

# EDUCATION: TEACHERS' OVERVIEW

## Introduction

In 2000, an estimated 110 million children around the world were missing out on school. World leaders met and promised that, by the end of 2015, all boys and girls would complete a full course of primary education. This promise formed the second of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2).

The early focus of MDG 2 was on enrolling children in school, and a lot of progress was made when several countries stopped charging school fees and many children went to school for the first time. But more recently, progress towards universal primary education has stalled. In 2015, there were still 58 million children out of school. Many were girls, disabled children and children living in countries affected by crises such as conflict, famine and natural disasters. The target set by MDG 2 was missed.



*A Year 5 maths lesson in Mandanpur Khadar, Delhi.  
Photo: David Levene/GCE UK*

## The Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015 world leaders turned their attention to the new Sustainable Development Goals, which replaced the Millennium Development Goals. The fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4) promises to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”.

Attention is now turning from enrolling children in school, to thinking about the quality of education that they receive. For example, issues like the number of qualified teachers, class size, and school infrastructure have become more important.

In addition, the focus on lifelong learning aims to overcome high levels of illiteracy among adults and the tendency for large numbers of children to drop out of education at the end of primary school. In 2016, as many as 263 million children and young people were missing out on both primary and secondary school.

Providing good education for all is a daunting challenge. Many of the barriers, such as poverty, gender inequality and disability, are difficult to overcome. Other barriers have emerged more recently. These include the challenges posed by conflicts and violence, natural disasters, and health epidemics, such as the Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa in 2014.

These challenges have implications for funding, as greater investment in education is required to achieve SDG 4. However, rich countries are not delivering all the aid they have promised, and some countries with many children out of school are not spending enough money on education, even when they can afford to do so.

## Further teaching ideas

- Show the video [1 Goal: 2 Girls Born On The Same Day \(2min 25sec\)](#): and discuss what impact education has on people’s lives.
- Ask your young people to investigate the different reasons why some children miss out on an education and what is being done to change this. These reasons include gender, conflict, disability, natural disasters or countries not having the funding to run schools.
- Ask young people to find out about the [Global Campaign for Education](#), or encourage them to get involved with the annual [Send My Friend to School](#) campaign.
- Emily and George from Ysgol Gyfun Plasmawr in Cardiff went to Ghana in 2015 to find out why so many children are missing out on an education. [Watch the film they made \(7min 40sec\) and read their diary](#) to learn more about education in Ghana.
- Having learnt about education for all, young people can get together to meet their MP to find out what he/she is doing to make sure all children can access a good education. [Find out who your MP is](#).

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