme. The chapter is primarily based on the findings of individual country reports. Four countries in the EAP region (Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Timor-Leste) were part of the initial OOSC Initiative, while recently, two more countries have requested to come on board and have already drafted their statistical analysis. This chapter focuses on a synthesis and comparative analysis of the four countries where the studies have been carried out, with some references to Thailand and Viet Nam. The full list of the country reports and supporting documents can be seen in the list of references.

No attempts have been made to generalize the results to other countries in the region or to extrapolate regional estimates.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

“The Conceptual and Methodological Framework (CMF) categorizes Out of School Children (OOSC) into five dimensions. Based on the definition of OOSC, the **Five Dimensions of Exclusion** include two dimensions that capture the out-of-school population of primary school age (Dimension 2) and lower secondary school age (Dimension 3). Pre-primary education is represented by Dimension 1, which highlights children of pre-primary school age who are not in pre-primary or primary education. The approach includes Dimensions 4 and 5 that focus on children who are in school but at risk of dropping out.”²³ This report follows the basic structure given by the CMF, and presents result of analysis in sections on Dimension 1, Dimension 2 and 3, and Dimension 4 and 5.

The CMF guidelines suggest a list of table templates for the study of the OOSC profiles. Not all countries however produced the entire list of tables. This is primarily due to the fact that the available survey data does not provide all the necessary information. On the other hand, some countries created tables that are not included in the CMF but are very useful in the understanding of OOSC children in those countries. Additionally, tables from different countries are not always comparable even when they are similar and on the same topic, as they were produced using existing data that do not strictly adhere to CMF guidelines.

²³ Conceptual and Methodology Framework (CMF).

To deal with the above issues, this report sets out a framework which is based on but not limited to the CMF guidelines, and deals with each aspect individually. The framework can be described as follows:

- The age and categories of children studied. The report follows the CMF guidelines and categorizes OOSC children into the five dimensions which include children of pre-primary, primary and lower secondary school ages. In some cases, the report further extends to include children of all school ages (5-17) and beyond.
- Indicators. The report lists the following prime indicators to be studied:
 - Dimension 1: Pre-primary school attendance and OOSC;
 - Dimension 2: Primary ANAR and OOSC;
 - Dimension 3: Lower secondary ANAR, Lower secondary school age children attending primary school, and OOSC;
 - Attendance rate of school age children;
 - Dimension 4 and 5: Dropout;
 - Dimension 4 and 5: Repeaters;
 - Dimension 4 and 5: Children who never attended school;
 - Dimension 4 and 5: Over-age.
- Disparities and deviations. The report studies disparities in gender, urban/rural, region/province, ethnicity, wealth, and etc. In addition, the report endeavors to quantify the severity of disparities using maximum and average deviations.

Because of the fact that different countries produced different tables based on available data, the report handles the presentation of indicators differently. The Dimensions 1, 2 and 3 are presented with all countries in a single table for comparison, but for Dimension 4 and 5, the report does use single tables, but provides individual examples from the countries. Information on Dimension 4 and 5, which project estimates of student enrolled but At Risk of drop-out, have not followed standard definitions from the CMF for a variety of reasons, and hence much less open to comparability between the countries.

With regard to disparities and deviations, there are different ways data dispersion can be measured. A typical method is to measure it with standard deviation. However, standard deviation is not suitable in the analysis of this report, for the simple fact that standard deviation measures the dispersion against the mean of the dispersion, but the dispersion in this report needs to be measured against a national average figure. Although the national figure is an average performance over the entire nation, because of the fact sub-national regions or other groups have different percentages of populations, the national

figure is never the simple mean, or average, of sub-national regional or other group performance data. As such two deviation data, the average deviation and the maximum deviation, rather than standard deviation, are chosen to form the set of figures that quantify the severity of dispersion in regional or other groups' performance.

The details as to how the deviations are calculated and the implication for national performance will be explained below when pre-primary school age children are analyzed. The same method will then be applied throughout the report.

BASIS OF DATA SOURCES USED IN THE COUNTRY REPORTS

There are numerous data on various aspects of out-of-school children in different countries. They are, however, often not well documented and not easily available, and sometimes insufficient information is collected during the survey process. The country studies in this exercise made use of available and relevant survey and administrative data. The major factors with which the countries chose particular data are the following:

- The data have sufficient information on educational background of pre-primary, primary and lower secondary school age children.
- There is at least information on school attendance in the current academic year. Information on the previous academic year is preferred but not essential.
- The data have at least gender and urban/rural disaggregation. Other disaggregation such as ethnicity, family economic status, etc. are preferred but not essential.

Depending on the individual country situation, different data are used in the respective country analysis, and to complicate the matter further, most countries carried out studies on more than one data set. To ensure reasonable cross comparison and further analysis, this report uses only analytical results on macro data obtained from the following surveys:

- **Cambodia:** Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey 2009
- **Indonesia:** Indonesian Household Income and Expenditure Survey (SURVEI SOSIAL EKONOMI NASIONAL) (SUSENAS) 2009
- **The Philippines:** Annual Poverty Indicators Survey (APIS) 2008 and Basic Education Information System (BEIS)
- **Timor-Leste:** Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2010
- **Thailand:** Child and Youth Survey (CYS) 2008;
- **Viet Nam:** Population and Housing Census (Census) 2009

EFFECT OF SURVEY TIME ON OOSC

The date when a survey is conducted can greatly affect analytical results on statistics of school attendance rates. The reason for this is simple. A child's age is calculated in survey analysis by the year the survey is conducted, but in education systems, the child's age is often considered by the start of an academic year. Strict rules require in Japan, for instance, that a child must be 6 years old before 1 April in order to enter the first grade of the primary education of that year. Because of the different function age has in an education system and in a survey, a survey conducted at a particular time may consider a child one year over-aged when he/she is of perfect official age for the grade. In the worst case, the child can be wrongly included as OOSC when he/she is in fact not due to start school.

Since the surveys included in country reports were conducted primarily to capture information not specifically on education, it is likely that the start of school academic year was not taken into consideration with respect to survey data collection time. At least, there is no documentation indicating so. This report therefore treats all survey results as prone to the effect, in other words distortion, caused by survey time.

Table 1 below shows the data collection time with respect to school academic year.

Table 1: Information on Surveys and Survey Time in Respect to Academic Year

Country Name	Survey Name Full Name	Academic Year	Survey Year	Survey Duration	Survey Time in Relation to Academic Year
Cambodia	Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)	October-July (Following year)	2009	Jan. – Nov. 2009	Across two academic years
Indonesia	Household Income and Expenditure Survey (SUSENAS)	July-June (Following year)	2009	July 2009	Beginning
Philippines	Annual Poverty Indicator Survey (APIS)	June-March (Following year)	2008	July 2008	Beginning
Timor-Leste	Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)	January-December	2010	Aug. 2009 – Feb. 2010	Across two academic years

The detailed effect of survey time on analytical results is complicated. In many of the analyses in this report, survey time mostly affects a child who falls into situations where only the child's official grade is taken into consideration. If the lower and the higher grades are also considered, the effect diminishes. For example, when analysis is carried out on the rate of primary grade 1 age children attending primary education, no lower grades exist. A child in this case may be listed as out of school if he/she is not yet of the age acceptable to the education system but has already entered the official age for the grade in the eyes of the survey. However, if a primary grade 2 age child is considered, the lower primary grade 1 is

automatically included in the calculation for attendance in primary education, the birth date of the child no longer matters and he/she is in school which ever date he/she was born. The analytical result will not be affected by the time the survey is conducted.

In this way, survey time affects mainly the attendance rate (in particular ANAR) of children of pre-primary school age, primary grade 1 age, and secondary grade 1 age. Any calculations resulting from these statistics will need to be read with caution. This also affects the estimates of overage students, whereby a student who is considered 2 years overage could in fact be either 1 or 3 years overage, depending on the timing of the survey in relation to the school year.

The extent to which survey time affects the results of this report is not fully analyzed, since it is not essential and additionally likely not possible. Instead, where necessary, the report addresses each issue individually with explanations following tables.

EDUCATION SYSTEMS OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

Children start schooling at different ages in different countries. The following table gives an overview of age in relation to academic levels.

Table 2: Age ranges of National Education Systems according to the International Standard Classification of Education

Country Name	Pre-Primary	Primary	Lower Secondary
Cambodia	5	6-11	12-14
Indonesia	6	7-12	13-15
Philippines	5	6-11	12-15
Timor Leste	5	6-11	12-14

Although all named as pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education, the actual age range for each of them can vary between countries. This is considered in this regional, multi-country analysis. Please note that all countries start Primary at age 6, except for Indonesia, which starts Grade 1 at 7 years of age.

UIS DATA

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is involved in developing national, regional and global estimation of OOSC children, which are included in the Annual Education Digest. The following table shows the out-of-school rates, using a combination of available survey data and enrolment data provided from administrative sources, in the three out-of-school dimensions for the four main

countries studied in this report. It is worth mentioning here that the UIS estimation is much lower than the OOSC figures. For a table with 6 countries, including Thailand and Viet Nam, please see the Annex.

Table 3: UIS Data on Out-of-School Rate

Country name	Most recent year since 2007	Total		Male		Female	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
D1							
Pre-primary school-age children who are not enrolled in pre-primary or primary school							
Cambodia	2010	202,771	70.0	104,143	70	98,628	70
Indonesia	2009	165,116 *	3.8 *	95,584	4	69,532	3
Philippines	2009	1,368,417	60.2	703,418	60	664,999	60
Timor-Leste	N/A	m	m	m	m	m	m
D2							
Primary school-age children who are not enrolled in primary or Secondary school							
Cambodia	2010	72,886	4	32,466	4	98,628	70
Indonesia	2009	399,571	2	m	m	69,632	3
Philippines	2009	1,460,431	11	798,880	12	664,999	60
Timor-Leste	2010	27,710	14	13,848	14	m	m
D3							
Lower secondary school-age children who are not enrolled in primary or Secondary school							
Cambodia	2007	186,809	17.2	75,849	13.7	110,960	20.8
Indonesia	2009	2,153,314	16.6	1,096,724	16.6	1,056,590	16.6
Philippines	2009	331,560	5.5	201,842	6.5	129,718	4.4
Timor-Leste	2010	34,029	35.2	17,205	34.8	16,824	35.6

Legend of

symbols:

m = Data is missing

* = National estimation

Source: UNESCO UIS Database 2012, accessed 27 January 2012

According to the UIS estimation, when examining the East Asia and the Pacific region as a whole, 29.7% (8,547,947) pre-primary age children were not enrolled either in pre-primary or primary in 2010²⁴. This estimation is based on different administrative records and comprises 29 countries in the East Asia and the Pacific Region.

DIMENSION 1: OOSC OF PRE-PRIMARY AGE

Table 4 below presents statistics on Dimension 1 of the countries included in this report. The table gives the percentage of pre-school age children who do not attend school and the percentage of those who do. The percentage of school attendance is then divided further into that of attending pre-primary education and that of attending primary education.

Table 5 displays the actual number of children who are out of school. It must be noted that statistics on pre-primary school age children are most prone to the time the related survey is conducted, since the data is of a single age group at the lowest school grade (pre-primary). Percentages of children with birth dates before and after the survey date greatly affect statistics on percentages of children attending and not attending schools.

Table 4 and 5 must therefore be read with caution. The graphical representations of the attendance rate and OOSC rate of pre-primary school age children are presented in the two figures following the tables.

²⁴ Cite data as: UNESCO Institute for Statistics database, May 2012 release

Table 4: School Attendance of Pre-Primary Age Children

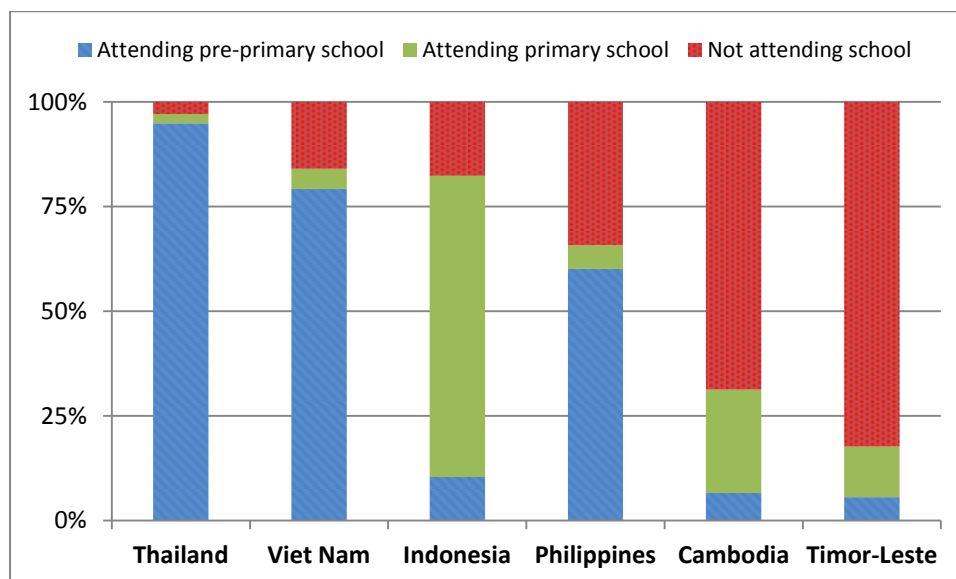
Country Name	Not attending school	Attending pre-primary school	Attending primary school	Attending either pre-primary or primary
Total				
Cambodia	68.7	6.6	24.7	31.3
Indonesia	17.6	10.4	71.9	82.3
Philippines	34.2	60.1	5.7	65.8
Thailand	2.9	94.9	2.2	97.1
Timor-Leste	82.3	5.6	12.1	17.7
Viet Nam	16.0	79.2	4.8	84.0
Male				
Cambodia	70.3	5.9	23.8	29.7
Indonesia	18.7	10.6	70.7	81.3
Philippines	36.7	58.3	5.0	63.3
Thailand	3.2	94.8	2.0	96.8
Timor-Leste	83.7	5.1	11.1	16.2
Viet Nam	16.1	79.1	4.8	83.9
Female				
Cambodia	67.1	7.3	25.6	32.9
Indonesia	16.4	10.3	73.2	83.5
Philippines	31.5	62.1	6.5	68.5
Thailand	2.5	95.0	2.5	97.5
Timor-Leste	80.8	6.0	13.2	19.2
Viet Nam	15.9	79.4	4.7	84.1

Table 5: The Number of Out of School Children at Pre-Primary School Age

Country Name	Not attending schools		Total Population
	%	N	
Cambodia	68.7	202,946	295,475
Indonesia	17.6	772,948	4,391,751
Philippines*	34.2	776,545	2,272,241
Thailand	2.9	26,713	933,234
Timor-Leste	82.3	27,451	33,362
Viet Nam	16	234,986	1,469,153
TOTAL	21.7	2,041,589	9,395,216

*Number calculated using UNPD population figure of the survey year

Figure 2: Percentage of pre-primary age children not in school



The summary of Table 4 and 5 can be drawn as follows:

- In total, more than 1.7 million pre-primary school age children are out of school in the four countries. This breaks down to 202,946 in Cambodia, 772,948 in Indonesia, 776,545 in the Philippines, and 27,451 in Timor-Leste. In addition initial estimates find 26,713 in Thailand and 234,986 in Viet Nam.
- The rate of pre-primary school age children attending school differs greatly between countries. The same applies to the rate of OOSC.
- The highest rate of school attendance is 82.3% in Indonesia (although Thailand and Viet Nam can boast even higher rates) and the lowest 17.7% in Timor-Leste. -Cambodia also has the low attendance rate of 31.3%.
- In three (Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam) of the four countries that have a relatively high school attendance rate, and most pre-primary age children attend pre-primary education.
- In Indonesia, however, 70% of pre-primary age children attend primary education, with only 10.4% actually attending pre-primary education. It is further estimated that in Indonesia²⁵, at the age of 5, 38.4% of children attend pre-primary school while 10.7% attend primary education. This is due in part to the fact that enrolment in government primary schools is free, whereas pre-primary is provided by private sector, thereby requiring parents to pay fees and tuition .

²⁵ Data from Indonesia country report.

- Like Indonesia, the two countries with a low rate of attendance, Timor-Leste and Cambodia, both have much higher percentage of pre-primary age children in primary education than in pre-primary education.
- There is some difference between male and female attendance rates, and without exception in all countries boys have lower attendance rates than girls.

DISPARITIES IN DIMENSION 1

Although Table 4 above clearly displays the difference between boys and girls, the figures are in absolute numbers and it is difficult to understand the magnitude of deviations for different sub-groups from the national average. Table 6 below describes the deviations in terms of the Gender Parity Index.

Table 6: Gender Variation in School Attendance Rate of Pre-primary Age Children

Country Name	School Attendance Rate			Deviation from National Average		Male/ Female			
	National Average	Male	Female	Male	Female	Maximum Deviation (Absolute)	Average Deviation (Absolute)	Maximum Deviation (% of National Average)	Average Deviation (% of National Average)
Cambodia	31.3	29.7	32.9	-1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	5.1	5.0
Indonesia	82.3	81.3	83.5	-1.0	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.5	1.3
Philippines	65.8	63.3	68.5	-2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	4.1	4.0
Thailand	97.1	96.8	97.5	-0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Timor-Leste	17.7	16.2	19.2	-1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	8.5	8.5
Viet Nam	84.0	83.9	84.1	-0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2

The Maximum Deviation indicates the maximum difference between male or female and national average, while the Average Deviation averages the differences between male and national average and between female and national average. Both deviations, displayed in the table in red, are expressed as a percentage of the relevant national average.

In Cambodia for example, the national average of pre-primary attendance rate is 31% with boys at 29.7% and girls at 32.9%. The maximum difference is between boys and the national average, which is 1.5979% (i.e. 1.6%), equivalent to 5.1% of the national average rate. On average, boys and girls deviate from the national rate by 5.0%. Of the four OOSC Initiative countries, the biggest deviation in gender differences is in Timor-Leste, where boys' attendance rate is 8.5% below national average and girl's 8.5% above national average.

Variations exist to a much greater extent in other areas such rural/urban, region/provincial, religion, wealth, etc. Unfortunately not all surveys included all these aspects in their study. Variation study not only requires surveys with appropriate questionnaires, it also demands a higher number of households surveyed and a higher degree of disaggregation when data is analyzed. Table 7 presents variations on

school attendance rate of pre-primary school age children, in urban/rural, regional or provincial and wealth index quintiles. Not all countries have data available in every one of the three aspects and where data is missing, the cells are left empty.

Table 7: Relative Deviations on School Attendance Rate of Pre-Primary Age Children

Country Name	Urban/ Rural		Regional/ Provincial		Wealth Index Quintiles	
	Maximum	Average	Maximum	Average	Maximum	Average
Cambodia	39.8	23.4	53.5	26.2		
Indonesia	8.0	7.2	-46.8	17.8	14.6	8.6
Philippines	11.4	10.4	-80.5	14.6	39.7	22.2
Thailand	-0.1	0.1	-2.5	1.3		
Timor-Leste	55.3	37.3			98.6	45.3
Viet Nam	0.5	0.3	-17.9	7.2		

It should be noted that, in the case of the sub-national/Regional/Provincial, the table only gives a very basic indication, as it is based on the selection of sub-national/regions/provinces taken when analysis is carried out on individual countries and can be incomplete. For example, in the country analysis of Cambodia, 5 provinces were studied, with all other provinces grouped together into additional “Other provinces”. The table therefore displays the variation among the selected provinces only. If within the “Other provinces” a province performs particularly differently, it will not show. Similarly, the average deviation for Indonesia is only the average over selected provinces rather than all provinces in the country.

One additional element present in Table 7 but not in **Error! Reference source not found.** is the negative sign in the Maximum deviation column. This sign describes whether the maximum deviation is a deviation that is higher than (+) or lower than (-) national average. All deviations are expressed as a percentage of the relevant national average. As an example, **Error! Reference source not found.** shows that the Philippines has an average deviation of 14.6%, with the maximum deviation of 80.5%. In other words, most regions deviate up or down from the national figure by around 14.6%, but one of the regions (Mindanao) exhibits a maximum deviation of 80.5%. As the maximum deviation is negative, the attendance rate of this particular region is 80.5% below the national average, i.e. only 19.5% of the national average attendance rate. One would seek to achieve both low average and low maximum deviations, as displayed in the statistics of Thailand.

High average deviation, or low average deviation but high (absolute) maximum deviation, indicates a great imbalance in attendance rates. In the latter case, (i.e. low average but high maximum), one or a

very few of the regions/groups have a very different attendance rate from the majority. However, it should be noted that this analysis of disparities only refers to attendance. If one were to analyze the quality of services in classrooms and schools, or the differences in outcomes from pre-primary experience, the deviations could be considerably higher, although this will remain speculation until further research is conducted in this area.

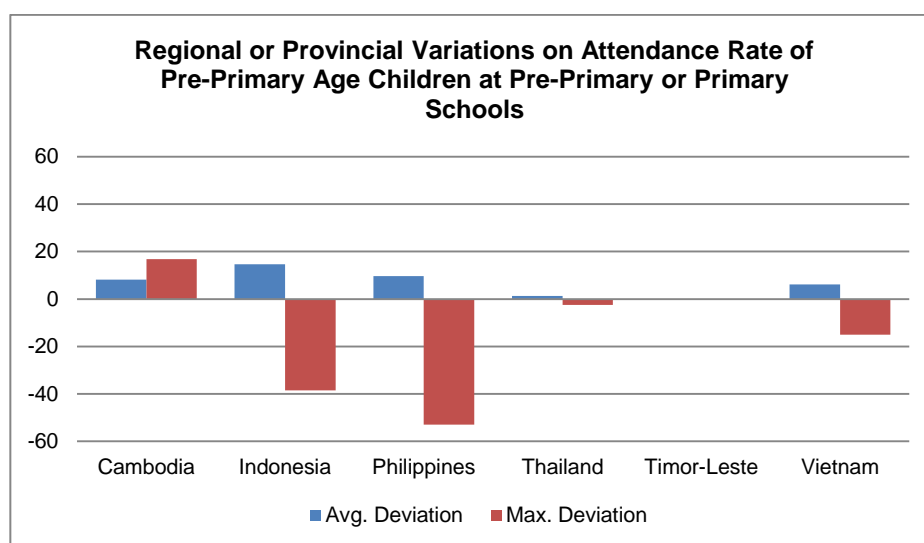
Further information can be found in the Appendix on the relationship between the attendance statistics and the above table and how the maximum and the average deviation are calculated.

The main messages from Table 6 and 7 are as follows:

- There is a great variation in school attendance rates between different areas and between children with different economic background (wealth quintiles) in most of the countries. The only exception is Thailand, although there is no wealth related information in the relevant survey of the country.
- In Cambodia and Timor-Leste, urban and rural areas show great difference in their attendance rate. Urban areas perform much better than rural areas, with attendance rates at 139.8% in Cambodia and 155.3% higher in urban Timor-Leste when compared to the respective national average. A closer look at all the six countries shows that except in Thailand, all countries achieve higher than national average attendance rates in urban areas. In Thailand the situation is the opposite: the rural areas are slightly better than the urban areas.
- Attendance rates in provinces in Cambodia vary greatly as the country shows a relatively high average deviation figure. Cambodia's capital Phnom Penh exhibits the greatest deviation from the national average, with 53.5% more than average children's attendance at the pre-primary levels.
- In the Philippines most regions only deviate slightly from the national average, but there is at least one region that performs alarmingly poorly. The country report shows that the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao has only 12.85% of its pre-primary age children in school, compared to the national average of 65.82%. The region's attendance rate is only 19.5% of the national average. Zamboanga Peninsula, although slightly better off than Mindanao, is also considerably disadvantaged with an attendance rate of just 36% of the national average.
- Statistics show that in Timor-Leste, wealth plays a great role in school attendance of pre-primary children. The attendance rate of the richest category is almost double that of the national average. In all three countries where wealth data are available, the richest category has been shown to have a considerably higher attendance rate.

Figure 2 gives a graphical impression of regional/provincial variations on attendance rate of pre-primary age children in pre-primary or primary education.

Figure 3: Regional/Provincial Variation on Attendance Rate (%) of Pre-Primary Age Children



DIMENSIONS 2 AND 3: OOSC OF PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY AGE

The CMF defines that children of primary or lower secondary school age are considered as being in school if they participate in primary or secondary education (ISCED levels 1, 2 and 3). Children of primary or lower secondary age who do not participate in education programmes at ISCED levels 1, 2 or 3 are considered as being out of school, including those who are in pre-primary and non-formal education.

DIMENSION 2: PRIMARY AGE CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL

8 below presents primary ANAR and its Gender Parity Index (GPI). This table, and also the subsequent tables presented in this section, follow the strict definition of children in school, i.e. only primary and lower secondary school age children are considered in the analysis, and only those who are currently attending primary or secondary school are included as attending school. No other type of education, such as NFE or Equivalency Programmes, are included here with regard to school attendance.

Table 8: Primary ANAR and GPI

Country Name	Male		Female		Total		GPI
	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	
Cambodia	81.6	945,951	83.7	896,472	82.6	1,842,423	1.03
Indonesia	97.7	14,574,645	98.2	13,522,069	98.0	28,096,714	1.01
Philippines	89.7	7,019,635	91.9	6,701,210	90.8	13,720,845	1.02
Thailand	90.3	2,950,410	90.6	2,812,286	90.5	5,762,696	1.00
Timor-Leste*	71.2	100,708	72.9	96,088	72.1	196,796	1.02
Viet Nam	91.6	3,459,244	91.5	3,186,492	91.5	6,645,736	1.00
Total		29,050,593		27,214,618		56,265,211	

* UNPD population figure of the survey year.

Number = Population of primary school age children

Compared with Dimension 1, the tables of Dimension 2 are much less affected by the time the related surveys are carried out. As was discussed earlier in Section 1, survey time has an impact only on the group of children whose birthdate determines whether they are in or out of school. In primary ANAR, this group is the lowest age group attending primary grade 1. When the country total/average ANAR is calculated, the statistics of this age group merge with other age groups, and the distortion caused by survey time is greatly reduced.

The **Number** column in the primary ANAR table contains the population of the related age group, rather than the number of children in primary or secondary schools. In all of the countries except Timor-Leste, this number is estimated with the survey micro data used. For Timor-Leste the UNPD population projection was used to calculate the number corresponding to the percentage calculated from DHS.

Table 9: Percentage of Out of School Children at Primary School Age

Country Name	Male		Female		Total	
	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number
Cambodia	18.4	174,452	16.3	146,320	17.4	320,773
Indonesia**	2.3	335,217	1.8	243,397	2.0	561,934
Philippines	10.3	720,106	8.1	544,964	9.2	1,265,070
Timor-Leste*	28.8	28,956	27.1	26,017	27.9	54,990

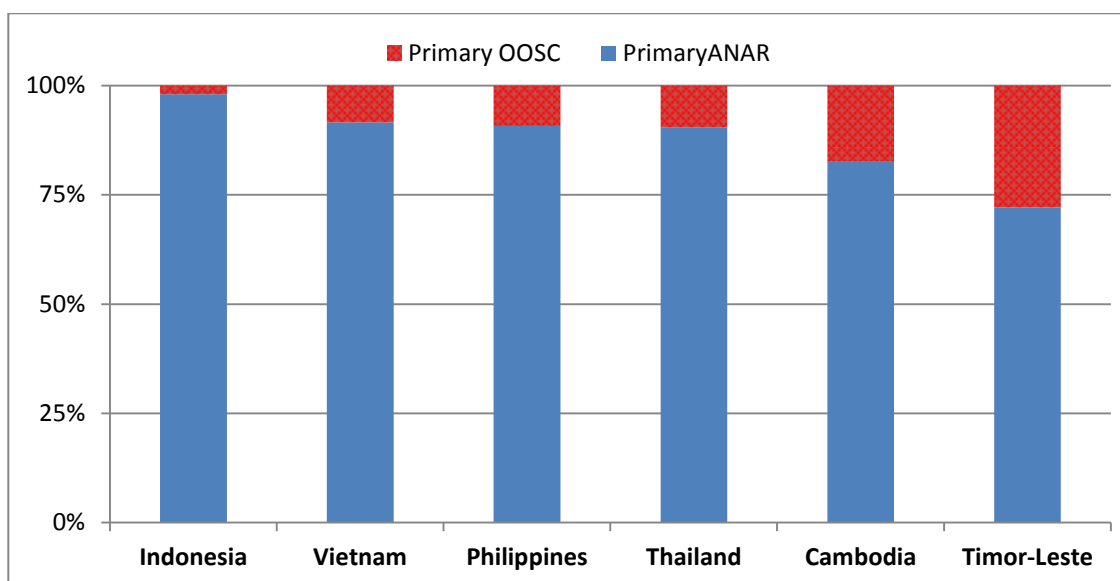
* Number calculated using UNPD population figure of the survey year.

** Indonesia's OOSC numbers are slightly different from the country report due to rounding.

Number = The number of primary school age children who are out of school

It must be noted that in Table 9, the **Number** is the estimated number of out of school children, not the population of the age group. Combining Table 8 and Table 9, one may state that in Cambodia, for example, the population of primary school aged children is 1,842,423, of which 81.6% are in primary or secondary schools and 18.4% are out of school. The number of out of school primary age children stands at 320,773.

Figure 4: Percentage of Primary School Age Children In and Out of School



The main messages from Table 8 and Table 9 are as follows:

- Out of the six countries, four achieve above 90% school attendance among primary school age children, one just above 80% (Cambodia) and one just above 70% (Timor-Leste). In terms of out of school children, in Timor-Leste, almost 30% of its primary school age children are out of school. The figure in Cambodia is almost 20%, while in Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam it is close to 10%. Only Indonesia is an exception: only 2% of primary school age children are not attending schools
- The number of out of school children at primary age is: Cambodia 321,000, Indonesia 562,000, the Philippines 1,265,000, and Timor-Leste 55,000. In total there are approximately 2,203,000 children at primary school age who are not attending any formal primary or secondary education in these four countries. If we add the preliminary figures from Thailand and Viet Nam, the total reaches nearly 3,315,000. .
- As described in the CMF, the primary ANAR GPI is calculated by dividing the female by the male ANAR. Values of the GPI between 0.97 and 1.03 are usually considered gender parity. If the GPI for the ANAR is less than 0.97, girls are at a disadvantage. If the GPI for the ANAR is greater than 1.03, boys are at a disadvantage. It is clear that all countries listed have achieved gender parity.

DISPARITIES IN DIMENSION 2

Table 10: Differences from National Averages for Primary ANAR

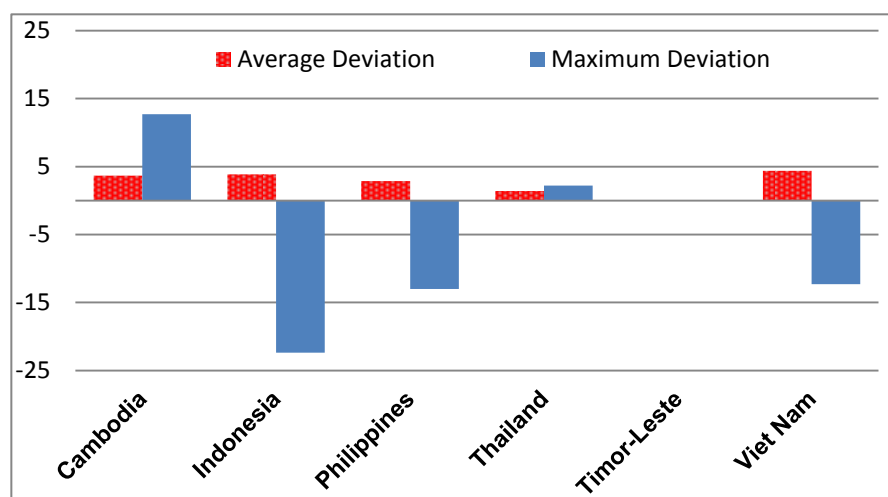
Country Name	Urban/Rural		Regional or Provincial		Wealth Index Quintiles	
	Maximum	Average	Maximum	Average	Maximum	Average
Cambodia	8.05	4.77	12.73	3.66		
Indonesia	0.82	0.82	-22.35	3.87	-1.84	0.98
Philippines	1.47	1.34	-13.02	2.88	-4.71	2.80
Timor-Leste	10.40	6.68			-17.05	9.41

In all countries urban areas perform better than rural areas and have rates higher than the national ANAR averages. Most differ only slightly but in Cambodia and Timor-Leste urban areas achieve around 8% and 10% respectively higher than the national average ANAR.

Although the average deviation is relatively small, regions/provinces still exhibit in some cases very large deviations from the national average in the negative direction. In Indonesia, for example, at least one region (Papua) has its primary ANAR 22.35% below the national average.

Timor-Leste is affected more significantly by wealth, with the lowest wealth quintile achieving 17.05% below the national average ANAR.

Figure 5: Maximum sub-national differences (%) from national averages in school attendance of Primary age children



DIMENSION 3: LOWER SECONDARY AGE CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL

Survey time affects the lower secondary ANAR in the same way as it affects the primary ANAR. Distortion exists in the statistics of the lowest age group of the lower secondary school age children. However, as this group merges with other age groups, the effect is reduced.

Table 11: Lower Secondary ANAR and GPI

Country Name	Male		Female		Total		GPI
	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	
Cambodia	31.4	501,574	35.1	460,926	33.1	962,499	1.12
Indonesia	77.9	6,930,719	82.2	6,451,510	80.0	13,382,229	1.06
Philippines	60.6	4,697,304	71.9	4,681,247	66.3	9,378,551	1.19
Thailand	75.0	1,543,961	79.5	1,467,430	77.2	3,011,390	1.06
Timor-Leste*	29.2	49,369	34.0	47,203	31.6	96,572	1.17
Viet Nam	77.8	3,156,877	80.4	2,908,223	79.1	6,065,100	1.03

* UNPD population figure of the survey year.

Number = Population of lower secondary school age children

The GPI in **Error! Reference source not found.11** and also in subsequent tables is marked pink if it is greater than 1.03. A GPI greater than 1.03 indicates that there is higher percentage of girls than boys in school. When the GPI is below 0.97, it is marked blue, meaning more boys than girls are in school. A GPI between 0.97 and 1.03 is left with no colour to represent gender parity.

Table 12: Lower Secondary School Age Attending Primary Grades and GPI

Country Name	Male		Female		Total		GPI
	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	
Cambodia	54.6	501,574	48.7	460,926	51.8	962,499	0.89
Indonesia	6.5	6,930,719	4.4	6,451,510	5.5	13,382,229	0.68
Philippines	26.1	4,697,304	20.5	4,681,247	23.3	9,378,551	0.79
Thailand	20.3	1,543,961	18.2	1,467,430	19.3	3,011,390	0.89
Timor-Leste*	57.4	49,369	51.8	47,203	54.6	96,572	0.90
Viet Nam	11.5	3,156,877	10.0	2,908,223	10.8	6,065,100	0.87

* UNPD population figure of the survey year.

Number = Population of lower secondary school age children

Note that **Error! Reference source not found.11** and **Error! Reference source not found.12** both have the population of lower secondary school age children in the Number column. In **Error! Reference source not found.13** however, the Number column contains the actual number of out of school children. This is done to follow the convention given in the CMF guide.

Table 13: Percentage of Out of School Children at Lower Secondary School Age and GPI

Country Name	Male	Female	Total	GPI
Cambodia	70,238	74,656	144,894	1.16
Indonesia**	1,081,192	864,502	1,940,423	0.86
Philippines	624,074	355,688	979,762	0.57
Timor-Leste*	6,619	6,694	13,323	1.06

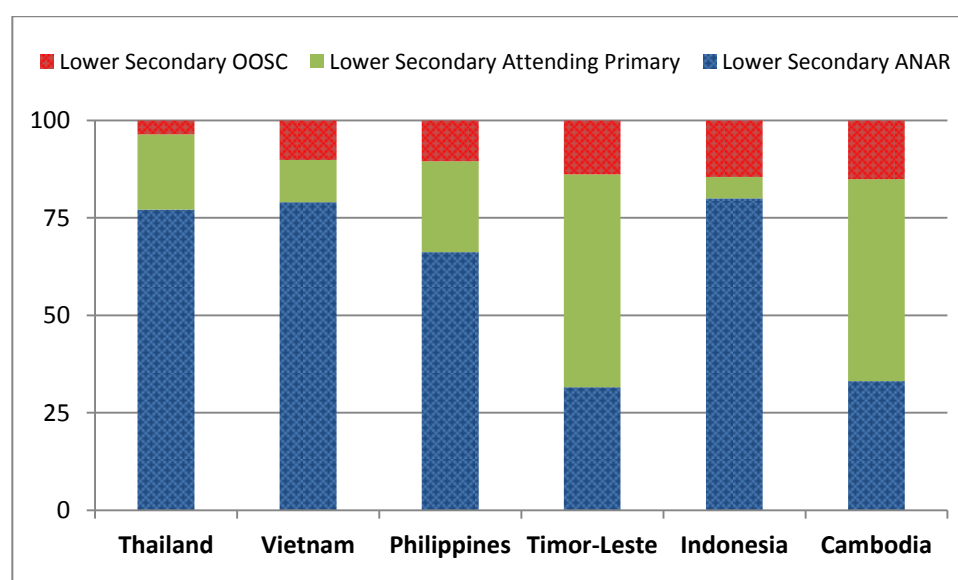
* Number calculated using UNPD population figure of the survey year.

** Indonesia's OOSC numbers are slightly different from the country report due to rounding.

Number = The number of lower secondary school age children who are out of school

The three tables, **Error! Reference source not found.11**, **Error! Reference source not found.12**, and **Error! Reference source not found.13**, should be read together. For example, in Cambodia, the population of lower secondary school age children is 962,499, of which 33.1% attends secondary education, 51.8% attends primary education, and 15.1% are out of school. The number of out of school children at lower secondary school age stands at 144,894. Figure 5 gives a graphical impression of **Error! Reference source not found.11**, **Error! Reference source not found.12**, and **Error! Reference source not found.13** together.

Figure 6: Attendance Status of Lower Secondary School Age Children



The main messages from **Error! Reference source not found.11** to **Error! Reference source not found.13** are as follows:

1. Lower secondary ANAR

- The lower secondary ANAR varies between 31.6% (Timor-Leste) and 80% (Indonesia). In other words, even in the best performing country, only 80% of the lower secondary age children attend school appropriate to their age. In the worst performing country this reduces to less than one third.
- Girls are at a distinctive advantage when it comes to attending schools appropriate for their age. In all countries (except Viet Nam), a higher percentage of girls than boys attend lower secondary schools. In the Philippines, for every 100 boys attending lower secondary school at the right age, 120 girls attend school at the right age. Viet Nam is the only the country that achieves GPI within gender parity range.

2. Lower secondary school age children attending primary education

- Many children fall behind the progress required of them. While they attend school, they are not enrolled in secondary school which is appropriate for their age, but in primary schools where they are over-aged.
- The percentage of children of lower secondary age still in primary education ranges between 5.5% in Indonesia and 54.6% in Timor-Leste. Cambodia is another country that has over half of its lower secondary age children still in primary schools, while the figure in the Philippines is 23.3%. In total, this equals some 32,856,341 children of lower secondary school age still studying in primary school overage.
- A distinctively higher percentage of boys than girls remain in primary schools. The GPIs are universally below 0.97, indicating more boys than girls of lower secondary age attending primary school. In Indonesia, for every 100 overage boys still in primary education, there are 68 overage girls attending primary school.

3. Out of school children at lower secondary school age

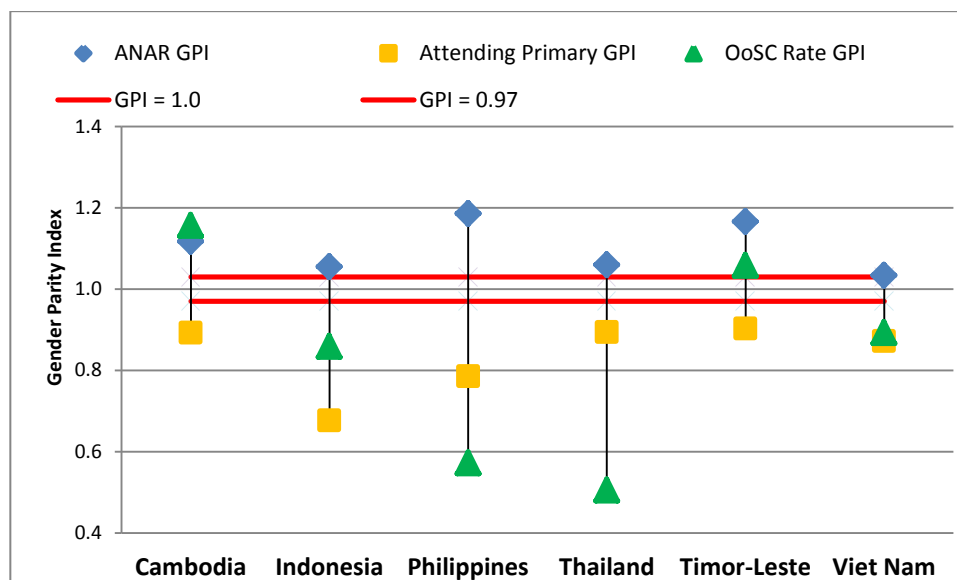
- The percentage of lower secondary school age children who attend neither secondary nor primary education ranges between 3.5% in Thailand and 15.1% in Cambodia. For Indonesia, the Philippines, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam, they have rates between 19-15% at the lower secondary age. Their out-of-school rates are respectively 14.5%, 10.4%, 13.8% and 10.1%.
- In relation to gender parity, the countries can be classified into two groups. In the first group, with Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam, a much higher percentage of boys than girls stay out of school. In the worst case, in Thailand the percentage of boys out

of school is almost double that of the girls ($1/0.51 = 1.96$). In the second group, with Cambodia and Timor-Leste a, higher percentage of girls than boys stay out of school. In Cambodia, for every 100 boys out of school, there are 116 girls out of school.

- The numbers of out of school children in these countries are 145,000 in Cambodia, 1,940,000 in Indonesia, 980,000 in the Philippines and, 13,000 in Timor-Leste. . The total number of OOSC children stands at approximately 3,078,000 (or 3,800,000 if we include Thailand and Viet Nam).

Figure 7 depicts GPIs in different countries. The two red lines represent the upper and lower limits of GPI to be considered gender parity. Any GPI figure falling out of this range indicates gender disparity. The figures above the upper limit indicate a higher percentage of girls while figures below lower limit indicate a higher percentage of boys.

Figure 7: Gender Parity Index of on the Lower Secondary ANAR, Primary Grade Attendance Rate and out-of-school Rate



The graph clearly shows that a higher percentage of girls attend school at the right age and a higher percentage of overage boys study in primary education. In the case of OOSC, Cambodia and Timor-Leste have higher percentage of out-of-school girls, while Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam have a higher percentage of out-of-school boys.

DISPARITIES IN DIMENSION 3

Table 14: Variation in School Attendance Rate of Lower Secondary Age children

Country Name	Urban/Rural		Regional or Provincial		Wealth Index Quintiles	
	Maximum	Average	Maximum	Average	Maximum	Average
Cambodia	69.0%	41.3%	106.4%	32.1%		
Indonesia	7.8%	7.3%				
Philippines	11.1%	9.8%	-28.3%	10.4%	-29.4%	19.0%
Thailand	2.5%	1.7%	-7.8%	3.6%		
Timor-Leste	43.1%	27.8%			69.8%	39.4%
Viet Nam	7.4%	4.9%	-26.3%	14.4%		

There are three significant finding here. **First**, the variation in urban and rural areas is much more significant in the lower secondary ANAR than in the primary ANAR. In Cambodia, the urban ANAR is 69% higher than the national average, and in Timor-Leste it is 43% above the average. The other four countries exhibit smaller differences between urban and rural but the figures are still between 4.9 and 10 percent for Indonesia, the Philippines and Viet Nam. **Second**, the sub-national variation in lower secondary ANAR is significant. In the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh, the ANAR of 68.4% is 106.4% higher than the national average of 33.1%. In other words, it is more than double that of the national average. **Third**, wealth also has significant impact on the ANAR. For example in Timor-Leste, the richest category fares the best in the attendance rate, achieving 69.8% higher than the national average. The average deviation is also high, meaning the five categories of wealth achieve very different ANARs.

Table 15: Maximum and average levels of difference between national average and sub-national levels of Out of School Children at Lower Secondary School Age

Country Name	Urban/Rural		Regional or Provincial		Wealth Index Quintiles	
	Maximum	Average	Maximum	Average	Maximum	Average
Cambodia	-38.8%	23.2%	72.5%	20.5%		
Indonesia	-29.5%	27.1%	80.8%	39.2%	82.9%	46.6%
Philippines	-33.5%	29.8%	-59.3%	23.4%	79.7%	51.5%
Timor-Leste	-20.4%	13.2%			51.2%	26.2%

The urban areas have universally lower than national average rates of OOSC. The most significant one is in Cambodia, where the rate of OOSC is almost 40% less in urban areas than in the country as a whole, although the Philippines and Indonesia experience similar though slightly lower levels of disparity

between urban and rural areas. The detailed information of urban and rural performance in the rate of out of school children at lower secondary school age can be seen in the next table.

Table 16: Urban and Rural Variations in Lower Secondary OOSC Rate

Country Name	Urban/Rural	Lower Secondary OoSC Rate	Deviation of OoSC Rate	Deviation Relative to National Average (%)	Average Deviation Relative to National Average (%)
Cambodia	National Average	15.1%			23.2%
	Urban	9.2%	-5.8%	-38.8%	
	Rural	16.2%	1.2%	7.7%	
Indonesia	National Average	14.6%			27.1%
	Urban	10.3%	-4.3%	-29.5%	
	Rural	18.2%	3.6%	24.7%	
Philippines	National Average	10.4%			29.8%
	Urban	6.9%	-3.5%	-33.5%	
	Rural	13.2%	2.7%	26.0%	
Thailand	National Average	3.5%			10.0%
	Urban	3.0%	-0.5%	-14.6%	
	Rural	3.7%	0.2%	5.4%	
Timor-Leste	National Average	13.8%			13.2%
	Urban	11.0%	-2.8%	-20.4%	
	Rural	14.6%	0.8%	6.0%	
Viet Nam	National Average	10.1%			20.9%
	Urban	6.9%	-3.2%	-31.6%	
	Rural	11.2%	1.0%	10.2%	

Table 15 also depicts the regional/provincial variation of the lower secondary OOSC rate. The result is significant. In one of the provinces (An Giang) selected for analysis in Viet Nam, the out of school rate reaches almost two and half times that of the national average (24.7% compared to 10.1%). In another province (HCMC), the OOSC rate is only 9%, close but below the national average.

The maximum deviation in the Philippines is shown to be -59.3%. This occurs in the National Capital Region where the out of school rate is significantly lower than the national average. Only 4.3% of the children are out of school, compared with 10.4% nationally. More research is needed to determine if the higher levels of enrolment and attendance in urban areas are due to population migration, with students attending in urban schools but their families still registered as living in rural areas.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL

The next two tables present the number of children who are out of school in each of the countries. Table 17 gives the number of OOSC separately on primary school age and on lower secondary school age.

Table 17: Number of OOSC Respectively at Primary Age and at Lower Secondary Age

Country Name	Primary School Age (Thousands)			Lower Secondary School Age (Thousands)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total

Cambodia	174	146	321	70	75	145
Indonesia	335	243	562	1,081	865	1,940
Philippines	720	545	1,265	624	356	980
Timor-Leste	29	26	55	7	7	13
Total	1,258	960	2,203	1,782	1,303	3,078

Table 18 combines them together and displays the number for children at primary school age and lower secondary school age as a whole.

Table 18: Number of OOSC at Primary and Lower Secondary School Age

Country Name	Primary and Lower Secondary School Age (Thousands)		
	Male	Female	Total
Cambodia	245	221	466
Indonesia	1,416	1,108	2,502
Philippines	1,344	901	2,245
Timor-Leste	36	33	68
Total	3,041	2,263	5,281

There are in total more than two million primary school age children who are out of school in the four countries. At lower secondary school age, the number is over three million. When combined together, the number of children who are at primary or lower secondary school age and do not attend any formal school in these four countries in East Asia and the Pacific exceeds five million two hundred thousand.

ATTENDANCE RATE OF SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

Sections 2.2 and 2.3 presented the school attendance rate of children at the pre-primary, primary and lower secondary school age. The sections also followed the strict definition of formal schools given by CMF. This section looks at school attendance rate of children between the age of 5 and 17. The statistics are mostly based on answers to the survey question asking a child if he/she is currently attending school. Unfortunately, no reference is made as to the type of school he/she may be attending. As an example, if a child is attending religious education which is not counted as formal education, he/she will still be included in this section as attending school. Although this is not in line with the Conceptual Methodological Framework, we have no choice but to rely on the data available.

Overall, at the age of pre-primary, primary and lower secondary school, the percentage of children attending non-formal education is relatively very small.

The two tables in the next two pages present respectively the two aspects of the attendance rate. One is the attendance rate itself, and the other is the gender disparity GPI of the attendance rate. A figure is presented to give a graphical representation of each of the tables.

Table 19: School Attendance Rate by Age

Country Name	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Cambodia	31.3%	56.1%	80.2%	88.1%	93.3%	92.2%	93.9%	88.8%	87.2%	79.0%	66.8%	55.3%	44.9%
Indonesia	49.1%	81.6%	97.1%	98.9%	99.0%	98.9%	98.4%	95.3%	92.2%	86.4%	77.0%	71.2%	58.1%
Philippines	65.8%	85.5%	95.4%	97.1%	97.6%	97.4%	97.1%	95.5%	92.3%	87.4%	82.7%	69.4%	55.9%
Timor-Leste	17.7%	40.8%	68.2%	78.0%	83.9%	86.1%	87.9%	88.8%	86.1%	82.9%	80.3%	74.0%	72.0%

Figure 8: Percentage of School Attendance Rate by Age

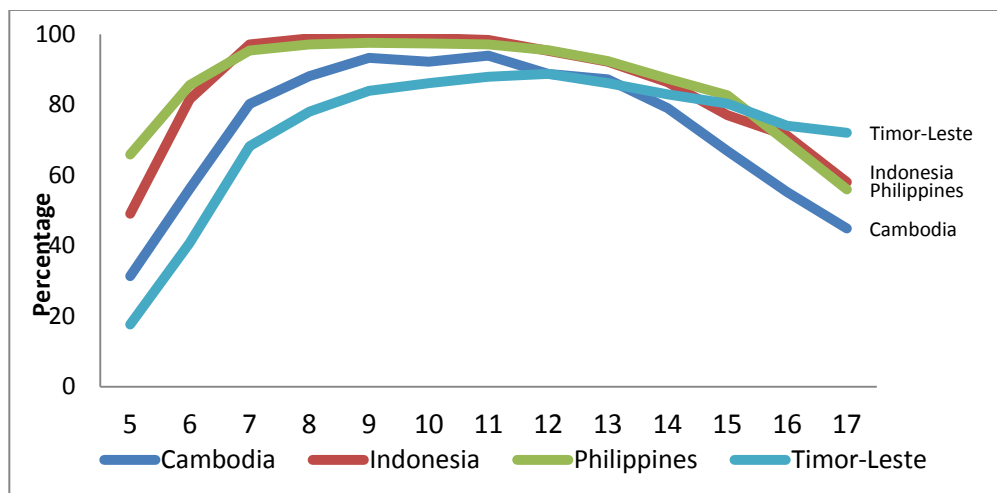


Table 19 displays a universal phenomenon where the attendance rate is low at the age of 5, increases quickly to reach relatively high between the ages of 8 and 12, and then declines gradually as age increases. At the lower end at age 5, Timor-Leste fares the worst and Philippines the best, and at the high end at age 17, Cambodia fares the worst and Timor-Leste the best. Timor-Leste seems to be slightly different, in that its curve does not decline in the higher end of age as quickly as the other countries, and also the increase at the lower end of age starts rather late.

Table 20: Compulsory age by level of education

Country Name	Pre-Primary	Primary	Lower Secondary
Cambodia	5	6 - 11	12 - 14
Indonesia	6	7 - 12	13 - 15
Philippines	5	6 - 11	12 - 15
Thailand	5	6 - 11	12 - 14
Timor-Leste	5	6 - 11	12 - 14
Viet Nam	5	6 - 10	11 - 14

Cambodia and Timor-Leste are different from Indonesia and the Philippines in that age of highest attendance rate is quite late. Timor-Leste reaches the highest attendance rate of 88.8% at the age of 12, while Cambodia reaches the highest 93.9% at the age of 11. This is in comparison to the highest of 99% at age 9 in Indonesia, 97.6% at age 9 in the Philippines, 99.8% at age 7 in Thailand, and 97.5% at age 8 in Viet Nam.

One fact remains the same in all countries. After the age of 12, attendance rates start to decline, and more and more children leave school as their age increases. The situation and statistics are very similar across all four countries.

Table 21: GPI on School Attendance Rate by Age

Country Name	Aged 5	Aged 6	Aged 7	Aged 8	Aged 9	Aged 10	Aged 11	Aged 12	Aged 13	Aged 14	Aged 15	Aged 16	Aged 17
Cambodia	1.11	1.03	1.05	1.05	1.02	0.99	0.99	1.01	0.96	0.95	0.97	0.86	0.77
Indonesia	1.09	1.03	1.01	1.00	1.00	1.01	1.01	1.01	1.02	1.03	1.04	1.00	0.97
Philippines	1.08	1.01	1.02	1.00	1.02	1.01	1.01	1.03	1.05	1.08	1.12	1.16	1.12
Timor-Leste	1.19	1.21	0.98	1.05	0.98	1.03	0.99	0.99	1.00	0.98	1.01	0.99	1.03

Figure 9: GPI on School Attendance Rate by Age

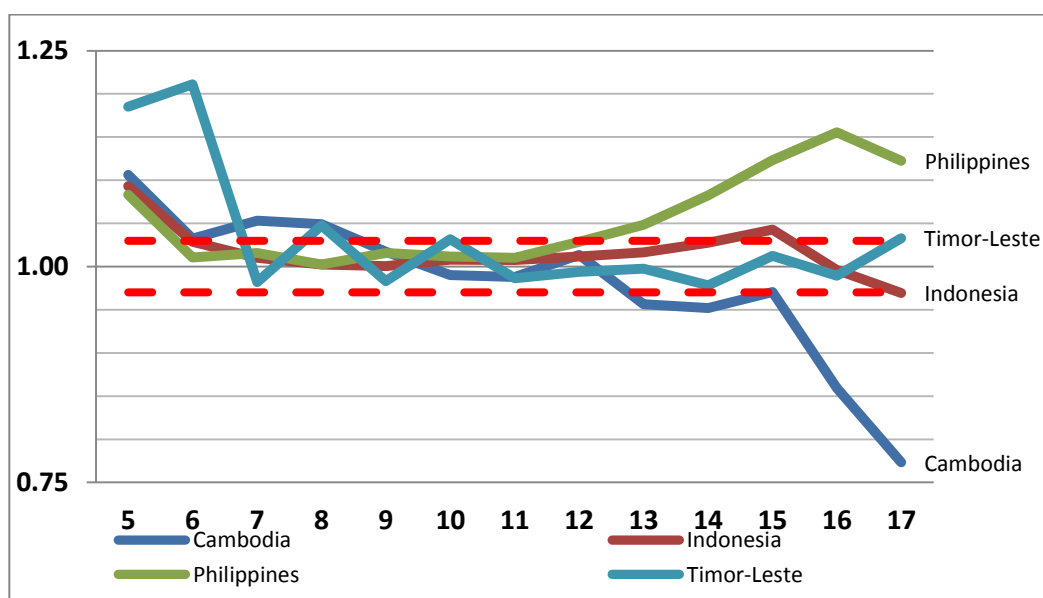


Table 21 presents GPI of the attendance rate and a graphical impression is displayed in Figure 9. The two dashed red lines represent the GPI upper and lower range of 1.03 and 0.97 for gender parity. The statistics that are above the GPI 1.03 line represent a higher female attendance rate, while the statistics below the GPI 0.97 line represent a higher male attendance rate. The figure gives a clear view of those in and outside of this range. Ages at the lower and higher end fall out of gender parity, particularly at the higher end of the ages. From above 12, all but Timor-Leste exhibit gender disparity. Cambodia has a higher rate of male school attendance while the other 4 have a higher rate of female school attendance. At the lower end of the age range, i.e. children aged 5, a higher percentage of female attend schools.

Disparities in Dimension 4 and 5

DIMENSIONS 4 AND 5: CHILDREN AT RISK OF EXCLUSION

Dimensions 4 and 5 cover children in school who are At Risk of dropping out, in other words, the potential OOSC of tomorrow. All children face some risk of dropping out, but not all do to the same degree. The analysis of Dimensions 4 and 5 focuses on those children who are at the 'greatest risk' of dropping out of school. Dimension 4 concentrates on primary school students while Dimension 5 on lower secondary school students.

There are various ways to analyze the population of children at risk. One simple method is to look at the at-risk children of yesterday, that is, children who recently dropped out of school and projecting this on current enrolment rates. Other methods of analysis include analysis of risk based on the repetition rate in school and/or on the rate of over-age students for specific grades.

There are two issues, however, in the measurement of the above-mentioned indicators. Firstly, unlike ANAR, questionnaires that produce data necessary for the calculation of dropout and repetition rates are not always present in surveys. The repetition rate, for instance, requires attendance information of two consecutive years but in many surveys only one year of information is available. The dropout rate, too, strictly speaking, requires data of two years, although one year information can be used to estimate some form of dropout. To make the issue more complicated, some surveys mix children who drop out from school with those who never attended, forcing analysis to report dropout in a different way from CMF recommended tables.

The second issue relates to over-age. Information required for the calculation of over-age rate is usually available in surveys and the calculation itself is relatively easy. However, CMF does not include any definition of over-age and there is also no template for the presentation of over-age rates. This results in different countries calculating and presenting over-age very differently. The age included in over-age range for instance can be 2+ years older in some studies but 3+ years older in some other studies. Over-age rates can mean different things in different Country Reports, some being percentage of an age group and some the percentage within a grade population. There are further complications when considering the timing of the survey itself and how this can effect interpretation of being overage.

Probably because of the issues above, and the lack of discussion related to the over-age issue in the CMF, there has also been little analysis in over-age in respect to gender, geographical location, and ethnic minorities.

To deal with the above issues, this chapter presents Dimensions 4 and 5 in a different way from Dimensions 2 and 3. In the presentation of dropout and repetition rates, instead of putting all countries together in one table, this is only done where possible for overage estimates. For repetition and drop

out, examples are given only for individual countries and are not comparable. Each country is presented individually, according to its own definition of indicators and tables. In the presentation of over-age, however, rates have been recalculated to follow the same definition and are presented in the same format, with all countries combined into one table.

DROPOUT

Error! Reference source not found. lists the availability of information on which the calculation of dropout and repetition relies. To calculate the percentage of children who dropped out during the past academic year, the attendance information on the current and the past year must be available. To calculate the percentage of children who repeat, further information on the grade attended in the current and the past years must also be available.

Table 22: Availability of Data for Dropout and Repetition Analysis

Country Name	Survey Name	Current Year Attendance	Never Attended	Attended	Previous Year Attendance	Dropout in the Past Year	Dropout Before Current Year	Repeat
Cambodia	CSES	Yes	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	No*
Indonesia	SUSENA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes**	No
Philippines	APIS	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Thailand	CYS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Timor Leste	DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Viet Nam	Census	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No

Yes* = Information available but non-formal education is included.

No* = although there is information on previous years attendance but no grade information is given.

Yes** = Questionnaires existing but no analysis is done.

As shown in the table, Cambodia has information on the attendance for the current and past year. However the survey does not differentiate children who attend formal education from those who attend non-formal education. There is also no information available on the grade attended in the previous year, and as such, no repetition rate can be calculated. In Indonesia, the survey has no information on the previous year's attendance but the analysis of dropout is nevertheless carried out using administrative data. The only countries that have full information are Thailand and Timor-Leste but only Timor-Leste has tables ready in their national report. Thailand is still in process of completing the full analysis for its National Report.

i. Timor-Leste

Table 23: Cumulative Dropout Rate (%) in Timor-Leste

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
Male	0.0	0.6	1.7	4.1	6.4	9.0	5.3	7.0	8.5
Female	0.0	1.1	2.9	5.3	7.3	9.0	6.2	7.4	8.1
Total	0.0	0.9	2.3	4.7	6.8	9.0	5.7	7.2	8.3

Table 24: Survival Rate (%) in Timor-Leste

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
Male	100.0	99.4	98.3	95.9	93.6	91.0	94.7	93.0	91.5
Female	100.0	98.9	97.1	94.7	92.7	91.0	93.8	92.6	91.9
Total	100.0	99.1	97.7	95.3	93.2	91.0	94.3	92.8	91.7

Table 25: Classification of OOSC by School Exposure in Timor-Leste

Categories of OOSC (%)	Primary school age (Dimension 2)			Lower Secondary School age (Dimension 3)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Total out-of-school children	27.80%	26.00%	26.90%	13.50%	14.40%	14.00%
Dropped out (% of OOSC)	4.70%	7.00%	5.80%	16.90%	11.20%	13.90%
Expected to enter by age 17 (% of OOSC)	47.80%	43.00%	45.40%	3.20%	2.40%	2.90%
Expected to never enter (% of OOSC)	47.50%	50.00%	48.80%	79.90%	86.40%	83.20%

The Table 24 and **Error! Reference source not found.** were calculated using template provided by UIS and **Error! Reference source not found.** is calculated by 100 minus the survival rate.

ii. Viet Nam

The Viet Nam survey provided no information on previous year's attendance. However, the following tables and figures provide a different but full picture of children who once attended but are currently not attending, i.e. dropout children.

Table 26: Percentage of Dropout Children in Viet Nam

Age	Dropped Out Children	
	%	N
6	0.3	4,249
7	0.5	6,442
8	0.7	9,717
9	1.4	18,477
10	2.4	29,657
11	3.6	50,486
12	6.1	89,460
13	9.6	152,092
14	13.9	222,545
15	24.6	434,835
16	33.4	592,252
17	38.1	672,127

Source: Census 2009, Viet Nam

Figure 10: Percentage of Dropout Children in Viet Nam

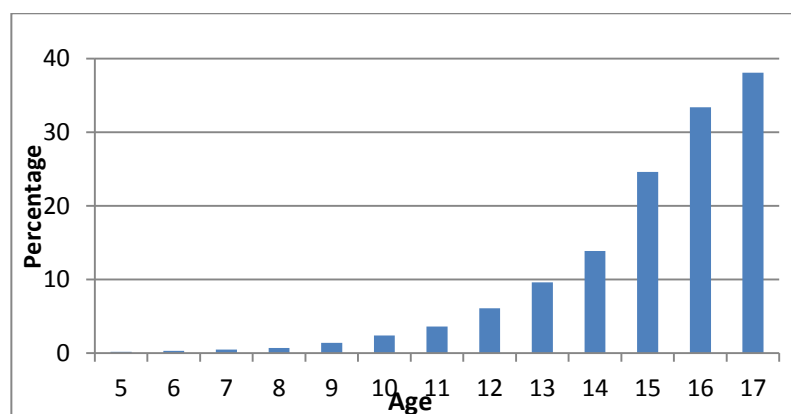


Table 27 presents the educational attainment of out of school children who are aged between 5 and 17. They show that in Viet Nam, there is a large group of children who complete the last grade of lower secondary school before leaving school.

Table 27: Educational Attainment (grade) of OOSC Aged 5 - 17 in Viet Nam

Educational Attainment of OoSC	Never Attended	No Educational Attainment	Attended but Dropped Out															Other Types of Schools/College/University		
			Primary Education							Lower Secondary Education				Upper Secondary Education						
			1	2	3	4	5	Total	6	7	8	9	Total	10	11	12	Total			
Age	5	15.8	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	6	5.4	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	7	2.4	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	8	1.8	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	9	1.6	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	10	1.6	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	2.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	11	1.5	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.9	2.8	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	12	1.5	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.7	1.0	1.5	3.9	1.4	0.7	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	13	1.7	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.8	1.2	2.1	4.9	2.4	1.5	0.8	0.1	4.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	14	1.7	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.8	1.3	2.6	5.5	2.9	2.5	1.8	1.1	8.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	15	1.8	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.9	1.4	2.9	6.0	3.4	3.4	3.3	7.5	17.6	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.1
	16	1.8	0.0	0.3	0.6	0.9	1.5	3.0	6.3	3.3	3.7	3.9	12.7	23.6	2.3	0.6	0.1	3.1	0.3	0.3
	17	1.8	0.0	0.2	0.7	1.0	1.5	3.1	6.5	3.3	3.5	3.9	14.3	25.1	3.5	1.5	1.1	6.0	0.5	0.5
Total	3.1	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.8	1.4	3.4	1.5	1.3	1.2	3.2	7.3	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.9	0.1	0.1	
Gender	Male	3.0	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	1.5	3.6	1.7	1.5	1.4	3.3	7.9	0.7	0.2	0.1	1.0	0.1	0.1
	Female	3.1	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.7	1.4	3.2	1.3	1.1	1.1	3.2	6.7	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.8	0.1	0.1
Urban/Rural	Urban	2.4	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	1.0	2.3	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.9	5.1	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.9	0.1	0.1
	Rural	3.3	0.0	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.9	1.6	3.8	1.6	1.5	1.3	3.7	8.1	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.9	0.1	0.1

REPETITION

i. Cambodia

The calculation of repetition rate normally requires attendance information on two consecutive years, the current and the previous year, which the Cambodia CSES survey does not provide. However, it is possible to extract information and estimate repetition from other two seemingly unrelated questions: the highest grade successfully completed and the number of years in school.

Without repetition, a child spends a number of years in school to achieve the same number of grades. Any extra years spent in school must be the result of repetition, or in some cases, temporary absence from school. With this logic, Table 28 is created to display the percentage of children who repeated different number of times to reach a certain level.

Table 28: Chance of repetition (%) before Completion of a Grade, Cambodia

Highest grade achieved	Number of times repeated							Total attended population
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	82.5	15.2	2.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	464,351
2	85.5	12.5	1.7	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	451,385
3	86.5	12.0	1.3	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	412,227
4	87.5	10.7	1.5	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	363,191
5	87.8	10.9	1.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	358,074
6	87.5	11.9	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	333,532
7	89.8	9.6	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	262,175
8	89.2	10.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	209,674
9	90.5	8.8	0.6	0.1	0.0	0.0		128,796
10	90.5	9.5	0.0	0.0	0.0			72,431
11	88.7	11.3	0.0	0.0				27,791
12	97.6	0.0	5.4					3,344
No grade completed	25.0	1.9	0.2	0.0	0.0			230,957

As an example, out of the 464,351 children who completed primary Grade 1, 82.5% succeeded without any repetition, 15.2% did with one repetition, and just over 2% repeated multiple times.

What **Error! Reference source not found.** 28 presents is in fact the likelihood of a child to reach a certain grade with a certain number of repeats. On average about 88% children reach a grade without repetition. 10% repeat once and 2% repeat multiple times. The Primary Grade 1 sees the higher repetition rate, although no further conclusion can be drawn on repetition rate in different grades.

Figure 11: Chance of Having a Number of Repeats before Completion of a Grade, Cambodia



OVER-AGE

This report defines that children are over-age if their age is two years or more than the age officially declared for the grade. As an example, in Indonesia the age for primary grade 1 is 7. If the child is 9 years old or older, he/she can be assured of being over-age, as an 8 year old could have enrolled coirrectly at age 7 and had a birthday while attending Grade 1.. However in Cambodia the age for primary grade 1 is 6 and therefore only an 8 year old or older child is considered over-age. The tables in this section do not give detailed ages but treat all ages according to the official age definition by the respective country, which is tabled in Section 1.

There is a good reason why over-age is taken only from 2 or more years older. A child with date of birth just before the survey date will be considered one year over-aged, even though he is attending grade which is right for him. If this is not taken into consideration, over-age statistics will no doubt be over-estimated. For children who are 2 or more years older than the right age for the grade, these children are confirmed over-age children for the respective grade by at least one year.

On the other hand, if the over-age definition considers only children who are 2 or more years older, the over-age statistics will be under-estimated. In between the two, this report chooses to calculate 2 or more years older as over-age, and the statistics present an under-estimated over-age conclusion. The tables must be read with this in mind.

Tables 29 to 34 present over-age by grade for each individual country. This is followed by a table that consolidates the information. The individual country table is useful in that it presents a detailed age spectrum over the most relevant ages of children in a grade.

Table 29: Over-Age by Grade in Cambodia

Cambodia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Under Age	0.0	9.5	8.1	7.7	7.6	7.6	9.0	10.0	10.3
Official Age	37.4	24.6	17.6	18.5	16.8	16.2	16.0	19.1	17.2
Official Age + 1	29.2	24.3	25.0	21.5	21.3	19.4	22.3	21.8	20.8
Over-Age	33.5	41.6	49.3	52.3	54.3	56.7	52.6	49.0	51.7

Table 30: Over-Age by Grade in Indonesia

Indonesia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Under Age	60.9	52.7	49.2	54.2	52.8	38.5	27.8	49.0	50.7
Official Age	31.7	35.8	37.8	33.6	33.5	51.6	53.2	37.2	33.3
Official Age + 1	4.3	8.3	9.5	8.4	10.1	6.8	13.4	9.5	11.3
Over-Age	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.8	3.7	3.1	5.7	3.8	3.9

Table 31: Over-Age by Grade in Thailand

Thailand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Under Age	2.2	3.2	3.1	3.4	2.8	3.0	3.2	3.5	3.1
Official Age	42.5	36.4	36.9	35.4	37.8	43.1	39.8	43.0	38.1
Official Age + 1	52.0	56.1	55.9	57.3	56.1	50.1	53.4	49.8	50.9
Over-Age	3.3	4.3	4.2	3.9	3.3	3.8	3.6	3.7	7.9

Table 32: Over-Age by Grade in Timor-Leste

Timor Leste	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Under Age	12.3	14.3	10.3	9.5	7.9	7.8	5.1	8.8	7.1
Official Age	35.7	25.4	22.5	16.1	19.1	12.4	19.2	14.3	11.1
Official Age + 1	26.4	25.9	22.0	24.8	20.6	25.3	20.3	21.1	18.6
Over-Age	25.6	34.4	45.2	49.6	52.4	54.6	55.4	55.8	63.2

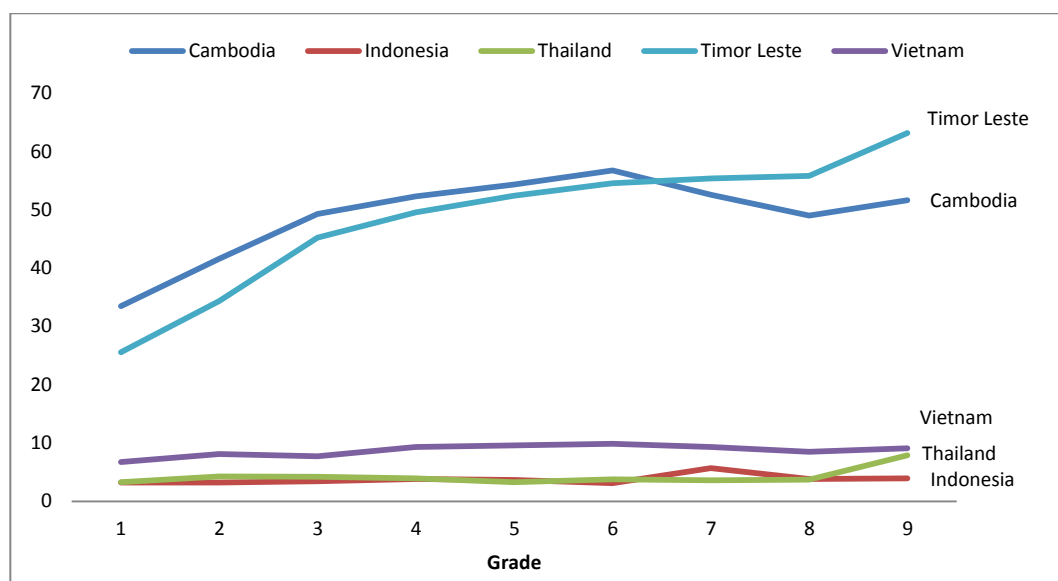
Table 33: Over-Age by Grade in Viet Nam

Viet Nam	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Under Age	3.6	2.8	1.9	1.4	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.7
Official Age	62.2	58.6	61.2	61.2	58.9	59.3	58.8	60.4	58.6
Official Age + 1	27.4	30.5	29.1	28.1	29.6	29.3	30.4	29.7	30.6
Over-Age	6.8	8.1	7.7	9.3	9.6	9.8	9.3	8.5	9.1

Table 34: Over-Age in Countries

Over-Age Rate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Cambodia	33.5	41.6	49.3	52.3	54.3	56.7	52.6	49.0	51.7
Indonesia	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.8	3.7	3.1	5.7	3.8	3.9
Thailand	3.3	4.3	4.2	3.9	3.3	3.8	3.6	3.7	7.9
Timor Leste	25.6	34.4	45.2	49.6	52.4	54.6	55.4	55.8	63.2
Viet Nam	6.8	8.1	7.7	9.3	9.6	9.8	9.3	8.5	9.1

Figure 12: Over-Age by Grade



The main messages from over-age tables are as follows:

- Cambodia and Timor-Leste have very high over-age figures, reaching their peaks at 56.7% in Grade 6 in Cambodia and at 63% at Grade 9 in Timor-Leste. In most of the grades in these two countries more than half of the children are over-age. This has unique policy and strategic response implications.
- Indonesia has a very high number of children who are under-aged. This is likely related to the uncommon fact that the official age to start primary school is 7 in Indonesia rather than the usual 6, and that Grade 1 is free whereas pre-primary is fee based. It is clear from the table that parents in Indonesia send their children to school earlier than officially recommended and hence the severe under-age level seen in the table, resulting in young children receiving education which is not age appropriate.
- Both Thailand and Viet Nam have relatively low number of over-age children in school. In Thailand there is a higher percentage of children at the official age +1 rather than at the official age, but in Viet Nam there is a higher percentage of children at the official age rather than the official age +1. This difference does not give any meaning as the variation depends on the time the survey is conducted in relation to academic year. The important and revealing data is the statistics on over-age, i.e. 2 years or more than official age. In this respect, the over-age situation is slightly higher in Viet Nam than in Thailand.

Sub-national Regional Variation on Over-Age in Viet Nam

As mentioned earlier, over-age has not been analysed sufficiently in individual country reports. The Viet Nam report, however, does include analysis on regional variation on over-age. The result is significant.

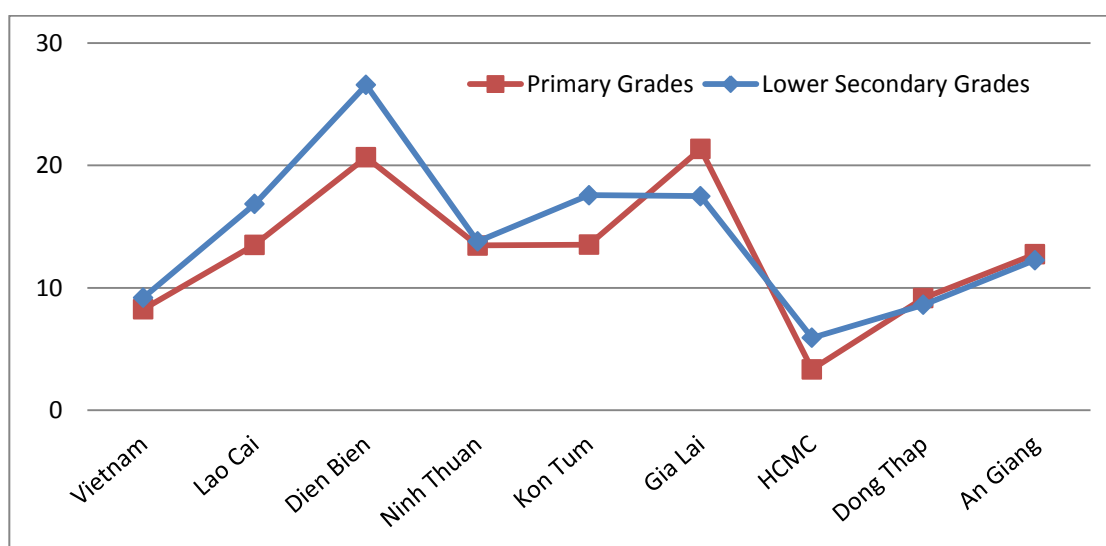
Table 35: Primary Over-Age in Viet Nam Provinces

Vietnam Provinces	Vietnam	Lao Cai	Dien Bien	Ninh Thuan	Kon Tum	Gia Lai	HCMC	Dong Thap	An Giang	Other	Over-Age Avg. Deviation	Over-Age Max. Deviation
Under Age	2.4	4.8	5.7	2.4	0.9	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	2.7		
Official Age	60.4	50.9	44.6	54.3	53.3	45.5	70.5	59.9	55.6	60.6		
Official Age + 1	29.0	30.8	29.1	29.8	32.3	32.8	26.1	30.9	31.6	28.9		
Over-Age	8.2	13.5	20.7	13.5	13.5	21.3	3.4	9.2	12.7	7.9	70.1	158.8

Error! Reference source not found. presents provincial variation on over-age in primary schools. The same definition is used to calculate deviations and both average and maximum deviations are in relation to the Viet Nam national average. The table shows that Gia Lai province has 21.3% of its primary age children who are over-age for the grade, a figure which exceeds 2.5 times that of the national average. The average deviation is 70.1%, indicating provinces perform very differently. In the best performing province HCMC, the over-age rate is only 3.4%, a figure that is only about 40% of the national average.

Figure 13 presents over-age in lower secondary grades, compared with over-age in primary grades. It is clear in some provinces such as Dien Bien and Gia Lai, over-age in grade increases in lower secondary education.

Figure 13: Primary and Lower Secondary Grades Over-Age Rate in Viet Nam by Province



ANALYTICAL SUMMARY OF PROFILES OF EXCLUDED CHILDREN

The beginning of this chapter attempts to comprehend the status of the out-of-school children by dimension of exclusions: out-of-school children in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary, as well as those who are in school but at risk of dropping out for primary and lower secondary level. Moreover, it examines the percentage of distribution for children who attends and not attends schools and particularly scrutinizes the disparity patterns pertaining to gender, geographical and economic quintiles. In Dimension 4 and 5, exemplifications of statistics from selected countries are presented to focus on dropout, repeaters, never enrolled and overage.

In this analytical summary, we will highlight the summary table for statistics based on the key indicators and available data. The key messages of each dimension further analyzes implications of the evidence in order to build for the following chapters, which will discuss on the barriers and bottleneck and education policies that would go around them.

In general, the pattern of the enrolment rate for pre-primary is low among the four countries, especially for the children who attend pre-primary during their pre-primary age. The implication for this is that they will become an overage in the latter stage of level of education and predominantly fall into the “At Risk” category. For the primary level, most countries except Timor Leste have a high attendance rate. However, the percentage of dropout, repetition, never enroll and overage are substantially high in some countries, making disadvantage children becomes more excluded. For the secondary level, focus on making children attend the secondary level at the right age, would greatly help those “At Risk”.

The key messages within this report can be summarized as follows:

Dimension	Cambodia	Indonesia	Philippines	Timor Leste
Dimension 1: Pre-primary				
<i>School attendance</i>	31.3%	82.3%	65.85%	17.7%
<i>Pre-primary age in pre-primary level</i>	6.6%	10.4%	60.1%	5.6%
<i>Pre-primary age in primary level</i>	24.7%	71.9%	5.7%	12.1%
<i>OOSC of Pre-Primary Age</i>	68.7%	17.6%	34.2%	82.3%
<i>Disaggregation by type of disparity (Attending School)</i>				

Dimension	Cambodia	Indonesia	Philippines	Timor Leste
<i>Gender (% Variation from national value)</i>	5%	1.3%	4%	8.5%
<i>Urban vs rural (% Variation from national value)</i>	23.4%	7.2%	10.4%	37.3%

DIMENSION 1: PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

- The rate of pre-primary school age children attending schools differs greatly between countries. The same applies to the rate of OOSC. The highest rate of school attendance in the four countries is 82.3% in Indonesia and the lowest 17.1% in Timor Leste.
- There are some differences between male and female attendance rates, and without exception in all countries boys have lower attendance rates than girls.
- In the two countries with low rates of attendance, Timor-Leste and Cambodia, there is a much higher percentage of pre-primary age children in primary education than in pre-primary education.
- In three of the four countries with relatively high rates of attendance (Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam), more pre-primary age children attend pre-primary schools than primary schools. In Indonesia, one of the four countries, this conclusion is reached only by lowering the pre-primary age by one year to 5. At the official pre-primary age of 6, most children attend primary education. However, the opposite is true in Indonesia, where Grade 1 starts at age 7 and over 70% of 6 year olds enroll in Grade 1 prematurely.
- Urban areas achieve almost universally higher school attendance rates than rural areas. Additionally there is a great variation in pre-primary school attendance rates between different areas within a country and between children with different economic backgrounds (wealth quintiles) in most of the countries. In some sub-national regions the attendance rate is as low as 20% of its national average, and in some wealth categories the attendance rate is as high as double that of its national average.

Dimension	Cambodia	Indonesia	Philippines	Timor Leste
Dimension 2: Primary school				
<i>School attendance</i>				
<i>ANAR</i>	82.6%	98%	90.8%	72.1%
<i>GPI</i>	1.03	1.01	1.02	1.02
<i>OOSC of Primary Age</i>	17.45%	2%	9.2%	27.9%
<i>Disaggregation by type of disparity (Attending School)</i>				
<i>Gender (% Variation from national value)</i>	Female	Female	Female	Female
<i>Urban vs rural (% Variation from national value)</i>	4.77%	0.82%	1.47%	6.68%

Dimension 2: Primary school age children

- Out of the six countries, four achieve above 90% for school attendance among primary school age children, one just above 80% (Cambodia) and one just above 70% (Timor Leste).
- All 6 of the countries have achieved gender parity in primary education at national level.
- The approximate number of out of school children at primary age is: Cambodia 321,000, Indonesia 577,000, Philippines 1,265,000, Thailand 550,000, Timor Leste 55,000 and Viet Nam 562,000. In total, in these six countries, there are 3,330,000 children at primary school age who are not attending any formal primary or secondary education.
- Urban areas achieve a higher attendance rate than rural areas. The average deviation in primary attendance is relatively small, however, although regions/provinces and also wealth quintiles still exhibit in some cases about 20% deviation from the national average.

Dimension	Cambodia	Indonesia	Philippines	Timor Leste
Dimension 3: Lower Secondary ANAR, Lower secondary school age children attending primary school and OOSC and Attendance rate of school age children				
<i>School attendance</i>				
<i>Lower Secondary ANAR/ GPI</i>	33.1%/ 1.12	80%/ 1.06	66.3%/ 1.19	31.6%/ 1.17

Dimension	Cambodia	Indonesia	Philippines	Timor Leste
Lower Secondary School age attending primary/ GPI	51.8%/ 0.89	5.5%/ 0.68	23.3% 0.79	54.6%/ 0.9
OOSC of Pre-Primary Age/ GPI	15.1%/ 1.16	14.5%/ 0.86	10.4%/ 0.57	13.8%/ 1.06
Disaggregation by type of disparity (Attending School)				
Gender (% Variation from national value)	Female	Female	Female	Female
Urban vs rural (% Variation from national value)	41.3%	7.3%	9.8%	27.8%

DIMENSION 3: LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

- The national lower secondary ANAR varies between 31.6% and 80.4%.
- Boys are at a distinct disadvantage in attending schools appropriate for their age. In all countries except one, a higher percentage of girls than boys attend lower secondary school.
- Many secondary school age children fall behind the progress required of them. They attend schools not at the level which is appropriate for their age, but in primary schools where they are significantly over-age. The percentage of children of lower secondary age still in primary education ranges between 5.5% in Indonesia to 54.6% in Timor-Leste.
- A distinctively higher percentage of boys than girls remain in primary schools overage. In Timor Leste, for every 1% of girls overage still studying in primary education, there are almost 1.5% of overage boys. .
- The percentage of lower secondary school age children who are out of school ranges between 3.5% in Thailand and 15.1% in Cambodia.
- The numbers of out of school children in these countries are 144,895 in Cambodia, 1,949,736 in Indonesia, 979,762 in Philippines, 686,899 in Thailand, 13,323 in Timor Leste, and 614,875 in Viet Nam. The total number of OOSC children stands at 4,389,491.
- Urban areas achieve a lower OOSC rate than rural areas, with higher percent of rural OOSC than urban.
- The sub-national/regional/provincial variation is now significant. In one of the countries, the out of school rate in one of the provinces reaches almost two and half times of its national average.

- The variation with regard to wealth categories is also significant. The worst case has the maximum deviation of 92.9% from its national average, with the average deviation of the five wealth quintiles at 46.6% of the national average.

Dimension	Cambodia	Indonesia	Philippines	Timor Leste
Dimension 4 and 5: Dropout				
Grade 1	0	4.4%	25.77%	5.1%**
Grade 2	0.9%	2.6%		4.6%**
Grade 3	2.3%	2.1%		4.7%**
Grade 4	4.7%	2.2%		5.4%**
Grade 5	6.8%	3.5%		5.4%**
Grade 6	9%	1.6%		2.6%**
Grade 7	5.7%	2.3%	20.57%	3.8%**
Grade 8	7.2%	2.2%		4.2%**
Grade 9	8.3%	3.7%		2.5%**
Dimension 4 and 5: Repeaters				
Grade 1	15.2%*	7.6%	n/a	30.3%**
Grade 2	12.5%*	4.2%	n/a	17.7%**
Grade 3	12%*	3.6%	n/a	16.7%**
Grade 4	10.7%*	2.8%	n/a	13.2%**
Grade 5	10.9%*	1.9%	n/a	10%**
Grade 6	11.9%*	0.2%	n/a	4.4%**
Grade 7	9.6%*	0.5%	n/a	5.6%**
Grade 8	10.4%*	0.5%	n/a	2.5%**
Grade 9	8.8%*	0.2%	n/a	1.8%**
Dimension 4&5: Never attended school	11.64%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Dimension 4&5: Overage				
Grade 1	33.5%	3.2%	n/a	25.6%
Grade 2	41.6%	3.2%	n/a	34.4%
Grade 3	49.3%	3.4%	n/a	45.2%
Grade 4	52.3%	3.8%	n/a	49.6%
Grade 5	54.3%	3.7%	n/a	52.4%
Grade 6	56.7%	3.1%	n/a	54.6%
Grade 7	52.6%	5.7%	n/a	55.4%
Grade 8	49%	3.8%	n/a	55.8%
Grade 9	51.7%	3.9%	n/a	63.2%

*Represent children who repeats once (see section 2.5.2)

**Source: EMIS (most recent)

4. NUMBER OF OOSC CHILDREN

- When the OOSC populations in four countries are combined there are in total more than two million primary school age children who are out of school. At lower secondary school age, the number exceeds three million. When combined together, the number of children who are at primary or lower secondary school age and do not attend any formal school stands over 5 million.

2. School attendance rate of children aged 5 to 17

- When the school attendance rate of school age children is displayed, the six countries exhibit universally a dome shaped curve, with the lowest rates at the lower end of the age, high in the middle, and low again at the higher end of the age.
- The gender difference also indicates a similar picture. There is gender disparity at the low and high end of the school-going ages but in the middle almost all countries achieve gender parity.
- In all but one country, girls have an advantage in attending school. Only in Cambodia at the higher end of the age range, there is a distinctively higher percentage of boys attending school.

3. Dimension 4 and 5: Over-age

- In the five countries included in the study of over-age students, two displayed significant levels of over-age. On average around 50% of Timorese children are over-aged in each grade. In Cambodia, 63% of its grade 9 children are over-aged..
- The other three countries also showed some level of over-age. In one of the countries over-age is on average close to 10% in each grade, while the others have an average around 4%.
- Even in countries where the average over-age rate is low, sub national regions or provinces may still display a very high over-age level. In Viet Nam, for example, the national average over-age in primary education is 8.2%, but in one of the provinces the over-age reaches 21.3%, a figure exceeding 2.5 times of the national average. The average deviation is 70.1%, indicating provinces perform very differently. In the best performing province HCMC, the over-age is only 3.4%, a figure that is only about 40% of the national average.
- Over-age is an issue often over looked and much more study needs to be carried out in this area as it has wide reaching implications for Education for All.

CHAPTER 3: BARRIERS AND BOTTLENECKS

This chapter discusses some of the most prominent barriers and bottlenecks to education in the region, based on the analysis from the four initial countries participating in the OOSC initiative. The types of barriers and bottlenecks that lead to exclusion from education vary by children’s profiles and contexts, and a combination of barriers often interacts together to result in marginalization of children. As per the OOSC Conceptual and Methodological Framework, barriers and bottlenecks are represented by four categories: demand side socio-cultural barriers, demand side economic barriers, supply side barriers and political, governance, capacity and financial bottlenecks. Demand-side barriers encompass household and community factors including those pertaining to the child’s experiences and attitudes toward schooling, as well as issues of affordability and cost. Supply-side barriers, on the other hand, include the input capacities of the government to provide education. It should be noted, however, that many demand-side barriers persist due to lack of systematic, supply side responses by government. Hence, the distinction between the two types is not always clear.

In reviewing the National Reports and their analysis of barriers and bottlenecks, the following were identified as the common themes and issues under the four categories.

Demand Side Barriers		Supply Side Barriers	Policy, Governance, Capacity and Financing
Social Cultural	Economic		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions on Value of Education • Limited Right Age Entry to Grade One • Gender Bias and Discrimination • Disability • Migration and Lack of Birth Registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct and Indirect Fees • Health and Nutrition • Natural Disasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access • Water and Sanitation Facilities • Quality • Language • Lack of Early Childhood • Development Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralization and Governance • Education Financing

SOCIAL CULTURAL, DEMAND SIDE BARRIERS

Across East Asia and the Pacific, there are numerous factors and issues related to socio-cultural barriers. Many of them are intertwined with one another and are magnified in the presence of economic factors such as poverty. In this section, some of the most common factors and issues related socio-cultural barriers are discussed, including perceptions on the value of education, perceptions on children's school readiness, gender-based bias and discrimination, and migration.

PERCEPTION ON THE VALUE OF EDUCATION

Education is not always seen as a valuable investment, especially for those who may be faced with relatively high opportunity costs of education. For instance, poor families in rural areas whose children may not have direct access to economic opportunities from schooling may believe that education yields limited economic return.

However, while poverty may be assumed to be the main cause of low value of education, evidence shows that the effects of poverty and wealth on preferences for education are not homogenous. Instead there are other factors, such as limited relevance of education, that play a more critical role in shaping household decisions on sending children to schools. For instance, in Timor-Leste, wealthier families tend to believe the children will be better served by "learning from practice" in family businesses in markets and stalls than in schools that teach limited relevant skills, and therefore are more likely to pull children out of schools. In Viet Nam and the Philippines, the stereotypical view that poor, ethnic minority families have low value for education is also disputed, as ethnic minority groups themselves report that it is the limited relevance of education in its current form, including language of teaching and low levels of learning, which is of greater concern.

In some cases, as in the Philippines, **low parental education** is cited as a key factor contributing to low value for education. Generally, parental educational attainment and a child's likelihood of success in education are the most frequently cited causal relationships in literature, but as the Country Report notes, there has been little done to help parents who have limited or no formal education, noting that (UNICEF, 2011b):

"Not only do parents not have the experience to support their children's education at home in terms of helping with lessons, they also are extremely poor and cannot afford to provide the basic needs of their children. In these cases it is unreasonable to expect parents to be able to provide similar quality support as those that can be provided by a more educated set. Teachers lament that the uneducated parents do not like to attend PTA meetings or do not show up when guidance counselors call them in. This is sometimes interpreted by school administrators²⁶ as parents not caring about their

²⁶ A study by SEAMEO (2007) goes so far as to question whether the DepEd may be discouraging parents with little education from being involved in their child's education, which is both detrimental to the child's motivation and disconnects an important segment of the community from the local schools.

children's education, but upon prodding it was evident that often when they do attend meetings they cannot really understand what is going on and feel alienated, and more importantly, they do not have the luxury of taking a morning off from working in the farm to see a guidance counselor. These are understandable situations and we should be able to recognize when schools need to fill in where parents can truly not provide."

As previously noted, some demand-side barriers such as low value of education materialize only in the absence of effective supply-side response (i.e, providing learning material and teachers fluent in local languages), highlighting the importance of better understanding the underlying factors and essential responses related to them.

LIMITED RIGHT-AGE ENTRY TO SCHOOL

One of the factors associated with high rates of out-of-school children in early grades is not entering school at the right age. In the Philippines, six and seven-year old children not in school comprised of nearly 75 percent of all primary school age out-of-school children in the country. One of the key reasons noted is the families' and teachers' **perception on school readiness of children** as there is a strong belief that children of that age are "too young to go to school." Some indications of "school readiness", as noted by teachers, include children's ability to write their names, recognize letters and numbers, and socialize with other children, many of which are said to be lacking among six-year old children. In large part, this may be due to limited access to ECD services, but it also reflects the **lack awareness on the importance of ECD**, as noted in the Philippines Country Report. Similarly, in Timor Leste, parents have low expectations for learning for young children, and also note hunger and distance to schools as reasons for delaying the enrollment of children in schools at the right age.

In Indonesia, on the other hand, early entry to school is a common barrier to education, with approximately 72 percent of 6-year olds and 11 percent of 5-year olds are in primary education and following curriculum designed for 7 year-old children. Children who live in urban areas, have educated mothers and come from better-off households are more likely to enter school early, but **prohibitive cost of pre-primary education**, which is mostly private, also means that most parents opt to send children early for "free" and available formal education.

GENDER BIAS AND DISCRIMINATION

Significant strides have been made towards gender parity across the region, and at national levels, enrolment gaps between boys and girls are minimal at primary levels. Nevertheless, various forms of gender-based bias and discrimination still prevail, especially at lower secondary levels and specific sub-regions within countries.

For girls, **gender roles prescribed by traditions**, such as caring for younger siblings and helping with household chores, can disrupt a girl's education, particularly if they come from poorer families. In Timor Leste, a 2009 study by Plan International and UNICEF explains the child-rearing responsibilities that are imposed upon girls often disrupts their education (Plan & UNICEF Timor-Leste (2009)):

As children become a little older, their older siblings are expected to care for them, particularly through emotional and social support. Older sisters had a significant role in caring for the social needs of very young children, moving into more physical roles of bathing, caring for at night and taking to school once children moved into 4 – 6 years age group, reflecting the fact that family spacing may mean that older sisters may not be that much older than the young children they are caring for. (p37)

Local practices such as **early marriage** also exert pressure to drop out of school for girls in Timor Leste, where **thirty-seven percent** of girls are married and have their first child by age 19. Early marriage is also a major barrier to education for girls in Madurese communities in East Java or the West Sulawesi of Indonesia, and for both girls and boys in the Raglai ethnic minority communities in Ninh Thuan, Viet Nam. A recent situation analysis of children in Ninh Thuan portrays the influence of early marriage on education prospects for boys and girls in different ways²⁷:

'For girls, there may be pressure to marry at an early age, because upon marriage boys come to live with the bride's family, thus supplementing labour resources and production capacity in the bride's family. Raglai boys are commonly assigned to look after the families cattle – in an immediate sense; therefore, this is one of the main reasons for the high rate of withdrawal from school amongst Raglai boys²⁸. At the same time, this has deeper associations with the social and economic value attached to cattle in Raglai society. The involvement of Raglai boys in caring for their families cattle herd is bound up with their own future livelihood prospects. School attendance – the demand for household labour – the values attached to cattle in Raglai society – the perceptions of Raglai teenagers about the value of education and their own future prospects – and broader maintenance of Raglai kinship relations are, therefore, all deeply interwoven.' (p68)

Gender-based violence within the family and in schools is also mentioned as a barrier to education in Timor, Indonesia and Viet Nam. High levels of tolerance for family violence is reported in Timor Leste and Indonesia, with women and girls bearing the brunt given they are often perceived to be in subservient roles.

²⁷ NinhThuan Provincial People's Committee & UNICEF (2011 draft document) Analysis of the Situation of Children in NinhThuan Province

²⁸ Livestock extension programs in NinhThuan stipulate that credit and material support provided to households is conditional on not withdrawing children from school; however, this may be problematic if alternative labour is not available or if labour-saving techniques are not simultaneously introduced into livestock production systems (e.g. through stall feeding and establishing irrigated fodder banks).

In Timor Leste, a UNFPA study on gender-based violence found that many victims of gender-based violence appearing before the courts were children under the age of 18.²⁹ Girls in rural areas who live far from schools are particularly vulnerable, and parents are reluctant to send them to schools due to risks of sexual abuse and harassment on the way to school. In Viet Nam, discrimination, **bullying and violence** occur in some schools and for specific students at risk, such as children with disabilities, children whose parents are in prison, or children in some form of juvenile detention centers. Both teachers and students are perpetrators of such violence.

Disadvantages of boys are also manifested in their lower attendance rates in lower secondary levels in Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines. Reasons for this so-called “reverse gender gap” range widely. As noted in the Philippines Country Report, gender-based biases, such as **low academic expectations of parents** and **teacher preferences** for female students, have adverse impact on boys’ educational outcomes.

DISABILITY

Since 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, the issue of inclusive approaches to education was highlighted. Over the last two decades, many countries reaffirm and strengthen the basic provisions with an unequivocal call for inclusive education by amending laws and regulations to echo the countries’ commitment to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008) on the equal treatment basis.

In most cases, children with disability are excluded from the formal school because these children require personalized teaching and learning in order to adjust themselves to respond to their future needs and be self-reliance. Generally, these children need a better physical access, quality teaching and learning, enabling environment from schools such as safe, secure and free from violence. Parents, peers and community also need to have a positive attitude towards children with disabilities. Therefore, when looking from the lens of disability, barriers in the supply side including a limited learning opportunities and low quality inclusive education, lack of qualified teachers, irrelevance of assessment and learning materials, and lack of monitoring and evaluation system restricts parents’ decision to send their children to school. On the other hand, constraints pertaining to the demand side include stigma and discrimination, and negative attitudes from family and society which push these children away from completing the full cycle of education.

With the adoption of WHO’s (2009) social definition of disability, the concept of disability was placed in the environment rather than with the person: with *disability emerging from the interaction of functional limitations with barriers in the environment. That is a person is disabled- not capable of fully participating*

²⁹ UNFPA, 2005. http://www.unfpa.org/women/docs/gbv_timorleste.pdf

*in various aspects of society- if they have difficulties in functioning that are not accommodated for in the environment- where environment is interpreted broadly as including the physical, cultural, and policy environments.*³⁰ This definition puts the responsibility with the institution to modify the environment so that a person with disability can access education and overcome environmental obstacles that are reflected in government policies and regulations.

In Indonesia, monitoring children's disability is done through a household survey. Based on SUSENAS 2003, statistic shows that 0.5% of children had a visual, hearing, speech, physical or mental disability and among these 71% of disabled children aged 6-11 years were not in school. **Children with disabilities and their families report that they feel embarrassed to attend the local school or find it unaffordable and impractical to have to go to a special school very far from home (UNICEF, 2011b). Stigma associated with disability often makes inclusive education elusive, and discriminatory attitudes adversely impact educational opportunities, especially if compounded by other major barriers, such as distance to schools, from the supply-side.**

In Cambodia, approximately 0.8% of all children aged 0-17 years old in 2008 were reported with disability (approximately 44,000 children). However, it is assumed that this might be underreported due to the challenges with the monitoring system and out of these, approximately 37% reported as never attended school and 10% as dropped out.

The first national survey of disability in Timor-Leste's primary schools was conducted in 2008 by Plan International and covered 336 primary schools across the country to find out the number, type and severity of the disabilities which primary students have. Nearly 2,000 students, or one in every 100 students, had a disability. Primary school children with a disability were not attending school either because they had never attended, or had dropped out because of difficulties associated with their disability. Twenty-four per cent of the children had an intellectual disability, and 21 per cent had a physical disability. Those with more than one form of disability were classified as having complex disabilities. There is no special provision in the education budget for children with disabilities, and there is a strong social stigma attached to having disabled children and wasting family resources on educating them. The report showed that children with milder disability are likely to start school on time. However, these disabled children are repeating at least two grades and 41.6% of them are over-age and dispersed across all grades, increasing in number at the higher grades.

³⁰ Cuong, Nguyen Viet & Daniel Mont Does Parental Disability Matter to Child Education? Evidence from Viet Nam Hanoi: The World Bank East Asia and Pacific Region Poverty Reduction & Economic Management Sector Department (p 5) http://econ.worldbank.org/external/default/main?pagePK=64165259&theSitePK=469372&piPK=64165421&menuPK=64166322&entityID=000158349_20110801083520

In Viet Nam, the definition of disability has been refined to focus on the context for learning being disabled rather than of the person and that is where only 10% of children with disabilities are in school. The country factor in the importance of the issue of disability and tries to keep track on the data for analysis. Viet Nam census includes questions on disability of major four functions: vision, hearing, movement (walking) and cognition (learning or understanding). A person is defined as “Disabled” if he/she has at least one of the mentioned four functions classified into “Unable”, while considered as “Partial Disabled” if he said he has either “little and/or Very difficult” in any of the four functions, and considered as “No Disability” if he/she has all abovementioned four functions classified into “No difficulty”. The country report stipulates the disability dimension for all dimensions, whereby children with disability are not attending pre-primary at 83.7% of population, 87.6% out of schools for children at primary age, and 90.9% for children at lower secondary age. The barriers that children with disabilities face are an extra barrier for all other barriers. The major barriers for the children with disability includes the distance to school, language for children with disability especially those with the hearing impaired person, lack of special trained teachers and lack of policy development cooperation among different ministries.

MIGRATION AND LACK OF BIRTH REGISTRATION

High level of migration within and between countries in search for better employment and economic prospects acts as another barrier to education. Moving from city to province, and vice versa, for employment can be common, and among some overseas Filipino workers, choice to work abroad and leave their family behind is based on their desire to earn enough to provide better education for their children³¹. Still, numerous challenges arise for children who are left behind and cared for by their extended families. A common outcome which often leads to dropouts, not only because of possible neglect by guardians who are unable to provide sufficient care (i.e., through help with homework, making sure children wake up on time or have supplies), but also the psychological impact of having parents move away. Even when children migrate together with their parents, due to lack of awareness about education systems, parents do not always enroll children in new locations in the middle of the school year and end up holding their children back until the new school year begins. Also, migrant families may not have official residential status in catchment area needed for school enrolment, which can effectively deny access. In Viet Nam, according to the Dien Bien Situation Analysis on Children (2010), teachers in some schools have been reported collecting registration forms and requiring commune authorities to issue **birth certificates** in order to complete the required documents before allowing migrant children to enrol.³²

³¹ Edillon, R.G. (2008). The Effects of Parent’s Migration on the Rights of the Children Left Behind. Asia Pacific Policy Center Report.

³² Dien Bien Provincial People’s Committee & UNICEF, 2010. Situation Analysis of Children in Dien Bien Province. P. 103

In some cases, as seen in the Philippines, strict demands for birth certificates as requirement for school entry is unrealistic for the poor and becomes a major policy/governance barrier to reaching out of school children. In the Philippines, schools, especially in the provinces, are strict with birth certificates, and inaccurate and inconsistent ages reported by parents from year to year can present challenges. However, lack of birth registration is a widespread phenomenon, and the related costs of between P100-P2000 to obtain one mean denied access to schools for the poor, especially those with many siblings (UNICEF 2011c).

ECONOMIC DEMAND SIDE BARRIERS

Economic demand side barriers are economic factors of families that keep children away from school. **Poverty and high levels of inequality is the primary economic barrier in the region.** East Asia and the Pacific has had by far the strongest overall HDI performance of any region in the world, nearly doubling average HDI attainment over the past 40 years, according to the Report's analysis of health, education and income data. Life expectancy in East Asia and the Pacific climbed to an average of 73 years in 2010 from 59 in 1970. In East Asia and the Pacific, the region's literacy rates rose to 94 percent in 2010 compared to 53 percent in 1970.

However, UNDP's Human Development Report 2010 notes that in East Asia, most countries have higher income inequality today than was the case a few decades ago, due in part to widening gaps between rural areas and the rapidly industrializing cities. In Indonesia, there has been steady reduction in the percentage of population living in poverty, which was only interrupted during the Asian financial crisis. The poverty headcount rate was 13% in 2010, according to SUSENAS, but the concentrations of poverty found in NTT, Maluku, West Papua and Papua are much higher. In Viet Nam, disproportionate representation of ethnic minority groups among the poor is persistent and, as discussed below, results from an array of underlying disadvantages they face.

In the remainder of the section, multiple mechanisms in which poverty manifests to exclude children from poor families are discussed, including direct and indirect fees, health and nutrition, child work and natural disasters.

Poverty and ethnic minorities in Viet Nam

In Viet Nam, poverty, especially among minority groups, means that students and their families can't depend on a permanent source of income and funds may not always be available to pay the costs of schooling. The World Bank's Social Analysis Study of Ethnicity and Development in Viet Nam (2009) identifies six specific "pillars" of disadvantage that go a long way towards explaining why minorities remain poorer. These six primary factors include: lower levels of education; less mobility; less access to financial services; less productive lands; lower market access; and stereotyping and other cultural barriers. **Community Leveling Mechanisms** is the term used by the World Bank's Social Analysis Study of Ethnicity and Development in Viet Nam (2009) to describe the ways in which social pressure is created in ethnic minority communities against excess economic accumulation. Cultural perceptions of social obligations and "shared poverty"; religious obligations that require economic expenditures; gender expectation grounded in different cultural models; and community ownership of land and assets when maintained as social practices can divert family earning from children's education. For ethnic minorities and others in remote areas, periods of low finances in families often caused by the failure of seasonal crops, pest infections and the vagaries of local market forces mean education for children is very hard to achieve.

Source: UNICEF, 2011d.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT FEES

Most countries in the region have officially abolished school fees to provide free and compulsory education at least at primary education level. However, various forms of direct and indirect fees to households prevail in many countries and account for one of the major reasons for non-attendance and dropout. In the Philippines, when children have no uniform, no allowance to buy food during snack time, or no money to hand to the teacher for school projects, they feel ashamed (*nahihiya/napapahiya*) enough to not want to come to school, even if the teacher and classmates are willing to contribute the necessary support. In Timor Leste, although education has been free since 2008, it is estimated that it still costs about an extra \$200 for each family.³³ These costs include costs of learning materials and uniforms and extra costs for school-based fees, snacks & lunches, and volunteer teachers. In Viet Nam, many children leave school after completing their primary education because of the fact that their parents cannot afford higher school expenses required for secondary (tuition fees, books, learning equipment, transportation, per diem fees, contribution fees for school). At the secondary level, these costs are double that of primary. There is also the notion that the government provides only the bare minimum in public education, and in order to attain better quality education, including full day schooling, they need to pay extra fees for tuition classes and/or coaching.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Indonesia and the Philippines are among the countries which contribute the most to the global burden of stunting while Timor Leste has one of the highest level of stunting in the world.³⁴ Severe poverty, no sanitation and dirty drinking water, poor access to basic health services, and a monotonous diet devoid of nutrients - is a key factor in children not developing to their full potential - or learning with

³³Meeting with CARE International Timor-Leste March 29, 2011

³⁴ UNICEF 2009, Tracking progress on child and maternal nutrition.

maximum capacity in schools. Child malnutrition is one of the proxy indicators for poverty under the Millennium Development Goal One, and there is a clear pattern showing that children from the poorest quintiles are much more undernourished than children from the richest quintiles. The rates of stunting in urban areas of EAP is ³⁵. 35% in comparison with 23% in urban area.³⁶

In the Asia-Pacific region, close to half a billion people are hungry, still live in poverty³⁷ and in turn suffer from under-nutrition. More specifically, 27 million children (0-59 months old) in the region are chronically malnourished (stunted)³⁸. Undernutrition has consequences for physical and intellectual development, the ability to capitalize on educational and other opportunities, and ultimately adult productivity and earnings. If not addressed during the first 2 years of life (the first “1000 days”), the impact of stunting and anaemia on child physical and mental development is largely irreversible. From the first year of life, children who are stunted or underweight for their age perform more poorly than their normal-sized peers in cognitive and motor tasks and in school achievement (Grantham-McGregor, Baker-Henningham, 2005)³⁹.

Nutritional status has been found to be a significant determinant of enrolment and performance in school: ‘children who are better nourished in the first years of life stay in school longer and learn more per year of schooling’ (Damon and Glewwe, 2007)⁴⁰. Studies from 79 countries show that every 10% increase in stunting corresponds to an 8% drop in the proportion of children completing primary school (Grantham-McGregor et al, 2007)⁴¹. Transitory or short-term hunger, common in children not fed in the morning, has been shown to adversely affect learning by making concentrating and performing complex tasks more difficult (Bundy et al, 2009)⁴². Children who are undernourished enroll later and complete fewer years of schooling, while hunger in school prevents children from making the most of their learning opportunities. Children who are hungry have been found to have shorter attention spans, slower memory recall and less able to solve simple visual tasks (World Hunger Series 2006: Hunger and Learning, WFP, 2006).

Paragraph on what worm infestation does to ones learning capacity – and how severe are the levels of parasite/worm infestation in the 4 OOSC countries – or in the region.

³⁵ Based on available data from Government Statistical Offices, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and Demographic Health Surveys (DHS)

³⁶ UNICEF Progress for children: Achieving the MDGs with Equity, p. 16

³⁷ FAO State of Food Insecurity in the World 2009

³⁸ UNICEF State of the World’s Children 2012

³⁹ Grantham-McGregor S, Baker-Henningham H. (2005) Review of evidence linking protein and energy to mental development. *Public Health Nutrition*; 8(7A):1191-201.

⁴⁰ Damon A and P Glewwe, (2007), Three proposals to improve education in Latin American and the Caribbean: estimates of the costs and benefits of each strategy, Report to the Copenhagen Consensus Center and the Inter-American Development Bank.

⁴¹ Grantham-McGregor, et al. (2007). ‘Child development in developing countries 1: Developmental potential in the first 5 years for children in developing countries’, *The Lancet*, paragraph 369: 60-70, excerpts from p. 63.

⁴² Bundy, D. et al. (2009a), ‘Rethinking School Feeding: Social Safety Nets, Child Development and the Education Sector, World Food Program and the World Bank.

NATURAL DISASTERS

Many countries in the region experience adverse climatic conditions such as flooding and other natural disasters, displacing households and their lives. Not only do disasters impose physical barriers to school attendance, they are likely to increase poverty levels especially among those who are already vulnerable, which can trigger dropout in the long run. “In Indonesia, where high impact earthquakes, volcanoes and tsunamis take place alongside lower impact but persistent flooding and landslides, both types of disaster contribute to an increase in the number of people living below the poverty line.

Concentrated high impact events over the last ten years had negative impacts on education, health and poverty levels in Indonesia (increased infant mortality, reduced share of houses with access to sanitation) and on education in the Philippines (increased drop-out rates and reduced achievement rates for secondary school)”⁴³.

The Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami in 2004, Cyclone Nargis in 2008 and the Sichuan earthquake in 2007 are just a few of the hundreds of disasters that have hit the region in the past decade. Thailand, Myanmar and Indonesia have suffered economic setbacks resulting from the Asian tsunami. This kind of disaster disrupts economic, social and cultural activities, and push significant numbers of families just above the poverty line, whose children become even more vulnerable to education exclusion – leading to dropout or significant disruption to schooling. In Timor Leste, the impact of unseasonal rains and natural disasters on the economy is significant, with nearly 6 percent drop in non-oil GDP growth of the country in 2010 attributed to unseasonal rainfalls and floods on agricultural production⁴⁴. In Viet Nam, droughts, floods, landslides and salination of soils make education access and life in general difficult, particularly in rural parts of the country. In An Giang province, the current Situation Analysis of Children points out that children from “households affected by flooding are especially...(vulnerable to) loss of schooling opportunities⁴⁵” “Data from Indonesia shows that most deaths and missing people recorded as a result of persistent low-impact disasters were in Tenggara Timur; a province with poverty indicators and secondary school enrolment rates lower than the national average, and child malnutrition and child mortality well above. .

SUPPLY SIDE BARRIERS

In this section, supply-side barriers to education are discussed. For the purposes of analysis, barriers will be presented in terms of access and quality, although they are closely related. Barriers related to language and ECD are highlighted separately, due to their significance in the region.

⁴³ Fran Seballos, Thomas Tanner, Marcela Tarazona and Jose Gallegos (2011), ‘Children and Disasters: Understanding Impact and Enabling Agency’, p. 8.

⁴⁴ International Monetary Fund, March 2011. IMF Timor-Leste Country Report No. 11/65
<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.aspx?sk=24696.0>

⁴⁵ An Giang Provincial People’s Committee & UNICEF (In Press). Situation Analysis of Children in An Giang Province.

Child Work as a result of low quality education

As noted earlier, some demand side barriers may persist due to lack of appropriate supply-side mechanisms, rather than resulting directly from socio-cultural or economic factors inherent within families and communities. Child work, for instance, may appear to be result from poverty and economic pressures of families, but analysis from countries in the region reveal a different story and that the underlying trigger is often concerns related to relevance and quality of education.

In Indonesia, there is no linkage between out of school children and child labor, as only 8 percent of working children aged 5-11 and about a quarter of those aged 12-14 are out of school. In the case of the Philippines, child labor exists is a result of, rather than as a cause, of dropout or non-enrolment. In urban areas in the Philippines, for example, interviews with parents and children reveal that decision to drop out comes before decision for children to work. That is, rather than being pulled out of school in order to work, they get involved in the work force because they have dropped out of school due to other reasons, such as high indirect costs of education and lack of relevance.

In Timor Leste, analysis of the attendance data from DHS (2010) has shown that children from the highest wealth quintiles are often not in school, which required follow-up analysis and exploration. Such children are often children of merchants who contribute to family wealth through their labor contributions. If urban merchant families perceive that children are not learning a lot in school, parents make the decision to withdraw them for family labour and informal on the job training.

These findings suggest that treating child work as mainly an economic problem and addressing their educational rights through cost reduction and cash-based would have minimal impact in bringing children to school. Instead, broader efforts to improve perceptions of quality and relevance of education for both parents and children should be prioritized. At the same time, providing alternative modes of education for working children would be sensible to promote and facilitate re-entry into education for those that remain in the workforce.

ACCESS

For too many children, access to schools continues to be a challenge. In sparsely populated rural areas, remoteness of schools is a major concern, as long distances to schools combined with poor or non-existent roads and limited transportation options effectively keep children out of schools. In Viet Nam, students in remote areas enrolled in primary education will travel, on average, 7-10 km to the nearest commune primary school, and this distance has been on the rise (World Bank, 2011, Vol 2). Distance to school and travel costs become especially critical, given there are few vehicles and no schools nearby. Geographic barriers such as mountains and rivers, especially during the rainy seasons, impose additional challenges. In Timor Leste, data from the 2007 Household Survey showed that travel time to primary school in rural areas is about 30 minutes, on average. At the secondary level, the average travel time rises to 70 minutes. The poor condition of rural roads also contributes to this barrier. The average distance to primary schools in Indonesia is comparably less, at 2 km, but it is higher in remote areas in Kalimantan (5 km), Maluku (7 km) and Papua (20 km). At the junior secondary level, the average distance to school exceeds 10 km in Maluku and Kalimantan and 35 km in Papua, compared to 3 km in Javanese villages. Not surprisingly, proportion of out of school children in junior secondary school age is highest in the Papua province, NTT and parts of Kalimantan and Sulawesi.

In urban areas, **classroom shortage** is a major concern, as existing schools are overcrowded and double or triple shift classes are inevitable. In the National Capital Region of the Philippines, an

alarming 94 percent of students were enrolled in multi-shift classes in the 2009-2010 school year. There also appears to be some association with late entry into schools, as 52 percent of students in multi-shift classes are overage for Grade 1 compared to 41 percent in single-shift classes. Although there is limited empirical evidence indicating student achievement suffering as a result of multi-shifting, it can be reasonable to expect that rushing through the curriculum without sufficient support may present stress to the learning situation⁴⁶.

WATER AND SANITATION IN SCHOOLS

The availability of adequate **water and sanitation facilities** in schools also affect school enrolment, and for disadvantaged children who are vulnerable to health risks and poor health, tendency to drop out of school without WASH facilities increases. **For girls entering menstrual age, lack of segregated toilets is often a critical barrier that keeps them out of school.** Although status of water and sanitation in schools has been improving, conditions in remote and disadvantaged regions remain inadequate. The joint UNICEF-SEAMEO Study of WASH in Schools provides insight into some of the gaps in both supply and quality of facilities in countries, as follows⁴⁷:

- Timor Leste: In Timor-Leste, only about 43 percent of primary schools have adequate sanitation facilities. Only 14.9 percent of all schools have latrines and 30.9 percent of the toilets that do exist in primary schools are not segregated by sex. 70 percent of all primary schools have water available and of these only 31.3 percent of the schools have water that is classified as good.⁴⁸ Lack of segregated toilets is one of the reasons that parents keep girls away from school and this is a serious infrastructure need to keep disease and illness levels down.
- Philippines: For the 2009-2010 school year, the average toilet to pupil ratio in public elementary schools was 1:55, and approximately 79 percent of public primary schools have access to water sources (e.g., local piped, well, rainwater, natural water, combination)
- Viet Nam: Only 12% of public primary schools in Viet Nam have adequate sanitation facilities. The survey conducted by the General Department of Preventive Medicine in 2007 revealed that of the primary schools surveyed in 20 provinces, 80.1% have latrines but only 7.7% met the required standards. The majority were not considered sanitary based on sanitation standards for 1) construction, 2) operation and 3) maintenance. Over sixty percent (62.5%) of the schools have sanitary-type latrines such as septic tank, pour-flush latrine, double-pit latrine, ventilated pit latrine, and biogas tank that do not necessarily conform to standards. Most of the schools have

⁴⁶ Caoli-Rodriguez, R. B. (2007). *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008: The Philippines country case study*. Country profile commissioned by UNESCO for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008, Education for ALL by 2015: Will We Make It? Full report can be requested through efareport@unesco.org

⁴⁷ UNICEF-SEAMEO Study of WASH in Schools. *Draft forthcoming*.

⁴⁸ RDTL 2010 EMIS data Ministry of Education

septic tanks (45.9%), while close to twenty percent (19.9%) do not have latrines at all. Approximately 83.7% of primary schools have access to water sources, but only about 35% of the schools have hand-washing areas while only 26.5 % with sufficient have water for hand washing.

QUALITY

As previously noted, parents' decision to keep children in school is closely related to their perceived value of education and the expected returns from education. Hence, quality of education provided in schools is crucial to bring and keep children in schools.

Findings from available **learning achievement** studies from countries point to significant gaps across the region. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009, which assessed the reading, science and mathematics performance of 15-year-old students, show that Thailand and Indonesia were near or below 50 percent level of the average OECD scores in the three subjects (OECD PISA Database). Similar results were produced for these countries in the 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, (TIMSS), which assesses the achievement of fourth and eighth grade students in mathematics and sciences. A number of countries using models of the Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRA) approach to conduct sample-based assessments also point to critically low reading levels; In Timor Leste, a 2009 study found that 70 per cent of students at the end of grade 1 and 40 per cent of students at the end of grade 2 could not read a single word; Two thirds of students in grade 3 could not read with fluency⁴⁹. In Viet Nam, the World Bank's 2011 review of 2001 and 2007 learning achievement data in Mathematics and Language showed that even though there had been growth in learning achievement over time improvement was still needed. Language results demonstrated that 40% of students were still not learning at an independent level and 30% cannot infer meaning from text. In Mathematics there were better results but 2007 students at the two lowest skill levels were only slightly higher than those of 2001 indicating more work is needed. Differences were even greater for remote vs. rural vs. urban students, and greater still for ethnic minorities⁵⁰.

Limited supply and relevance of **learning materials** is another sign of low quality in education. In the Philippines, in Mindanao where there are many Muslim learners, the acute shortage of school facilities influences parents' decisions to send their children to school and keep them there. Findings from qualitative interviews with stakeholders suggest that shortages of classrooms, textbooks, and teachers result in poorly motivated parents and pupils. It is the poorest families that need the most subsidies from schools in the form of educational supplies and other inputs in order to increase the likelihood of completion, and yet it is this region, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in particular, that experiences the sharpest shortages in inputs. Even when provided, quality of textbooks can be

⁴⁹ Basic grade 1 reading test in Tetum and Portuguese languages; administered to approximately 900 students in grades 1-3 in 40 schools

⁵⁰ World Bank (2011) Viet Nam: High Quality Education for All Report No. 56085-VN Volume 2: Human Development Department East Asia and Pacific Region p. 42-63

inadequate, as errors, misalignment with curriculum and short instructional time are commonly found (Lee, 2011).

At the national level, the aggregate **teacher supply** has steadily improved and is largely adequate in most countries in the region. **However, aggregate levels mask severe shortages of teachers in certain regions within countries, mostly in remote, disadvantaged regions. In the Philippines, less than 40 percent of students are in schools of PTR of 45 and above at the national level,** but the corresponding figures for ARMM and CALABARZON increases to about 68 percent and 53 percent, respectively. In ARMM, approximately 38 percent of students are in schools with PTR of 65 and above (UNICEF, 2011c). There are various factors issues related to teacher supply in remote, disadvantaged areas, including ineffective teacher allocation policies, low teacher remuneration and working conditions, and insufficient candidate pool in local areas. In Indonesia, acute shortage of teachers in remote areas is attributed to lack of adequate housing, poor transport and reluctance of appointed civil servants to relocate. Even when teachers are posted, teacher absenteeism emerges as a significant concern in those areas (UNICEF, 2011a). In Viet Nam, limited affirmative action for training of ethnic minority teachers who are more likely to support adequate instruction to ethnic minority students contributes persistent shortage of qualified teachers (UNICEF 2011d). As discussed later, such shortage of teachers who can communicate with students, especially in the early years of schooling, effectively compromises access to quality of learning among disadvantaged ethnic minority students in many countries across the East Asia and Pacific.

The **quality of teachers** is undoubtedly the most important dimension of school quality. However, available information in the region show that a large proportion of teachers, particularly in rural areas face challenges meeting qualification levels required to teach. Despite increasing emphasis by training programmes on promoting 'learner-centred' instructional practices to promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills, some teachers are unable to translate those principles into practice in their classroom (Lee, 2011). Teachers' pedagogical skills and subject-matter knowledge are also limited in many countries, as pre-service and in-service professional training remains weak. In Indonesia, for instance, teacher aptitude tests administered to primary and secondary school teachers in 2008 found that the proportion of correct answers made by primary school teachers was, on average, only 38 per cent. For secondary school teachers, the average for the 12 subjects tested was 45 per cent, with scores in math and language at 36 and 51 per cent, respectively⁵¹.

⁵¹ PMPTK (Directorate General for Improvement of Teachers and Education Professionals). *Presentation on costs associated with the Teacher Law of 2005*. Yogyakarta, Indonesia: August, 2008.

LANGUAGE

Across the East Asia Pacific, there is tremendous diversity of languages within countries, but textbooks are provided only in selected dominant languages. Not surprisingly, textbooks written in a language that is not understood by teachers and students significantly limit the quality of teaching and learning process.

As will be discussed further in Chapter 4, notable progress has been made in a few countries to promote mother tongue based bilingual education policies and programmes, most notably in the Philippines and Viet Nam. However, great efforts are needed to ensure effective set of policies and strategies to support mother tongue based bilingual education, including teacher development, material development and distribution, is institutionalized.

For ethnic minorities, the challenges of supply of qualified teachers and relevant textbooks raised earlier become more acute. For instance, textbooks that are not written in their mother tongue would not be of great use. Yet, there are few textbooks provided with the language diversity in mind. In Timor Leste, although the national language policy cites Portuguese and Tetum as the two official languages, the first set of national textbooks to be developed is in Portuguese. Some of these textbooks, developed in Portugal with Timor-Leste in mind, lie beyond the scope of experience for most children. Certainly, these textbooks are beyond comprehension of children as less than 10 percent of families in Timor Leste speak Portuguese at home. Fortunately, the first set of Tetum language textbooks for Grades 1-3, the language spoken by 60 percent of the population, will be piloted in schools in 2012.

Just under 4 percent of all children in Cambodia spoke Khmer as their second language, with the largest proportions living in Mondul Kiri and Ratanak Kiri. Indeed, a striking 61.6 percent of all children were non-Khmer mother tongue speakers in Mondul Kiri and 70.1 percent in Ratanak Kiri. This is due to the fact that the majority of children in these provinces belong to the following ethnic, indigenous or language groups: Jorai, Rhade, Kachah, Tampuan, Brao, Kreung, Kraveth, Lun, Phnong, Stieng, Kraol¹ as well as Vietnamese and Chinese.⁵² Out of these non-Khmer mother tongue speaking children aged 6-17 years old, 41.1% have never attended schools and of those enrolled, 8.5% of them drop out in primary. This implies that language and culture are barriers to access as well as to learning.

LACK OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

A growing body of research shows that investments in early childhood care and education is closely associated with better success in later stages of education, as well as broader socioeconomic benefits, including improved female labor participation rates, increased fertility rates and poverty reduction⁵³. Data from select countries in the region also confirm research findings that children who have had ECCE experience are more likely to complete primary education, suggesting investments in children's

⁵² Analysis of Children's access to Education in Cambodia based on the 2008 population census. Key Findings (2011), National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning.

⁵³ OECD Staring Strong III: A quality toolbox for early childhood education and care, OECD. 2012.

early years lead to better outcomes in the long run. Thus, ensuring opportunities to access quality ECCE reduces the potential costs of early drop-out and repetition resulting from weak foundations. However, access to early childhood development services remains largely insufficient.

The provision of early childhood service, typically 3-5 years old does not only relate to education issue, but also to health and nutrition. National Policies on early childhood in EAP usually involve multiple Ministries, including the Ministry of Education, of Public Health, of Social Development and others. Inter-sectoral communication and coordination in developing a multi-sectoral and integrated ECD policy is essential for implementation – and the Philippines is an excellent example of effective National Coordination for

The lack of effective, well coordinated and pro-poor public-private partnership and private sector investment on early childhood can make the equity gaps widen. In Indonesia, for example, the national government provides only 0.6% of the total access to pre-primary education while the rest is provided by private sector and communities organizations. “Because private centres offer ECCE regularly, the principal strategy appears to be the delivery of services to these areas through integration with health services (posyandu) and religious contexts (mosques, churches and viharas). The overall strategy is the guidance of early childhood-related initiatives through advocacy and community involvement rather than through direct policy formulation”.⁵⁴

In Timor Leste, for example, the population of children is increasing along with the need to provide for pre-school education across the whole country, but pre-school classrooms are short in supply. In the Philippines, the recently implemented Universal Kindergarten program is expected to address the gap and improve children’s school readiness, but ensuring quality services that are developmentally and age-appropriate and delivered with appropriate teaching-learning approaches will be key to the success of the program.

POLITICAL, GOVERNANCE, CAPACITY AND FINANCING

DECENTRALIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

Governance of education system has significant impact on the overall quality of education. In the East Asia and Pacific, **decentralization** of the sector and school based management have been underway in some countries with the aim to improve transparency and accountability of services. High levels of decentralization has been most notable Indonesia and the Philippines, where the effects on student outcomes have been varied. In Indonesia, for instance, the Indonesia Local Education Governance Index (ILEGI)⁵⁵ developed by BEC-TF revealed wide variations in service delivery by local governments

⁵⁴ Asia-Pacific End of Decade Notes on Education for All: Early Childhood Care and Education, UNESCO and UNICEF (2012), p. 9

⁵⁵ BEC-TF (2011a) developed the Indonesia Local Education Governance Index (ILEGI) to help monitor local government performance in education governance and service provision. The index captures several dimensions of governance, including: management control systems; management information systems; education service provision standards; transparency and accountability and; efficient resource use.

across the 50 districts surveyed⁵⁶. The report argued that there has been little innovation in local delivery of basic education services in ten years of reform, suggesting that the authorities, who are furthest from their targets are also those in most need of central support to improve their management. **School-based management (SBM)**, in particular, has been central to the decentralization agenda in both Indonesia and the Philippines, as it is the delegation of authority to the local level that can trigger school and community mobilization to implement plans that can improve education outcomes, including enrolment and attendance. Unfortunately, in the case of the Philippines, SBM has not been fully rolled out across the country and even when grants are made available to the heads of schools, related processes (including planning, disbursement and reporting of funds) need to be improved in order to empower school heads⁵⁷.

In Viet Nam decision-making is comparatively more centralized and a number of NGOs working in Viet Nam decry the weakness of lower levels of management within the Viet Nameese Education system, while applauding the increased professionalism at the central government. Decentralized management systems also depend on a combination of devolved authority and improved capacities, especially the increased understanding and use of local data systems for planning and decision-making and monitoring.

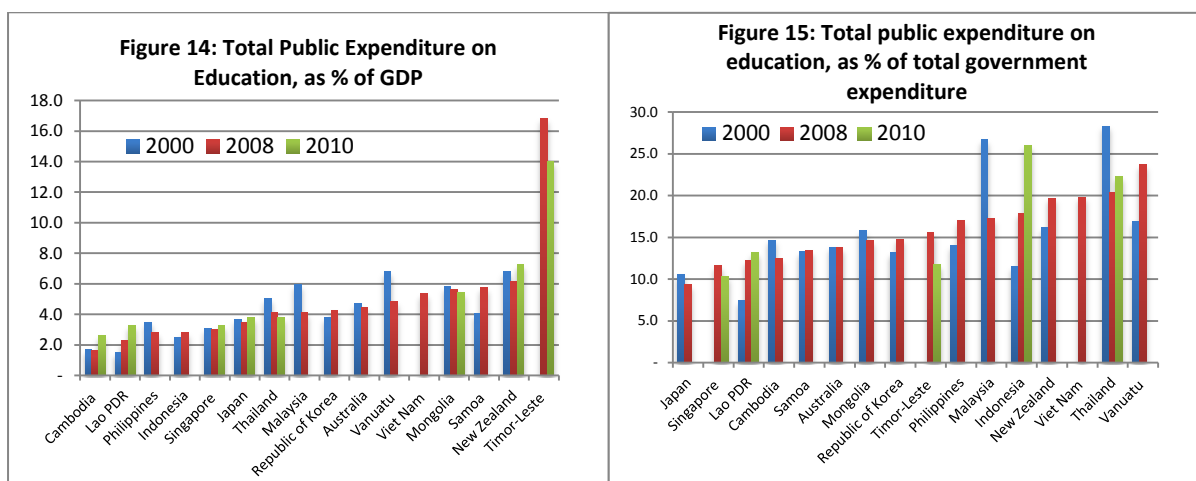
EDUCATION FINANCING

Levels of public expenditures for education ranges widely across countries in the East Asia Pacific region, from about 2 percent of GDP in Cambodia to more than 11 percent in Timor Leste (See Figure 1). Since 2000, change in national spending has varied across countries, with modest but essential increases in Cambodia and Indonesia while the Philippines and Thailand registered declines. By contrast, expenditures in advanced economies such as Japan and Australia remained relatively stable. Timor Leste is a clear exception to the trend, with about 14 percent of GDP allocated for education, of which a significant portion is capital expenditure. Overall, decreasing spending trend in transitional economies such as Thailand and Philippines is worrying, and spending levels in Cambodia and Lao PDR remain well below 4 percent, which may be insufficient considering the remaining challenges to education for all in those countries.

⁵⁶ BEC-TF (2011a) Governance matters to education outcomes – The Indonesia Local Education Governance Index (ILEGI): a score card of 50 local governments, Volumes 1 and 2, Basic Education Capacity Trust Fund

⁵⁷ Albert, J. R. (2011). "Improvement of the Implementation Procedures and Management Systems for the Teacher Deployment and New Classroom Construction Programs of the Department of Education." Study Prepared for Department of Budget and Management.

Figure 14 and 15: Change in financial commitments to education, EAP countries (2000-2010)



Source: UNESCO-UIS Database

More importantly than the absolute expenditure levels, however, **equity** of public expenditures in education is a concern in many countries. While expenditure data by location is not available in all countries, levels of inequities in public spending can manifest in disparities in educational access by location, income, gender and ethnicity⁵⁸. In the Philippines, for instance, secondary net enrolment rates ranges widely by region, and public school enrolment is skewed in favor of richer households as education level rises, with only 35 percent of secondary school students coming from the three poorest quintiles⁵⁹. In Viet Nam, rural-remote-urban differences in learning achievement are high, and achievement levels of ethnic minorities are considerably low compared to those of the Kinh majority. Efficiency in education is measured by how much the levels of input yield the desired outputs and outcomes within the education sector; here, input is defined as the level of expenditures and outcomes as enrolment rates and learning achievement levels.

- **External efficiency** relates inputs to the levels of education outcomes measured by private and social rates of return, such as increased earnings, greater social equality, reduced poverty, etc.
- **Internal efficiency**, on the other hand, relates inputs to levels of education outputs, such as completion rates and learning achievement.

Efficiency of spending can also be relatively high suggesting general sector inefficiencies in education. In some countries, budget allocations by different education levels also suggest possible inefficiencies. Levels of public spending in ECE level, for instance, is generally very low, with 8.8 percent of total public education expenditures spent by Viet Nam being one of the highest levels in the region. This may explain the considerably low access to pre-primary education in the region. Given that long-term

⁵⁸ For more discussion on education expenditures in EAP, See *Education Expenditures: Equity and Efficiency in EAP*, UNICEF EARPO, Working Draft forthcoming.

⁵⁹ Philippines: Public Expenditure Review: Strengthening Public Finance for More Inclusive Growth. 2011. World Bank, Manila, Philippines.

benefits of investments in pre-primary education has been shown to be significant, such low levels of spending in ECD may contribute to inefficiencies⁶⁰.

Levels of investment in pre-primary education have critical implications for overall efficiency of budget allocations in education, as long-term benefits of quality pre-primary investment have been shown to be significant. Moreover, data from selected countries in the region shows that children who have had early childhood care and education experience (ECCE) are more likely to complete primary education, suggesting investments in children's early years lead to better outcomes in the long run. Thus, ensuring opportunities to quality ECCE reduces the potential costs of early drop-out and repetition resulting from weak foundations. An increasing number of countries are beginning to prioritize ECCE funding, as in the case of Lao PDR and Mongolia where ECCE was included in EFA-FTE, would lead East Asia and the Pacific countries in the promising avenue to develop children's readiness before they start their primary education.

While public investments place heavy emphasis on primary education, the role and impact of **private or non-state providers** is rapidly growing particularly in pre-primary and post-primary levels, in both low and middle-income countries with potential significance in equity and efficiency of educational opportunities. Broadly, non-state providers include two types: those that are financially aided by the governments with grants-in-aid or subsidies and those that rely almost exclusively on student fees, whether profit-oriented or not. Existence and effects of private spending and non-state engagement in education, relatively high in countries like Indonesia, Philippines and Viet Nam- also suggest the need to investigate the relevant implications they have on increasing disparities and on efficiency of education expenditures.⁶¹

In some countries, governments actively seek private sector engagement with non-state sectors as a means to addressing a range of policy objectives, including better service coverage, improved efficiency and resource mobilization to supplement insufficient national budgets. As such, in the case of Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia, partial financing of private schools by governments is a common feature, particularly in secondary education, which helps free up public resources to invest due attention to other priorities including primary education.

Investing in education is widely considered central to efforts to promote future success of individuals, societies and nations at large. However, social inequalities and inequities remain a major driver in creating disparities in the access to, and the quality of education. Factors such as gender, income, location, language, ethnicity and disability produce a multiplicity of barriers to school entry and survival rates. Furthermore, realizing equity and efficiency in education financing measures continues to be a challenge.

⁶⁰ OECD Staring Strong III: A quality toolbox for early childhood education and care, OECD. 2012.

⁶¹ Secondary education financing survey. 2010. *Draft*. UNESCO Bangkok.

CHAPTER 4: POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

In this chapter, specific policies and strategies, as identified in the National Report, have been employed in response to the barriers and bottlenecks as identified in the previous chapter. For this Regional Synthesis report, focus will be on identifying the common responses, specific good practices and unique, noteworthy elements from the countries participating in the OOSC initiative and, where possible, their impact and lessons learned. A summary of the key policies and strategies, aligned to the four categories from the Conceptual and Methodological Framework, is provided in the table below.

Demand Side Barriers		Supply Side Barriers	Policy, Governance, Capacity and Financing
Social Cultural	Economic		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Participation • Promoting awareness on importance of ECD • Promoting gender equality in education • Inclusive education for children with disabilities • Birth certificates and accessible registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower costs of education • Increase household income to afford education • Improved health and nutrition • Education for disaster management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding access to school facilities • Improved quality • Language of education • Expansion of ECD services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School based management • Education financing and fund flows

SOCIAL CULTURAL, DEMAND-SIDE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Based on the social cultural, demand-side barriers discussed in the previous chapter, policies and strategies that aim to address those barriers are clustered as follows: promoting community participation; ECD and school readiness; promoting gender equality; education for the disabled; migration and birth registration.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

As discussed, low parental perception of the value of education is partly a supply issue - relevance of education - but the main reason lies in limited capacity among parents, especially those with limited education, to engage in school processes to both understand and complement the benefits of education. This implies the need to transform **parental attitude**, or at least to increase their capacity to engage in

education and the amount of time they interact with teachers, schools and their children's learning process.

The most widely adopted strategy in East Asia and Pacific to promote community participation has been the adoption of the Child Friendly Schools (CFS) approach, especially efforts around the CFS Dimension of Community, Parent and Child Participation. CFS schools are not only designed to be child-seeking schools, where children who are not in school are actively sought out and brought into education, they also actively promote local community participation in school planning, monitoring, and other activities. In Indonesia, community participation is also emphasized as part of the school based management process under the decentralization of administration of education and village administrators cooperate with school management to visit houses to ensure that children are enrolled and seek for reasons from those who do not enrol. In Timor-Leste, the National Human Development Report 2011 also outlines the processes of decentralisation that are underway to increase local decision making, which along with training in management for local officials, could lead the way for more relevant service provision (UNICEF 2011c).

Under the Child Friendly School Framework, community, parent and student participation is a core dimension and important element in the success that CFS initiatives have had in improving quality and retention at school level. Two key strategies of this CFS dimension are School Self assessments (SSAs) and School Improvement Plans (SIPs) which are closely related in terms of processes, The SSA involves forming three groups of assessors (students, parents and school staff), who are organized to carry out assessments of what they feel are the best and worst features of their school, often using simple formats and tools to guide their discussions and reviews. Once completed, the three groups then share their findings with each other in a school wide meeting, during which those features most in need of improvement are identified and prioritized for follow up action. The SIP, which follows directly on from the SSA, results in the development of a 1-3 year plan for improving specific aspects of the school often linked with school grants systems, and providing an opportunity for all school level stakeholders a chance to contribute to improving their school.

PROMOTING AWARENESS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ECD AND SCHOOL READINESS

Key reasons for delayed entry to school, as discussed previously, were parental perception regarding school readiness of children, which in turn is related to lack of awareness on the value of early childhood care and development. In addition to providing access to ECD services (discussed under 4.3.4), improving parents' recognition on the importance is crucial to expanding ECE access and school readiness of young children. "The early years are identified as the period of development from the prenatal period through birth to eight years of age when children grow and develop more rapidly than in any other period in their lives. This is a period of rapid brain development and has been identified as

a “sensitive” or critical period when children are both receptive and vulnerable to environmental stimulation and influences”.⁶²

Numerous advocacy campaigns and interventions to raise awareness on value of ECD have been implemented, in partnership with NGOs and development partners. In Indonesia, the compulsory age for pre-primary school is children aged between 4-6 years old. However, only 38.4 percent of children aged 5 attends pre-primary school and 10.7% attends primary schools, leaving 50.9% of children aged 5 out-of-school. For children aged 6, 9.6% attend the pre-primary level and 71.9% attend primary schools underage, which leaves 18.4% defined as out-of-school. Although we see that there are 81.6% of children by age 6 attend either pre-primary or primary education, there are only 48% of children who have ECCE experience before they start their primary education. Therefore, village officials in Indonesia play an important role to raise community awareness of the benefit of education, especially at the early years.

In Indigenous communities, understanding and tackling prevailing myths and traditions can be a part of the effort, as seen in the Philippines (UNICEF 2011b)

- *Among some indigenous populations there are beliefs that militate against child enrolment in school. For example among the Matigsalug of the Ata Manobo tribe in the uplands of Bukidnon (in Mindanao), there was a prevailing belief that if children went out to go to school, the children would be eaten up by the kapre. The latter is believed to be a creature of the underworld that has mythical powers to physically dominate human beings and is cause of great fear. Thus, in fear of being devoured by the kapre even the parents of such tribes do not want to send their children to school. This obstacle was overcome through advocacy to the parents by a local NGO that was given support by a Manila-based NGO to undertake a program for preschool children.*⁶³

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

Gender bias and discrimination, in the form of traditional gender roles, early marriage, gender based violence and disadvantages of boys, hamper educational access for some children in the region. Various programs to tackle gender-based barriers have been implemented in many countries, ranging from scholarship programs for girls, to trainings on gender-responsive teaching. Success levels of programs have varied, however, and as discussed in the OOSC Country Report of Timor Leste, it is important to recognize that changing behaviours with regard to gender depend on more than a series of training courses. A 2010 review of four NGO gender related projects in Timor Leste cautions against simplistic analysis of changes in social behaviour, noting that:

⁶² The Early Years Ensuring a Child's Right from the start, ARNEC, p. 3, Accessed on 18 September 2012: <http://www.arnec.net/ntuc/slot/u2323/publication/Booklet%20-%20The%20Early%20Years.pdf>

⁶³ Personal conversation with Tribal Mission, an NGO working on an education project at the National Summit of Children's Hour, UNILAB Bayanihan Center, 23 June 2011. This author is a member of the board of Children's Hour.

- There are immense structural limitations that mean that the impacts of NGO gender programming tend to remain narrow and fragile;
- The character of the gender projects provide both advantages and disadvantages in facilitating a process of change to gender relations; and
- Change is occurring at the intersection of customary, traditional and modern social systems. The writers say that ‘customary’ here refers to a worldview framed by local custom where local authority is determined genealogically and the ancestral domain links the natural and the lived world; ‘traditional’ (Trembath et al, 2010).

In some countries in East Asia, particularly, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines and Thailand, net enrolment ratios are lower for boys than for girls. More boys drop out than girls and there are gender disparities in school participation as boys (57.7%) outnumber girls (42.3%) among OOSC aged 6 to 11 years. In the Philippines, it has been noted that home visitations by school personnel when boys started disappearing from schools was a practical and effective enterprise. The suggestion was also made in that boys who are covered by the Programang Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino (4Ps) social welfare program are given additional cash incentives to encourage their participation in school and to put off their involvement in economic activities. In addition, improving teaching-learning processes to ensure stimulating academic environment for boys will be instrumental to keeping them engaged and in school.

More active responses against perpetrators of gender-based violence can also be seen in countries, with passing of legislations related laws and policies on gender-based violence and domestic violence. Again, however, as noted in the 2011 National Human Development Report of Timor Leste, transforming societal attitude on gender-based issues takes time, as it is “difficult to bring perpetrators to justice and families prefer the settle issues of domestic violence privately and without recourse to law.” In Timor, Agencies like PRADET Timor-Leste (Psychosocial Recovery and Development East Timor, or Recuperação no Desenvolvimento Trauma no Psicosocial Timor-Leste) works to deliver services to community members experiencing mental illness and trauma, often arising from violence, and the Fatin Hakmatek program has been developed to respond to forms of violence perpetrated by men against women and children, including domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse (usually sexual in nature) (UNICEF 2011c).

DISABILITY

As discussed in the previous chapter that very few children with disabilities make it through school in countries across East Asia and the Pacific due to both demand and supply-side barriers. Commonly, if they do get to school they drop out early because of stigma, inadequate and inappropriate resources or lack of transportation.

Ministries of Education in East Asia and the Pacific provide special centers and schools for disabled children (some mainstreamed within regular classes) based on the “least restrictive environment” in order to ensure that both barriers to supply and demand side are eradicated. In Indonesia, the government has introduced a large number of special schools, but it cannot afford to offer this option at a large scale in rural areas. Children with disabilities and their families often feel embarrassed to attend the local school or find it unaffordable and impractical to have to go to a special school very far from home.

In Viet Nam, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (2008) estimates the total number of children with disabilities in the 0-18 years age group to be 662,000 (2.4 per cent of that age group). The most common form of disability in children is mobility impairment, which affects one-third of children with disabilities.⁶⁴ However 75% of children with disabilities in Viet Nam are still out of school. Based on recent surveys and clearer understanding of the situation, the Government of Viet Nam is now better placed to prepare specific policies and practical responses, including teacher training and inclusive school services, to ensure children with disabilities enroll in school and complete the basic education cycle. The strong support from the legal framework such as Law and Decree on Persons with Disabilities (in 2010 and 2012 respectively) and National Plan of Actions on People with Disabilities 2011-2020 is another supporting element that helps Viet Nam expand the availability of proper learning opportunities for disabled children.

Cambodia is the first model Global Partnerships in Education (GPE) countries, which focus on the identification of Out-of-School Children including disability screening in order to create targeted interventions to increase enrollment and reduce/prevent drop out. This is the first attempt to conduct a systematic research to calculate out of school and disability prevalence rates a sample size of 20,000 children across the country. The initial findings from this study highlights a comparative data taken from the US census and Cambodian census that shows underreported disability numbers which often make the governments overlook the magnitude of the problem. Based on the US Census, 54 million or 19% of total population whereas the Cambodia census shows that only 160,000 people or 1.3% of population are people living with disability. The provision of equal access to educational services is needed on the non-discrimination basis. In Cambodia, “more than half the [disabled] children had access to educational services, of which almost half went to public schools. Most of these children had mild levels of Down syndrome. The remaining families did not send their child to school for various

⁶⁴ Quoted in UNICEF (2010) An analysis of the situation of children in Viet Nam Hanoi: UNICEF p24

reasons, including distance of the school from home, financial constraints, and the belief that the child is unlikely to benefit from an education.”⁶⁵

Clearly, there is a need to establish and strengthen systematic means to provide for the educational needs of disabled children. Three strategies that have been recognized globally to improve disability and inclusion policies are (1) teacher training in special needs education, (2) creation of accurate databases and conducting surveys about the actual needs of special needs education and use the data for programme and policy decision, and (3) community sensitization, including support to parents of children with special needs.⁶⁶

BIRTH CERTIFICATE

“Birth registration, the official recording of the birth of a child by the government, is a fundamental human right and an essential means of protecting a child’s right to an identity”.⁶⁷ Efforts to improve birth registration have been made across the region, as part of education as well as a child protection, health, water and sanitation agenda, in order to track life events from birth to death. Children without the proper registration are refused to access of their basic rights including education, health and other social welfare.

Many countries in the East Asia and the Pacific impose tariff and regulation such as late fine and judicious procedure, which are the main barriers to discourage parents from registering their children on a timely manner. Those whose household are poor, live in the rural area and have limited access to health care are most vulnerable to be able to access to education. 70% of Children from the richest quintile in Cambodia have birth registration compared to those from the poor quintile (59%)⁶⁸, and the same patten applies to Indonesia with a more varying degree that 84% of Children from the richest quintile compared to 23% for the poor.⁶⁹ However, Thailand is one of the examples that try to change the regulation not to refrain children with no birth registration to the access to their education. UNICEF recommended that “In countries where fees have been removed, the perceived barriers of expense can be mitigated by public awareness campaigns and innovative programmes such as mobile or house-to-house registration campaigns at the national level. In countries where fees for birth registration and late penalties still apply, interventions should be targeted at policy and legal reform”.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ René Ayala Moreira (2011). Intellectual Disability in Rural Cambodia: Cultural Perceptions & Families’ Challenges study in Boribor district and Kompong Chhnang Province. P. 33.

⁶⁶ FTI (2008) The Road to 2015: *Reaching the Education Goals FTI Washington*

http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/library/Annual_Report_2008_EFA_FTI.pdf

⁶⁷ The ‘Right’ start to life: A Statistical Analysis of birth registration, 2005 (UNICEF) p. 1

⁶⁸ Demographic Health Survey, 2005, Cambodia

⁶⁹ Demographic Health Survey, 2007, Indonesia

⁷⁰ Ibid. P. 24

In the case of the Philippines, the OOSC Country Report suggests that the Department of Education (DepEd) work with the NSO and LGUs towards offering a discounted rate for birth certificates, so as to enable the issuance of certificates at the school premises during enrolment to make it affordable and convenient for parents.

ECONOMIC DEMAND SIDE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Various economic barriers are manifested to keep children out of school, including fees, health and nutrition status, and natural disasters, with poverty as the main underlying factor. Responses to direct and indirect fees as a barrier are usually one of two main types: those that seek to directly lower the cost of education for households and those that aim to increase household income to cut the poverty cycle. These are discussed below, followed by responses related to health and nutrition and natural disasters.

LOWERING THE COST OF EDUCATION

“Experience in many countries shows that the household costs of schooling are a major barrier that prevent children from accessing and completing quality basic education”⁷¹. Moreover, children from poor families have a higher tendency to be affected by economic and social pressures, including extended absences which can lead to drop out. Therefore, lowering direct and indirect costs to education (and providing incentives or scholarships) will significantly encourage children from poorer families to access and complete their education. In Indonesia several strategies have been used to keep children in school through times of financial crisis. To address the needs of poor families, JPS Scholarships were provided to 4 percent of children attending primary school (i.e. two thirds of the originally targeted 6 percent), 8.4 percent of children attending junior secondary school and 3.7 percent of children attending senior secondary school. These scholarships were designed in recognition that poor families may need state funds in order to attend schools (even if these schools are free) and that schools servicing poor communities also tend to be under-resourced. The JPS Scholarships were discontinued but replaced by Special Assistance for Students (Bantuan Khusus Murid, BKM), which reached its peak in 2004 when 20 percent of primary and 26 percent of junior secondary education students received a scholarship. The scheme was renamed Scholarships for Poor Students (Beasiswa untuk Siswa Miskin, BSM) in 2008. To address the needs of under-resourced schools, Special Assistance for Schools (Bantuan Khusus Sekolah, BKS), a school-supporting block grant, was established with

⁷¹ Six steps to abolishing primary school fees – operational guide, The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/ The World Bank (2009), Page 3

specific funding formulas to benefit poor schools. The BSM programme was reformed and expanded in 2005, and renamed as School Operational Assistance (Bantuan Operasional Sekolah, BOS).⁷²

In Timor Leste, each year, the Alola Foundation⁷³, provides scholarships for 1,000 students in 113 rural schools in all 13 of the country's districts. Scholarships cover school fees, books, uniforms and other basic school items. School principals help identify potential scholarship recipients. When well-targeted, these scholarships are very effective at ensuring disadvantaged children stay in school. However, difficulties in receiving scholarships in a timely manner – such as at the beginning of the school year (to buy uniforms and stationary), and in being responsive to short term financial shocks to families (such as illness or deaths in the family), require monitoring and delivery systems that can be quite expensive.

INCREASING HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Social protection systems are now seen as an investment and an entitlement for both poor and non-poor in a country. 'Social protection is seen not simply as an ad hoc and temporary remedy, but as a policy instrument with a clear rationale grounded in economic considerations and political, rights-based notions.'⁷⁴ There is also a focus on the notion of vulnerability as it relates both to poverty relief and poverty prevention. At present, across most of Asia and the Pacific the coverage of social protection is low, and typically confined to urban workers in government and the formal sector.

Viet Nam has a number of social protection programs including social insurance and social welfare schemes, the latter including targeted benefit programs and special schemes for war veterans and invalids among others. However the really poor in the Vietnamese community are often excluded from assistance and there are low quality social services in poor areas. Migrants in urban areas also have only limited access to such services. More recently a number of agencies and researchers have put forward the notion of a family-based package of assistance, integrating and expanding existing programs, to serve as a foundation on which additional benefits can be built. Depending on household characteristics such as numbers of household members working or numbers and ages of children, interventions are designed for the bottom 15% of households in terms of wealth and assume nationwide implementation. UNICEF also makes the point that trained social workers and other care workers are needed at local levels to ensure that needy families get access to welfare provision and use these resources to benefit their children. For ethnic minorities, there are a number of poverty reduction programs that specifically aim to promote education by providing incentives and subsidies, as well as supplying financial support for transport and boarding support, either financial or the building of boarding accommodation near schools.⁷⁵

⁷² UNICEF/UIS (2011) Out of School Children in Indonesia Jakarta : UNICEF Indonesia p 79

⁷³See Alola Foundation <http://www.alolafoundation.org/index.php>

⁷⁴ Babajanian, B. V. (2010) Social protection in Asia: the latest thinking and policy contours in Asian Development Bank (2010) Enhancing social protection in Asia and the Pacific: The proceedings of the regional workshop Mandaluyong City: Philippines: Asian Development Bank. P 535

⁷⁵ Jones R., Tran Thi Hanh, Nguyen Anh Phong and Truong Thi Thu Trang (2009) A Mapping Exercise – Poverty Reduction Programmes and Policies in Viet Nam Hanoi: UNDP (pp 19-25)

Other social welfare subsidies to families require regular attendance in school as a requisite for continued funding, with mechanisms in place to monitor attendance through links to reporting by headmasters or school management committees. For example in Indonesia, the government has used a set of traditional and innovative social protection programs that can have both direct and indirect influence on education outcomes. The conditional cash transfer program, PKH, uses a Latin American approach, by providing resources to the mother or other female members of the household to reward behaviors that improve health and education outcomes (enrolment and attendance). It has been implemented on a pilot basis for 700,000 recipients and is currently being rolled out to 1,800,000 recipients. An impact evaluation on the first two years of the program suggests limited effects on education outcomes, although these might have been underestimated because of initial implementation problems.⁷⁶ Another Indonesian innovative community conditional cash transfer program, is known as PNPM-Generasi. Communities receive a grant conditional on them presenting an investment plan that shows how they will improve performance in terms of 12 health and education outcome indicators. Although this has been implemented on a relative small scale (2,200 villages), the results from its evaluation are already promising, especially for remote communities who use the funds to open lower secondary schools for their children.

In Timor Leste, Bolsa de Mae is a cash transfer programme for orphans and single parent households, or households with two parents, one of whom is unable to work. The program is designed to support families with monthly subsidy to be needed to feed and educate their children, on the condition that the identified child attends and successfully completes each level of schooling. It provides the following:

- \$5 for 8 months each year in primary school
- \$10 for 8 months each year in secondary school
- \$20 for 8 months each year in university
- \$30 for 8 months each year in university abroad

Since the inception of the Bolsa de Mae program in 2008, the number of beneficiaries receiving Bolsa de Mae payments increased from 7,200 to 9,730 or USD663,750 to USD876,153 in 2009.⁷⁷ Data or information on the impact of the program, however, is yet to be documented and needs to be studied to understand its gaps and improvement needs. While there seems to be wide support among communities to widen the scale of the program, there is also general consensus that proof of the effectiveness of the program in yielding positive outputs may be stymied by lack of data and monitoring systems and weak administrative capacities. According to one expert, lack of a good central data base system to monitor impacts of other social protection schemes also present challenges to assessing the cumulative impact the programs has had in alleviating poverty, but any effective monitoring of the

⁷⁶ UNICEF/UIS (2011) Out of School Children in Indonesia Jakarta : UNICEF Indonesia

⁷⁷ South-South Cooperation: Lessons from Brazil on Conditional Cash Transfers. UNDP Timor Leste (2009). Available at: <http://www.tl.undp.org/nloct09/newsmonthly%20octubre%202009/Lessons%20from%20Brasil%20on%20Conditional%20Cash%20Transfer.htm>

programmes will require serious resourcing. It has been noted that inter- and intra-ministerial coordination remains a challenge that needs to be addressed for improved synergy among different social welfare programs.⁷⁸

The Philippines, with initial support from the WB and now from ADB, launched a major CCT program, Bridge for the Filipino Family Program (Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program or 4Ps), in 2008. This program provides education grants totalling PhP300 per child per month for a period of 10 months per year, up to a maximum of three children per family is available. Households must comply with the following conditions: a). Children 3-5 years old must attend day care or pre-school classes at least 85 percent of the school days every month; and b) Children 6-14 years old must enroll in elementary or high school and attend at least 85 percent of the time.⁷⁹ By the end of 2009, the program reached 700,000 households across the country.⁸⁰In addition some Local Government Units (LGUs, i.e. cities and municipalities) also provide in-kind subsidies to children. The Pasig city government, for instance, has provided free books (1:1 ratio), bags, shoes, and physical education uniforms to all its public elementary school students for many years.

Overall, most countries in the region have yet to establish comprehensive social protection systems directly linked to improving education outcomes that are cost effective with proven impact.⁸¹

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Since it is well proven that stunting, micronutrient deficiencies and hunger have a detrimental effect on cognitive development and school performance, it is reasonable to assume that the education sector would be one of the sectors most likely to benefit from investing in school feeding and nutritional supplementation programmes.. By the same token, it is also true that education is one of the sectors most likely to have an impact on stunting reduction. Analyses of DHS and MICS surveys from several countries (Bangladesh, Lao, Mongolia, and Nepal) indicate that after controlling for confounding factors, parents' education universally played a strong protective role in child nutritional status. This is particularly true for mother's education, where evidence shows that increasing education of the mother translates into better nutritional status of her children. There is also evidence that providing school meals helps keep girls in school longer especially if linked with a take home ration⁸².

Cash transfer programs, which alleviate some of the environmental risks associated with poverty and undernutrition have been shown to reduce stunting and to improve behaviour and cognition (Cecchini

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ UNICEF/UIS (2011) Out of School Children in Philippines Manila: UNICEF Philippines p 69

⁸⁰ Babajanian, B. V. (2010) Social protection in Asia: the latest thinking and policy contours in Asian Development Bank (2010) Enhancing social protection in Asia and the Pacific: The proceedings of the regional workshop Mandaluyong City: Philippines: Asian Development Bank. P 542

⁸¹ Babajanian, B. V. (2010) Social protection in Asia: the latest thinking and policy contours in Asian Development Bank (2010) Enhancing social protection in Asia and the Pacific: The proceedings of the regional workshop Mandaluyong City: Philippines: Asian Development Bank. P 546

⁸² Gelli A, Meir U, and Espejo F 2007. Does provision of food in school increase girls' enrollment? Evidence from schools in sub-Saharan Africa Food and Nutrition Bulletin, 28 (2): 149-155

and Madariaga, 2011 and Nadeau et al, 2011)^{83,84}. In many EAP countries, governments are trying to implement food transfers and school feeding, health insurance schemes and both conditional and unconditional cash transfers, to respond to the issue of poor health and stunting for children. In Indonesia a number of conditional and unconditional cash transfer systems target the health and well-being of children as well as their attendance at school. In addition, a national school feeding programme (PMT-AS) or Program Makanan Tambahan Anak Sekolah) has resumed since 2009. The programme provides grants to schools so that they can purchase locally prepared healthy snacks or meals. A small-scale school feeding project has also been implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP) for a number of years as part of its Nutritional Rehabilitation Programme (NRP). It is motivated by the belief that, especially in the case of anaemia, almost all school children in Indonesia need additional micronutrients, whether poor or middle income, rural or urban. The project offers fortified biscuits in class every day to about 320,000 primary school students in two provinces (East Java and NTB) to increase attendance and performance.⁸⁵ Further, programs to improve maternal, infant and young child nutrition demonstrate the largest impacts in nutrition and development with the most disadvantaged mothers and young children. Iron supplementation and deworming interventions have been shown to improve nutrition and participation among preschool children.

In the Philippines, DepEd's School Health and Nutrition Program (SHNP) endeavors to maintain and improve the health of schoolchildren by preventing diseases, promoting health-related knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices. As well, sitting beside the 4Ps program is the Food for School Program (FSP)⁸⁶ and the Breakfast Feeding Program (BFP)⁸⁷. While the FSP was found to have positive impact on the beneficiaries, the FSP has been discontinued largely due to leakage of resources in the targeting process.⁸⁸

Another successful measure to advocate and mobilize resources for improving the health and well-being of pre-school and school-aged children and help improve their performance in school at a low cost is on deworming. Philippines have also made excellent progress with nation deworming programmes, the Essential Health Care Program (EHCP) that promotes handwashing, toothbrushing and deworming among pre-school and elementary students in collaboration with Philippines government. The programme has proven the reduction in worm load by 50% from 66% infected with

⁸³ Cecchini, S and A Madariaga, (2011), Conditional Cash Transfer Programmes: The Recent Experience in Latin American and the Caribbean, United Nations, ECLAC, Santiago, Chile.

⁸⁴ Nadeau S, Kataoka N, Valerio A, Neuman MJ, Elder LK, (2011), Investing in young children: an early childhood development guide for policy dialogue and project preparation. Washington, DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/World Bank.

⁸⁵ UNICEF/UIS (2011) Out of School Children in Indonesia Jakarta : UNICEF Indonesia p87

⁸⁶ The FSP involved the provision of a kilo of rice to families who suffer from severe hunger through their children in DCCs and in preschool and Grade 1 in schools operated by DepEd. Aside from targeting day care pupils, the FSP also aims to mitigate hunger among poor families and improve school attendance of Grades I to III.

⁸⁷ The BFP is a short-term hunger alleviation intervention for school children with no *baon* (school allowance) and who do not eat breakfast before leaving the home. The program aimed to improve the active learning capabilities of school children. Grade I and Grade II pupils in low performing schools were provided with breakfast in the form of specially formulated instant noodles.

⁸⁸ UNICEF/UIS (2011) Out of School Children in Philippines Manila: UNICEF Philippines

intestinal worms to just 35%. UNICEF in Philippines cited that “Toothaches and diarrhea are among the common ailments that cause children to miss school. Studies show that 7 out of 10 children aged 3-12 suffer from intestinal worms due to unhygienic practices that often lead to diarrhea and under-nutrition. Research also shows that 97 percent of 6 year olds and 81 percent of 12 year olds have dental caries”⁸⁹. EHCP program caused a reduction of school absenteeism by 25%.

In Timor Leste, the National Strategic Plan states the objective to provide clean, piped water to all government schools by 2020. This will certainly make schools healthier places to be. Timor Leste also has a school feeding programme that is supported by the World Food programme, although implementation has been slow and coverage reduced in more recent years due to budget constraints.

EDUCATION FOR DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

With a number of large-scale natural hazard (tsunamis, cyclones, floods, earthquake, droughts, and etc.) having affected the region in recent years, most countries have developed some form of Education for disaster management programme. In 2007, EAPRO region has developed a series of principles for Disaster Management involving children that forms the basis for many of these programmes⁹⁰, which has later on been evolved to the concept of Disaster Risk Reduction in Education. Disasters pose great economic threats to education completion across the region, both in terms of burden on families and strains on national budgets and capacity to provide educational services. Therefore, embedding DRR in Education at the policy level to address both school safety and disaster management will build a foundation for a safeguarding the environment and ensuring social protection measures are in place soon after disasters hit.

A number of positive examples of overcoming the potential disruptions to learning caused by disasters exist. In Timor Leste, the Ministry of Education, together with UNICEF and Plan International, are developing emergency preparedness programs and resources, focusing on threats from natural disasters (i.e. tsunamis) and social conflict. This joint effort has developed ideas about interagency communication during emergencies and ways of keeping educational services operational before, during and after emergencies. As development partners note: *It is anticipated that 2012, with its national elections, will present some special challenges in the area of social unrest, and thus the cluster will continue to develop ways in which education can anticipate and be resilient to both natural and man-made emergencies.*⁹¹

⁸⁹ http://www.unicef.org/philippines/mediacentre_17977.html

⁹⁰ UNICEF EAPRO (2007) The participation of children and young people in emergencies: A guide for relief agencies, based largely on experiences in the Asian tsunami response Bangkok: UNICEF EAPRO
http://www.unicef.org/eapro/the_participation_of_children_and_young_people_in_emergencies.pdf

⁹¹ Ibid 42 p 14

Indonesia is another example of high impact risk country, located in the ring of fire - the most active disaster prone area of the world – and affected annually by floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and landslides. However, with adequate emergency preparedness and readiness, disaster does not necessarily cause a lasting negative impact to schooling. For example, In Indonesia, the school participation at the primary level in high impact disaster areas, such as Yogyakarta, Jawa Tengah, and Sumatera Barata, were higher after the earthquakes struck, with tent schools and mass enrolment campaigns resulted in a positive impact.

SUPPLY SIDE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Improving both access and quality of education is vital to bring and keep children in schools who face diverse set of barriers and bottlenecks. Strategies to respond to gaps in access and quality of schools are discussed here, followed by specific focus on countries' efforts around language in education and provision of ECD.

EXPANDING ACCESS

In the previous chapter, barriers related to access included remoteness of schools, classroom shortages, WASH facilities, and teacher supply were highlighted. A range of efforts are in place across the region to respond to such barriers, from adoption of inclusive education and CFS policies and approaches, to construction of new facilities, alternative modes of delivery and multi-grade classes.

In Viet Nam, *multi-grade teaching* with the building of smaller satellite schools in close proximity to children's homes, especially for the earliest years of schooling, has been an important innovation for decades. Multi-grade can also be considered during the secondary education as there are many reasons associated with distance of school from home, that cause drop out and non-enrolment. For children involved in Child Labour or home based chores, various forms of alternative education is available through continuing education centres, supplementary education in evenings, or participate in illiteracy elimination classes in wards and communes. However, this form of education and classes are not attractive to children for many reasons and successful completion rates are quite low.

Other types of alternative delivery modes are available to provide flexible learning opportunities to those unable to access regular schools, including working children, migrant children and children living in remote areas. The Indonesian government has introduced one roof primary-junior secondary school: integrated basic education in the same premises with shared use of teaching resources; the establishment of satellite classes of a main school in remote areas; open schools under the supervision of a regular junior secondary school and normally run at times convenient to the students, many of whom are at work; special service classes for children who have dropped out of school; non-formal

basic education and inclusive education with the enrolment of children with disabilities into standard classrooms.⁹²

Non-formal equivalence programme are also available in Indonesia and reaches over 200,000 students annually with packages designed for equivalence and certification at Primary, Lower Secondary and Upper secondary levels. As an alternative delivery programme, working children and drop-outs are eligible to study independently and even on line, with an equivalency exam offered prior to certification and diplomas being awarded. Issues remain in terms of quality, however, with only a third of students who enroll actually passing the final exam and receiving their certification (EAP Equivalence Programmes Desk Review).

In the Philippines, the Homeschooling system, either Online Distance Learning (ODL) or Printed Distance Learning (PDL), involving the teaching of children at home, usually by their parents is recognized by the DepEd provided that the parent-teacher is a college graduate and is able to provide at least 4 hours of instruction per week for kindergarten to 7th grade.⁹³ This is one way of overcoming the issue of long distances to school. Other responses to distance from home to school include the Home Schooling, and the Multi-grade Program in Philippine Education. Examples also exist of schools with support from Local Government Units that provide transportation services and boarding facilities for children and teachers who live far from their school.

In conflict-affected areas, the *Bangsamoro* Development Agency has developed a culture-responsive, age and developmentally appropriate Islamic preschool curriculum to be used by *Bangsamoro* children, especially in Mindanao. This *Tahderiyyah* curriculum has been developed and endorsed by Muslim leaders, scholars, the MILF *Tarbiya* and the MILF Central Committee.⁹⁴ Furthermore, in order to counteract the large numbers of children not attending schools in ARMM in the Philippines DepED is planning to institute a BRAC type program at community level for primary school age children.

Efforts to broaden access to education for children with disabilities are gaining momentum, but many challenges remain. In Indonesia, the government has introduced a large number of special schools, but it cannot afford to offer this option at a large scale in rural areas. Children with disabilities and their families often feel embarrassed to attend the local school or find it unaffordable and impractical to have to go to a special school very far from home. In Viet Nam, steps are being taken to help bring more children with disabilities to schools, beginning with their identification and referral. The Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs(2008) estimates the total number of children with disabilities in the 0-18 years age group to be 662,000 (2.4 per cent of that age group). The most common form of disability in children is mobility impairment, which affects one-third of children with disabilities.⁹⁵ However 75% of children with disabilities in Viet Nam are still out of school.

⁹² UNICEF/UIS (2011) Out of School Children in Indonesia Jakarta : UNICEF Indonesia

⁹³ http://en.wikipilipinas.org/index.php?title=Homeschooling_and_open_universities_in_the_Philippines

⁹⁴ UNICEF/UIS (2011) Out of School Children in Philippines Manila: UNICEF Philippines

⁹⁵ Quoted in UNICEF (2010) An analysis of the situation of children in Viet Nam Hanoi: UNICEF p24

In the East Asia Pacific region, Cambodia presents some promising initiatives on inclusive education for children with disabilities. A small scale initiative in one cluster school in Svay Tieb district in Svay Rieng province is a good model which has now spread to 11 other provinces. The Inclusive Education Program by Handicap International in Battambang, the Mainstreaming Inclusive Education project by VSO, and the USAID-funded ESCUP for underserved populations) are also notable initiatives that include children with disabilities within their target of reaching all disadvantaged, out-of-school children. Children with disabilities are identified by community mapping, and then provided with all the services they would need to enrol in school. This might include a referral to a hospital for surgery for hernia, a modified bicycle for transportation to school, or a neighbouring schoolmate receiving support to provide the student with disabilities a lift to school (USAID, 2006).⁹⁶

QUALITY

Quality of education has become a central concern to governments across the region. There is growing recognition on the importance of quality in ensuring continued demand for and participation in education and as private sector employers increasingly complain about the low standards of school graduates. As discussed in the previous chapter, low levels of learning outcomes, poor teacher quality and lack of resources are some of the critical gaps common in countries.

Across the region, **assessment of learning achievement**- essential to diagnose and improve education outcomes- has been given insufficient attention, with only a handful of countries administering national level assessments or participating in international assessments such as PISA and TIMSS. However, efforts to assess levels of learning outcomes are increasing, from early grade reading to assessment of academic and non-academic areas. In particular, a number of countries are using variations of the Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRA) approach to conduct sample-based assessments to better understand the levels of reading abilities in early grades, which is a critical foundation that can affect learning prospects in subsequent years in schools. Although the EGRA approach is neither a standard that can be used for comparative analysis across countries nor necessarily a culturally relevant model with which reading and literacy can be effectively measured, it has been a useful way to highlight and bring focused attention to improving essential learning outcomes can be measured in the early grades.

In the Philippines, the Student Tracking System, developed and implemented with support from UNICEF, is a useful tool that provides individual schools with an early warning for children who are at risk of not learning and dropping out. It includes socio-cultural and economic background of each child and his or her family, which helps identification of specific needs of individual students. In addition,

⁹⁶ Reported in Kalyanpur, Maya, Kong Vichetra, Kong Kanitha, Un Siren, Lek Kongjian, Bo Vibol & Eng Muguek (2007) Including the excluded Integrating disability into the EFA Fast Track Initiative processes and National Education Plans in Cambodia Phnom Penh World Vision Cambodia p iii p 11

other school-community mechanisms, such as the Community-based Management System, are implemented in select barangays nationwide regularly and collect data on the number of school-aged children not in school.

For children who are not learning and, hence, at risk of dropping out, some remediation and support programs should be made available. As teachers learn more about the role of interactive teaching and learning, this will probably come to the fore. In some qualitative studies, students have complained about their teachers' lack of concern about their poor performance in class. When dropout or grade repetition is the only response for low performing students, this not only results in lower efficiency in education systems, but will ultimately lead to limited future life choices for individual students.

Improving teacher quality has been another focus area in the region's efforts to quality improvements. In Indonesia, policies on teacher upgrading and teacher certification are currently being implemented with the objective of increasing the level of teacher qualifications and improving deployment. The teacher upgrading policy focuses on strengthening teacher training institutions and assisting teacher and supervisor clusters. The teacher certification program is not directly linked to quality improvements, as many of the requirements to get certified are routine and not linked to classroom teaching conditions. However, it is hoped that the teacher remuneration package that accompanies certification will help attract more highly qualified people to the profession.

The government also provides a special allowance paid for teachers serving in remote areas, which appears to have decreased teacher absenteeism rate from 20 percent in 2003 and to 15 percent in 2008. However, the absenteeism level for teachers in schools that received the allowances was still higher than that for other schools. Some studies shows that teachers who were absent during school time were mostly engaged in tasks outside school, sick, or attending to private business, suggesting the need for improved management and accountability practices.⁹⁷

In the Philippines, teachers' competency development has been one of the key reform areas in the current BESRA (Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda) programme. It was expected that by end of 2011, a competency-based systems for hiring, deployment, performance appraisal, promotion, and continuous personal and professional development of teachers would be in place in all regions and divisions nationwide.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ UNICEF/UIS (2011) Out of School Children in Indonesia Jakarta : UNICEF Indonesia

⁹⁸ BESRA Progress Report, based on the final draft of the BESRA Implementation and Accountability Plan, 2010-2012; PPT, National Mancom Meeting, 23 February 2010.

In Viet Nam, MOET has turned its attention to the quality training of teachers and the development of a set of professional teacher standards linked to the curriculum. The teacher professional standards are also meant to be linked to revised pay scales for teachers, which once implemented, is hoped to motivate teachers towards improved performance.

While these and many other strategies are being implemented to improve teacher standards and performance, there is increasing understanding that teacher performance is affected by a range of individual, social, cultural and economic factors that cannot be easily altered with disparate, fragmented policies or more in-service teacher training programmes. Behavior change toward effective teaching and learning processes should be recognized as a long- term investment, and should be supported with a concerted effort by pre-service teacher training institutions and in-service professional development providers. Strengthening school leadership is also essential to improving overall quality of teachers and teaching-learning, as schools where principals are more actively engaged in observing and guiding teachers are more likely to help student performance.⁹⁹

Textbooks are one of the most essential inputs for quality learning, and sustained efforts are needed to produce and distribute materials, particularly to remote, disadvantaged areas, in a timely manner. Gender, language and culturally appropriate materials continue to remain a challenge. In Viet Nam textbooks are printed by the central government and must be purchased by parents, which is usually far more convenient in urban and semi-urban areas. Setting up national systems to print and distribute textbooks in a timely and efficient manner usually require public private partnerships, for decentralized printing and/or for streamlined distribution, which in turn requires changes to policies governing the roles and functions of government and private sector partners.

LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION

As noted earlier, for ethnic minorities who do not speak the national language at home, learning from teachers who do not speak their language and in a language that they do not speak are serious impediments to learning and retention. In the Philippines, the recent Order 74 by Department of Education- “Institutionalizing Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education”- has allowed for the use of local languages to be used as the medium of instruction in preschool to at least grade 3. The policy stipulates, among others, the integration of MLE in all subject areas and establishing the support system for its implementation, including identifying resources to be tapped for the purpose and encouraging the DepED regional directors and superintendents to create opportunities for orientation and training on MLE.

⁹⁹ World Bank (2011) Viet Nam: High Quality Education for All Report No. 56085-VN Volume 1: Human Development Department East Asia and Pacific Region p 16

MTB-MLE is being piloted in over 100 elementary schools involving 12 dominant languages in the Philippines. Under K-12 Programme of DepED, Mother tongue is being adopted as a medium of instruction starting in Kindergarten up to Grade 3 and as a separate subject in Grades 1 to Grade 3. The on-going training program for Grade 1 teachers includes training on the implementation of MLE. While local language materials and core textbooks still need to be developed, there is great hope that the high levels of Grade 1 and 2 drop out and repetition will be reduced by this measure (DepEd Philippines, 2011).

In Viet Nam there are more than fifty four ethnic groups, and encompassing seven major language families. Many ethnic groups are long standing and pre-date Viet Nameese settlement; others are more recent migrants to more distant and remote areas due to government resettlement policies. There have been a number of efforts over the years to introduce mother tongue and bilingual education, as well as efforts to introduce Viet Nameese immersion programmes in pre-school. For children learning in Kinh and reading in Kinh, there are at least two difficult tasks: learning in a new language and learning to read and write. *The Action Research for Mother Tongue Bilingual Education project (2008-2015)* has provided a positive model for education for ethnic minority children at primary level. Initial assessments show that children are interested in school, drop out doesn't occur and children can learn in the language they use at home. This has already resulted in higher test scores in Math and Viet Nameese language skills for children. In Viet Nam and across the region, institutionalising mother tongue language programmes in the early years of school is both difficult and necessary for ensuring equality of access for children of ethnic minority background.

In Timor Leste, the Multilingual Mother Tongue-based languages policy has also been adopted by the government and will be piloted in a number of areas (Oecusse, Lautem and Manatuto).¹⁰⁰ Such broad efforts to address the educational needs of ethnic minorities are greatly encouraging, and opportunities of ethnic minorities are expected to dramatically improve in the coming years. At the same time, however, careful documentation and evaluation of the lessons from mother-tongue based education programs will be paramount to sustained, successful responses to the needs of disadvantaged ethnic minorities, who face diverse set of barriers that require targeted, comprehensive support.

There is a lot of resistance to introducing mother tongue based education, It must also be recognized that policies on language of instruction are fraught with political risk and nationalist tendencies. Many political leaders fear that teaching children in local languages can weaken the role of the state or even lead to succession movements and anti-national sentiments. Ethnic minority communities and parents themselves are also suspicious of mother tongue based practices which they feel will further marginalize their children – who they fear will not be able to master the national language and thereby be further marginalized. While there is common acceptance that the use of mother tongue in schools can result in strengthened cultural identity, more advocacy and evidence based policy debate is

¹⁰⁰ Prime Minister explains Government's policy on Mother Tongue in Parliament. Available at: <http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?p=6454&lang=en>

required to convince parents and policy makers alike that other tongue based education actually strengthens students' capacity to master the national language and to succeed in school.

EXPANSION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Access to affordable ECD services are critical for child development as well as ensuring strong foundations essential to future success in schools. As mentioned in the previous chapter, access to ECD has important effects on school readiness, which in turn impacts right-age enrolment in schools, and lowers the risks of repetition, drop out and overall student performance.

In the Philippines, the Senate has approved a bill, Kindergarten Education Act, which seeks to make pre-school education mandatory, compulsory, and free in all public schools. It aims to institutionalize kindergarten education into the basic education system. The Senate version prescribes a mother tongue-based multilingual education as a medium of instruction for pre-school children.

In Timor Leste, in response to very low levels of early childhood participation, the National Education Strategic Plan addresses the need for universal ECCD coverage, but a clear policy, standards, training programs and national budget are required to take ECCD to scale and these have yet to be prepared.

In Indonesia, there are many possibilities for increasing pre-primary education access. The Ministry of National Education supports a community-based Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) project for more than 700,000 children in 50 districts. The project operates in a way similar to PNPM-Generasi: communities receive block grants according to a plan on how best to deliver early childhood services. In parallel, the establishment of a national quality assurance and professional development system is also being supported. There are still major challenges to address with the high levels of underage enrolment in Grade One, which is primarily the result of primary school being fee free and pre-schools being fee based.

In Viet Nam, the World Bank's study on High Quality Education for All (2009) includes early childhood education in its areas for policy reform as it is seen as an important period of time for learning, especially for those who are outside the mainstream, such as those who are poor, migrants, or ethnic minority. However even if it ranks highly in terms of policy and it has had a long history in Viet Nam's socialist society, there are still children who fall through this learning safety net and many of them are amongst the marginalized.

GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING

SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT

As noted in the previous chapter, decentralization and, in particular, school based management has been a notable trend in many countries across the region. Potential benefits of decentralization in improving educational outcomes need to be supported with requisite improvements in **local level**

capacity and **school based management**. Some progress in these aspects is being made in countries, albeit to varying degrees. In Indonesia, the *Decentralized Basic Education 1- Management and Governance* project (2005-2011) assisted 1,300 schools to prepare and implement four-year school development plans which was found to have led to better planning, greater community participation, and improved transparency.¹⁰¹ Improving school-based management specifically, on the other hand, seems to require a more complex and time-intensive investments, as studies find that empowering inexperienced community members to execute complicated tasks, such as advising on teacher management, is unlikely to happen without intensive set of inputs.

In the Philippines, the *Strengthening the Implementation of Basic Education in Selected Provinces in the Visayas (STRIVE)*, funded by the AUSAID has been implemented to build leadership and management capacity among school heads and managers. A practical guideline for *Dropout Reduction Program (DORP)* at the secondary level has also been developed as a means to promote more proactive school based monitoring and management as a collaborative effort by school head, teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders (UNICEF 2011b).

EDUCATION FINANCING

There has been increasing recognition that, in addition to more funding, better utilization of **education funding** is needed to improve equity and efficiency of education systems. In Timor Leste, the National Education Strategic Plan proposes funding of USD150 million in 2011 and reaching USD 388 million by 2030. This represents about 20 percent of total government budget, which would be similar to the shares spent in countries like Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines. In 2009, education share of national budget was just 12 percent, however, suggesting that considerable effort would be required for the government to implement the strategy¹⁰². The importance harnessing all available resources, such as non-state providers such as civil society and religious organizations, is also recognized; the Philippines OOSC Country Report calls for the need for systematic documentation and assessment of the impact of their contribution to basic education.

To alleviate the burden of maintaining children in school, education ministries may institute a wide range of schemes and incentives, such as school feeding, free or subsidized transport, special grants and supplies. Governments may also endorse the provision of free uniforms, textbooks and stationary, or monthly rations and incentives that are attached to attendance. In Mongolia and Cambodia, incentives including free school meals and textbooks are provided to poor schools. In 2010, Fiji introduced a Free Bus Fare for school students from poor communities.

In Indonesia, two innovative social protection policies stand out. The conditional cash transfer

¹⁰¹ DBE1 (2007) Implementing school-based management in Indonesia: the DBE1 experience 2005-2010 Impact Study, Decentralized basic education 1: management and governance, USAID.

¹⁰² The Development Partners Appraisal of the National Education Strategic Plan 2011-2030 and Recommendation for Re-endorsement of Timor-Leste for Accession to the Education for All (EFA) Fast Track Initiative. June, 2011. Dilli, *Unpublished Paper*.

programme known as PKH (Program Keluarga Harapan or Hopeful Family Programme) provides money to the female primary caregiver, a reward for families whose school-age children, among other things, enroll and stay in school. To complement this, the conditional cash transfer programme, known as PNPM-Generasi (National Community Empowerment Program - Healthy and Smart Generation), was established. Communities receive a sizable grant conditional on their presenting an investment plan that can include establishing or improving junior secondary schools — an initiative that, thus far, has shown real success in expanding access to junior secondary.

While many private schools cater to the wealthy, equal numbers of unregistered private schools are providing valuable education services at affordable rates to the poor in countries throughout the region. In Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia, partial financing of private schools, particularly at secondary levels by governments is a common feature. The role of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Non-State Organizations (NSOs) is rapidly growing, particularly in pre-primary and post-primary levels, in both low and middle-income countries, with potential significance for the equity and efficiency of educational opportunities. Education ministries need to analyze whether government resources can be used more efficiently by the private sector and NSOs in providing access to a quality education for specific disadvantaged groups – including children who are very poor, live in remote communities or who are disabled.

As discussed previously, various demand-side financing options, including scholarships and cash transfers, are available across the region, with the anticipation that they would lead to improved equity and efficiency within the education system as well as better outcomes. As noted, such strategies have yet to be evaluated and documented, and improvements to the administrative capacities and coordination mechanisms to ensure their effectiveness and sustainability in yielding positive educational outcomes are required.

Key results for education to achieve	Potential Target Groups	Investment case for targeted solutions
<p>Increase participation in and access to primary and secondary education with significantly reduced disparities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic minorities • Street children • Remote and rural communities • Children from Isolated areas • Children from religious groups • Girls • Children with special needs • Children affected by disaster • Dropped out, slow learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of Child Friendly Schools approach to promote community participation • Child Seeking Schools • Awareness raising campaign on importance of ECD and School readiness • Campaign to tackle gender-based barriers such as scholarship programs for girls, trainings on gender-responsive teaching • School construction in remote areas • Special assistance for schools which are under-resourced. • Conditional cash transfers and social protection linked to regular school attendance • School feeding and/or food incentives for regular school attendance/ Food for School programs • Multi-grade teaching, with capacity and resource support in 'incomplete' schools • Water, sanitation and hygiene in schools • Mother tongue-based education with local language materials • Increase provision of ethnic minority teachers and teachers' aides • Alternative delivery systems: independent tutorials/equivalency programmes/distance learning • School grants with pro-poor financing formulas • Cost-sharing or loans will be introduced for higher education students and scholarships for the poorest • Review of within — and across — district resource allocation • Enactment of laws and decree that address an equal opportunities for disabled person to be able to access to special centers and schools for disabled children based on the "least restrictive environment" • Disaster Risk Reduction program • Non-formal equivalence programme/ online distance learning and certification at primary, lower secondary and upper secondary level • Student tracking system
<p>Improve the quality of primary and secondary education systems and the experience and outcomes for students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic minority groups • Street children • Remote and rural communities • Children from Isolated areas • Children from religious groups • Girls • Children with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headmaster and PTA training on School Self-Assessment, School Improvement Plans and child-friendly schools • Recruitment and training of local teachers • In-service teacher training and up-grading programmes • Development and distribution of textbooks and reading materials • Water, sanitation and hygiene in Schools • Mother Tongue Based Education • Examination reform • Education Management Information System (EMIS) analysis support • School grants with pro-poor financing formulas • Essential Health Care program that promotes hand washing, tooth brushing and deworming • Multi-grade teaching
<p>Improve participation in early childhood care and education programmes to lay the foundation for success in schooling and a positive impact on children's development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic minority groups • Street children • Remote and rural communities • Children from Isolated areas • Children from religious groups • Girls — or boys — in some contexts • Children with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early learning and child development through community-based or pre-school models • Conditional Cash Transfer and social protection • School feeding and take-home rations • EMIS and EFA Info analysis support • Community-based home visiting programme and parenting education • Disaster Risk Reduction in early childhood development (ECD) • Mother tongue-based ECD programmes • Increased salaries from government to care providers • Expanded services through non-state providers • Household incentives , traditional cash transfer schemes for families enrolled in ECD

Key results for education to achieve	Potential Target Groups	Investment case for targeted solutions
Improve availability of trained teachers and appropriate learning materials for marginalized and excluded children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Education, Teacher Training Department • Teacher Education Institutions • Pre-service teachers and teacher trainers • In-service teachers and teacher trainers • Public Service Commissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of in-service teachers on how to effectively use information communication technology (ICT) in education • Leveraging in-service teacher curriculum to be able to effectively use ICT in education. • In-service teachers peer coaching programme • Mother tongue-based education with local language materials • Regular In-service and pre-service training • Peer coaching for teachers programme

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

This review of OOSC analysis from the four countries in EAP has shown that, with over 5 million primary and secondary school age children remaining out of school in these four countries alone, much more needs to be done to reach the goals of education for all. Analysis has also shown that there are notable commonalities in the profiles of children who are educationally disadvantaged, beginning right from the start, at pre-primary ages:

- Children living in rural areas are less likely than those in urban areas to be in school at all levels, but especially in pre-primary and lower-secondary levels. Generally, subnational (by region and provinces) variations in school attendance rate can also be significant, as in the case of the Philippines, where in one of its provinces, children are almost two and half times more likely to be out of school compared to the national average.
- Differences in school attendance rates by economic backgrounds are also significant especially in pre-primary and lower-secondary levels.
- There is near gender parity in primary levels in all countries, but boys are at a distinct disadvantage in attending pre-primary schools and lower-secondary levels appropriate for their age (with the exception of Viet Nam).
- In many countries, a sizeable proportion of children are over-age for their grades, and hence, at risk of dropping out, most notably in Cambodia and Timor Leste. Even where national rate of over-age children is relatively low, subnational disparities can be high. Gender disparities also prevail among over-age children, with generally more boys than girls of lower secondary age attending primary schools.
- Children with disabilities have severely limited access to education and ethnic minority children, who often face multiple levels of disparities, also represent one of the most disadvantaged groups in terms of school attendance.

At the same time, some exceptions to regional trends can be seen in some countries, based on various issues and challenges unique to their contexts. For example:

- In Indonesia, a high number of children are under-aged, possibly due to the comparatively late official age of entry (age 7) and the fact pre-primary schools are mostly fee-based while primary schools is free of charge. In contrast to other countries whose efforts need to be directed to

respond to the needs of over-age children, Indonesia would need to identify the necessary responses for under-age children who are also at risk of dropping out.

- In Cambodia, girls at the higher end of the age range are much less likely to be in school than boys, suggesting the need to identify and respond to the underlying causes of disadvantages that girls face in the country.

Overall, analysis shows that the common factors of disparities have less impact on school attendance in primary compared to other levels, which could be a reflection that the vast efforts made towards universal primary education are making a difference. However, certain groups of children (i.e., children with disabilities and some ethnic minority children) are persistently over-represented among the remaining proportion of OOSC, suggesting inequities remain a real barrier to realizing universal primary education. Inequities that begin in pre-primary level and become prominent in secondary level also have far-reaching impact on the achieving the goals of education for all.

The preceding chapters discussed the wide range of underlying issues and challenges that lead to barriers to education for children, from socio-cultural and economic demand-side barriers to supply-side barriers. The extent to which government policies and strategies have successfully responded to them has similarly varied. For instance, many countries have made significant strides toward improving community participation and raising awareness on gender parity in education. Policies and programs for mother tongue-based education have also improved across the region, although sustained efforts are needed to ensure progress in turning policies into practical actions for children in classroom. Strategies like school-based management and demand-side financing programs remain ineffective in many countries – either through improper targeting/monitoring delays in disbursement and difficulties in reaching the most disadvantaged - and need to be strengthened. Accelerated efforts to support groups that have received very little attention thus far (i.e., children with disabilities) are also essential, and multi-sectoral responses to tackle barriers related to birth certification and migration would also be important to promote better education outcomes.

The following outlines some key recommendations for countries to reduce the barriers and bottlenecks to education:

- 1. Analyze the key risk dimensions that persistently exclude certain groups of children from education, not only in access but also in learning, and institute innovative approaches to education expand genuine opportunities to learning.** Across the EAP, ethnic minorities and children with disabilities face far greater risk of exclusion from education access than others. Secondary school age boys are also significantly disadvantaged, not only in terms of access but also from learning, leading to a large proportion of them being over-age and at risk of dropping out. Complex set of economic and socio-economic challenges can further exacerbate situations for these

children who must deal with multiple levels of disparities. Clearly, rigorous analysis to identify the various underlying causes of exclusion (i.e., poverty, distance, language) would be instrumental to identifying critical solutions to address their needs. In many cases, innovative approaches and alternative solutions would be needed to make a difference. Although such steps may be more cost-intensive in the short term, the long-term benefits to societies of having education systems that are inclusive and equitable will far exceed the costs.

2. **Promote and expand quality ECD provisions, particularly for the disadvantaged, to improve equity in overall education outcomes.** In most countries, ECD and pre-primary education access is heavily affected by family background such as wealth, as provisions remain largely fee-based and insufficient in number. Hence, lack of access to effective pre-primary education is often the starting point of inequities that affect children from poor and disadvantaged families in their educational endeavors in primary and beyond. Without strong foundations set in early years, children face challenges in learning and development in subsequent years. Problems associated with under-age entry to schools, as seen in Indonesia, is often a result of limited access to affordable ECD services as well. Hence, expanding access to ECD by leveraging non-state providers and employing innovative delivery modes could be one of the most efficient means to improve equitable educational outcomes at all levels.
3. **Invest in improving quality of education as an integral strategy to breaking down barriers to access to education.** Access and quality in education are closely linked, and as discussed earlier, quality of learning - or lack thereof - is often cited as a key reason why parents draw children out of school. Other symptoms of poor quality education, like high repetition and over-age enrolment, are prevalent in some countries. Promoting better quality education would be paramount to ensure that those students who are at-risk of dropping out remain in schools and interested in learning. Improving the quality of teachers and their teaching and learning practices; textbook development, including in minority languages; textbook distribution; social-emotional learning; and gender-responsive practices, are some of the critical strategies needed to curb number of children out of school.
4. **Strengthen education and social protection systems to improve overall efficiency and equity in education.** In the context of continuing global economic recession, the importance of better efficiency and of protecting children of disadvantaged populations will be more acute than before. Decentralization and school-based management are being employed in many countries as a means to improve system efficiency, but much broader efforts to strengthen human resource and systemic capacity (i.e., M&E, management skills) in education systems will be crucial to their effectiveness in yielding in positive education outcomes. Effective social protection schemes, like conditional cash transfers are also being introduced in some countries, but greater investments are needed to design and target programs to address the barriers affecting those most in need.