

## **ASPECTS OF EDUCATION AND PEACE IN THE WORLD OF 2011**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This paper aims to present the relationship between education and peace, and how they influence each other. These issues are discussed at the global level of 2011, statistical data is provided by the global reports made by UNESCO. The main conclusions reached are as follows: education and school can incite to violence or to help peace, everything depends on the laws and governments, but what is desired is that the school to be the place to go and start to achieve peace. The existence of peace leading to an environment conducive to education achieved for all citizens of a country, regardless of social class of origin.*

**KEY WORDS:** *education; training; school; peace; violence.*

**JEL CLASSIFICATION:** *I24; I28.*

### **1. MAKING SCHOOLS NON-VIOLENT ENVIRONMENTS**

Schools in the twenty-first century need above all to teach children what is arguably the single most vital skill for a flourishing multi-cultural society – the skill of living peacefully with other people. Awareness of religious, ethnic, linguistic and racial diversity should not be banished from the classroom. On the contrary, diversity should be recognized and celebrated.

No country can hope to establish lasting foundations for peace unless it finds ways of building mutual trust between its citizens – and the place to start is in the classroom.

National governments and aid donors need to realize that, whatever their intent, education policy reforms will be rolled out in a political environment shaped by the legacy of conflict.

Donors can contribute to conflict-sensitive education planning. The first principle of engagement is ‘do no harm’. That is why any education policy should be

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subject to a rigorous assessment of potential impacts taking into account not only technical data, but also public perceptions and long-standing grievances. This is an area in which UNESCO and UNICEF need to play a far more central role – and both agencies should participate more actively in the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission.

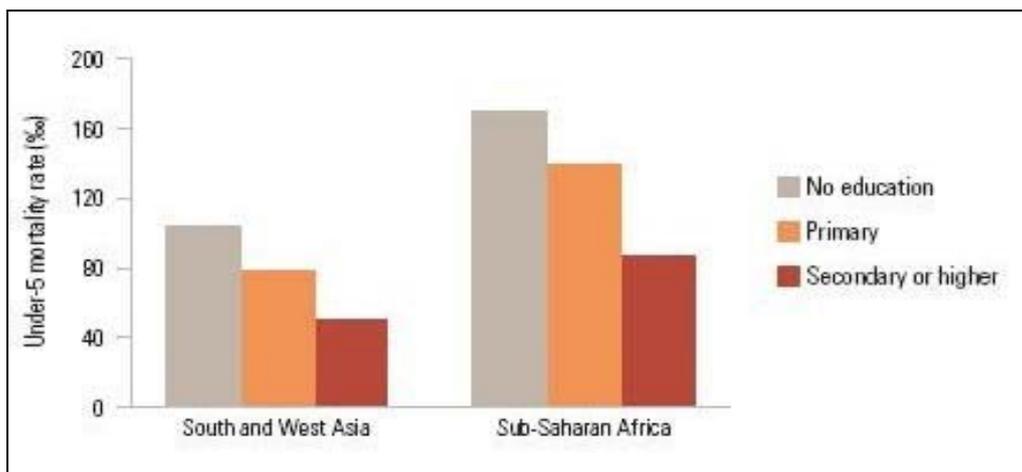
All the goals set in Dakar in 2000 will be missed unless governments acknowledge the magnitude of the challenge and act, with a renewed sense of urgency, to keep their promises.

Goal 1: Early childhood care and education – “*Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.*” (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, p. 43)

The linguistic, cognitive and social skills they develop in early childhood are the foundations for lifelong learning. If children fail to develop these foundations because of poor nutrition, a lack of stimulation, emotional stress or other factors, there are significant costs for both individuals and societies, and the effectiveness and equity of education systems are undermined.

There is no substitute for health and nutrition in the early years of life. Yet ill-health and hunger rob millions of children of the opportunity to develop healthy bodies and minds.

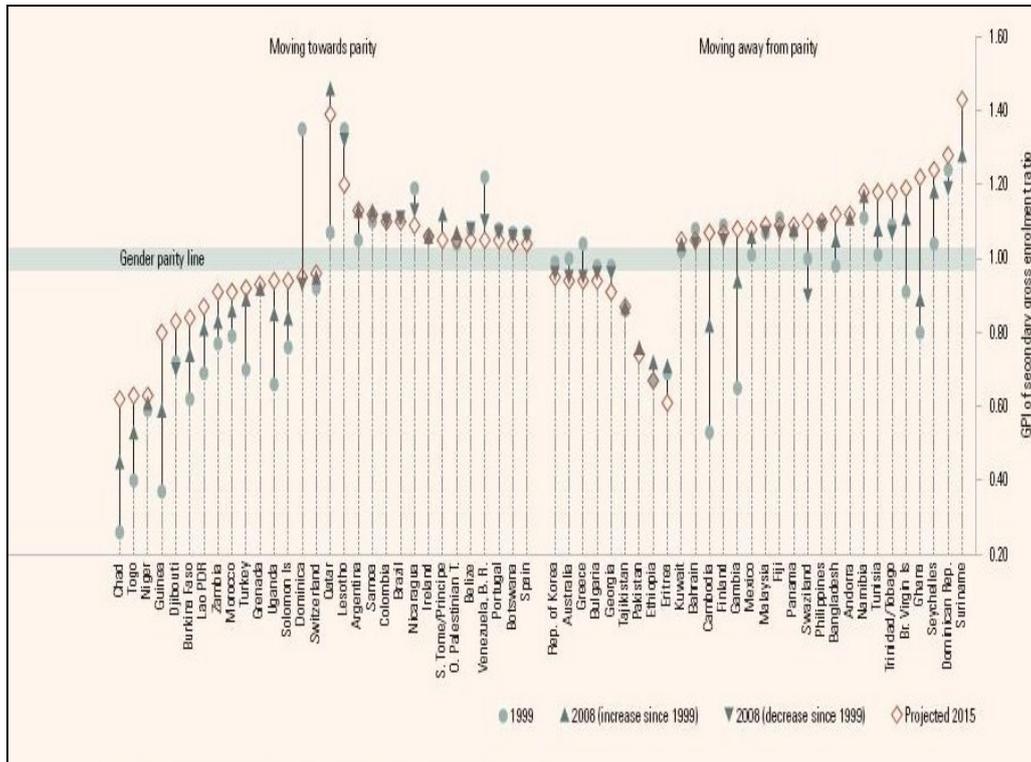
Children born to more educated mothers are more likely to survive and less likely to experience malnutrition. Universal secondary education for girls in sub-Saharan Africa could save as many as 1.8 million lives annually. Malnutrition is a human tragedy on a global scale. Every year, it is directly implicated in the deaths of over 3 million children and more than 100,000 mothers. It follows that economic growth is not a guaranteed route to accelerated improvement in nutritional status. (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, p. 45).



Source: [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org) accessed on 16.04.2011

**Figure 1. Education saves lives – mortality rates fall with maternal schooling (2004-2009)**

Goal 2: Universal primary education – “Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality” (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, p. 54).



Source: [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org) accessed on 16.04.2011

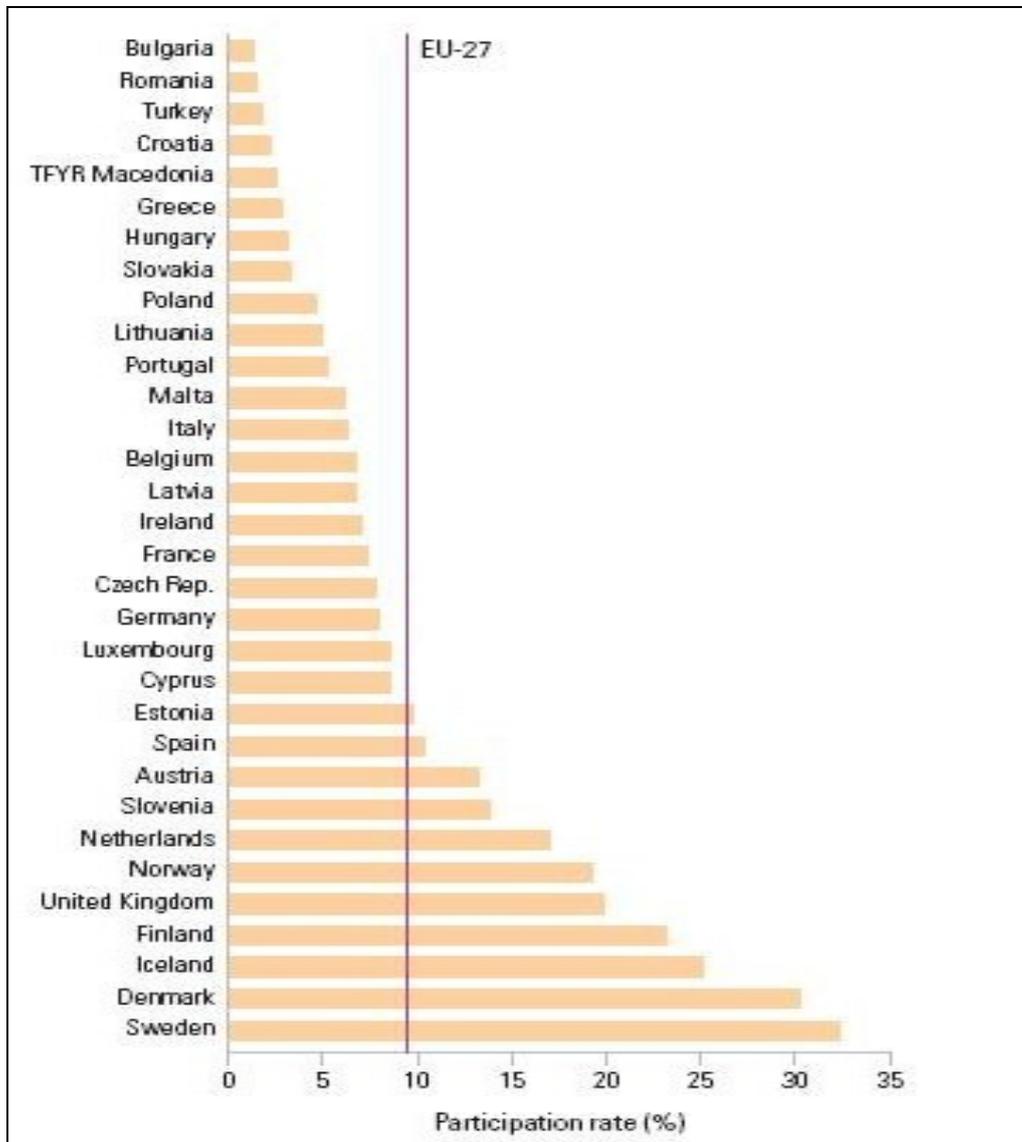
Figure 2. Education by 2015

The past decade has been one of rapid progress towards the goal of universal primary education (UPE). Many of the world's poorest countries have registered extraordinary advances.

Goal 3: Youth and adult learning needs – “Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes” (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, p. 68).

The commitment made in 2000 in Dakar, Senegal, to address the learning needs of all young people and adults combined a high level of ambition with a low level of detail. The skills developed through education are vital not just for the well-being of young people and adults, but for employment and economic prosperity.

Formal education during the adolescent years is the most effective base for developing learning and life skills. In many wealthy countries, entering the labour market with low levels of skills results in a lifetime of insecure employment and low wages. (Măcriș A. & Măcriș M., 2010)



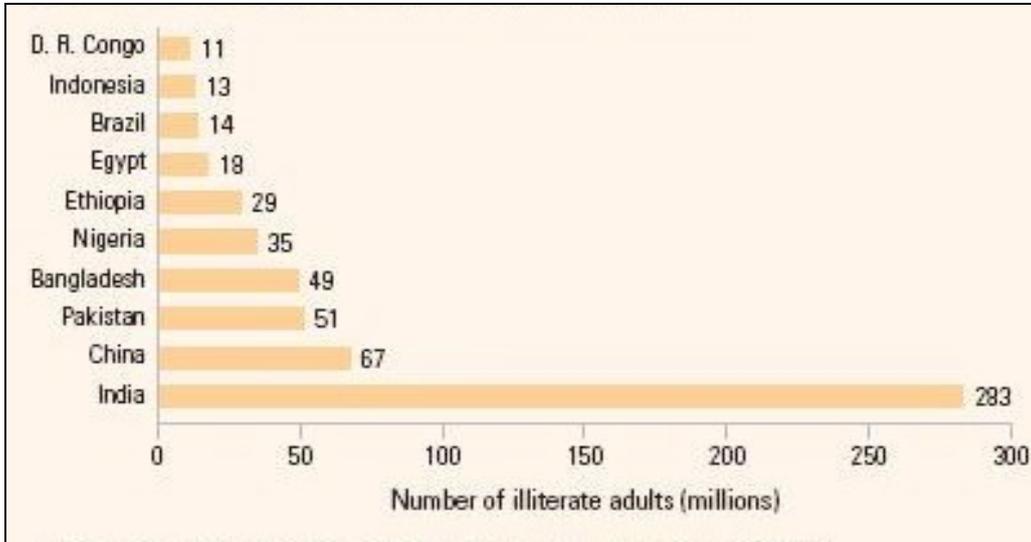
Source: [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org) accessed on 16.04.2011

**Figure 3. Access to continuing education and training is inadequate in many European countries (people aged 25 to 64) - 2008**

Goal 4: Improving levels of adult literacy – “Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults” (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, p. 79).

For children, having parents who are literate confers enormous advantages for access to education and learning achievement levels. By contrast, illiteracy traps

people in poverty and lives of diminished opportunity – and it undermines national prosperity.



Source: [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org) accessed on 16.04.2011

**Figure 4. The majority of illiterate adults live in ten countries**

In 2008, there were just fewer than 796 million illiterate adults, around 17% of the world's adult population. Women make up nearly two-thirds of the total. Sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia account for 73% of the global adult literacy deficit, though the Arab States also register high levels of adult illiteracy. (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, p. 80)

Large numbers of adults have lived in illiteracy for many years because they faced restricted opportunities for education during their childhood.

Meanwhile, new generations of children are entering adulthood without basic literacy and numeracy skills, either because they dropped out of school or because they received a poor-quality education.

Goal 5: Assessing gender parity and equality in education – “*Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality*” (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, p. 87).

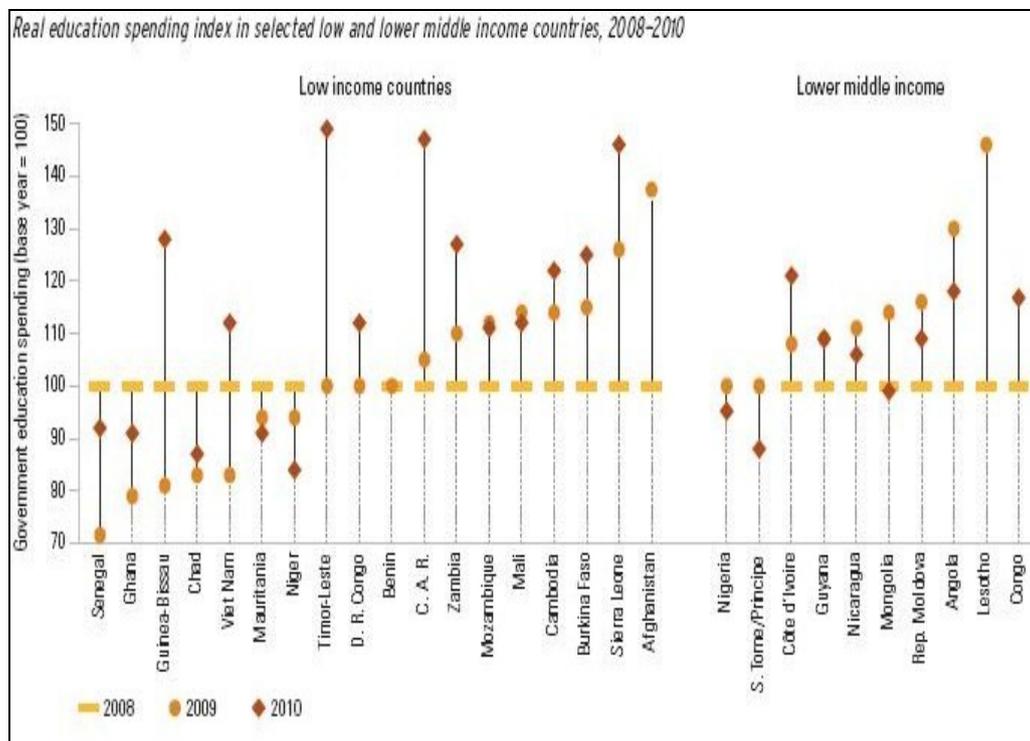
Gender parity in education is a fundamental human right, a foundation for equal opportunity and a source of economic growth, employment and innovation.

Goal 6: The quality of education – “*Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills*” (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, p. 97).

Getting children into school is a necessary but insufficient condition for achieving the Education for All goals. The experience of school, what children learn in the classroom and the skills that they emerge with are what ultimately count. This section looks at some of the key indicators of the quality of education and learning achievement.

Sustained progress in education quality depends on making sure that all schools have sufficient teachers, that the teachers are properly trained and supported, and that they are motivated.

The financial crisis and rising food prices: impact on education That's why we must focus our efforts on giving these children an education. Not only does it prevent conflict *before* it occurs, it also rebuilds countries *after* it ends.



Source: [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org) accessed on 16.04.2011

### Figure 5. The impact of the financial crisis on education spending

Across many of the world's poorest countries, armed conflict is destroying not just school infrastructure, but also the hopes and ambitions of a whole generation of children.

*"The only thing we could bring with us is what we have in our heads, what we have been taught – our education. Education is the only thing that cannot be taken from us"* (Martone, 2007, p. 3).

## **2. EDUCATION AS A PARTH TO PEACE**

José Ramos-Horta said if you want peace and justice, if you want jobs and prosperity, and if you want a people to be fair and tolerant towards one another, there is just one place to start — and that place is school. We needed new institutions, new investment and new laws — but we know that reconstruction had to start in our schools. We understand that education is not just about getting children into school, it is about equipping them with the skills they need for a better future.

But education is about more than skills and jobs. It is also a vehicle for transmitting those intangible but powerful forces that bind societies together — forces like respect, tolerance and shared values.

One of the key messages in UNESCO's *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* is that education can be a force for preventing conflict, reconstructing countries after conflict, and building peace.

In today's world, where so many people are divided by faith, identity or language, education can unite us in shared respect and tolerance.

Education does not cause wars, nor does it end them. Reconstructing education after violent conflict confronts governments with daunting challenges. For parents who have seen the education of their children compromised by war, education is likely to be seen as an important part — even the most important part — of the initial peace premium.

Education is a public service that touches the life of virtually every citizen. It is only a slight exaggeration to say that a country's future will be as peaceful, prosperous and cohesive as its education system allows.

Given that education is central to people's lives, provides a link between state and citizens and is a potential source of conflict, to neglect its importance is to risk a return to violence.

There is a Persian proverb which says: "There are two worlds: the world within us and the outside world". Inner peace is what ultimately engenders external peace. And it's through education that we learn to unite the two worlds and live in harmony with ourselves and with others. Every child needs to learn, in their earliest school years, to respect the rights of others. Learning to refrain from even the simplest forms of violence and to recognize peace as a jewel of life is one of the most important of all lessons. When children are deprived of that lesson, no amount of decrees and official instructions will make them respect the rights of others.

Schools can be a powerful force for peace if they teach children everyday what is at the heart of the Persian proverb — our shared humanity and common destiny.

## **3. CONCLUSIONS**

Enhance the role of UNESCO and UNICEF in peace building initiatives. Education brings hope to millions of children who have never known peace. It brings opportunity to countries that are desperate for growth and prosperity. In short, education is our saving grace, our best chance, and our one shot to bring security *and* development to all humanity.

#### 4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article is a result of the project POSDRU/88/1.5./S/55287,,Doctoral Programme in Economics at European Knowledge Standards (DOESEC)". This project is co-funded by the European Social Fund through The Sectorial Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013, coordinated by The Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies in partnership with West University of Timisoara.

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