

48th International Conference on Education



RESEARCH FINDINGS

Overcoming inequality: why governance matters

Kevin Watkins



Overcoming inequality: why governance matters

International Conference on Education - Geneva, 2008

Kevin Watkins

Key messages

- There has been strong progress towards many EFA goals, but...
- Key targets for 2015 will be missed – and time is running out
- Governments are failing to tackle inequality, as are current approaches to governance reform
- Aid to education is stagnating and donors are not meeting their commitments

Outline

- Chapter 1 – Education for All: human right and catalyst for development
- Chapter 2 – The Dakar goals: monitoring progress and inequality
- Chapter 3 – Raising quality and strengthening equity: why governance matters
- Chapter 4 – Increasing aid and improving governance
- Chapter 5 – Policy conclusions



EFA & the MDGs

- Education for some – global and national inequalities persist
 - **The global divide:** between the world's richest and poorest nations
 - **The wealth gap:** within countries, children from the richest households up to 5 times more likely to be enrolled than those from the poorest
 - **The quality divide:** many children leave school lacking basic literacy and numeracy skills

EFA & the MDGs

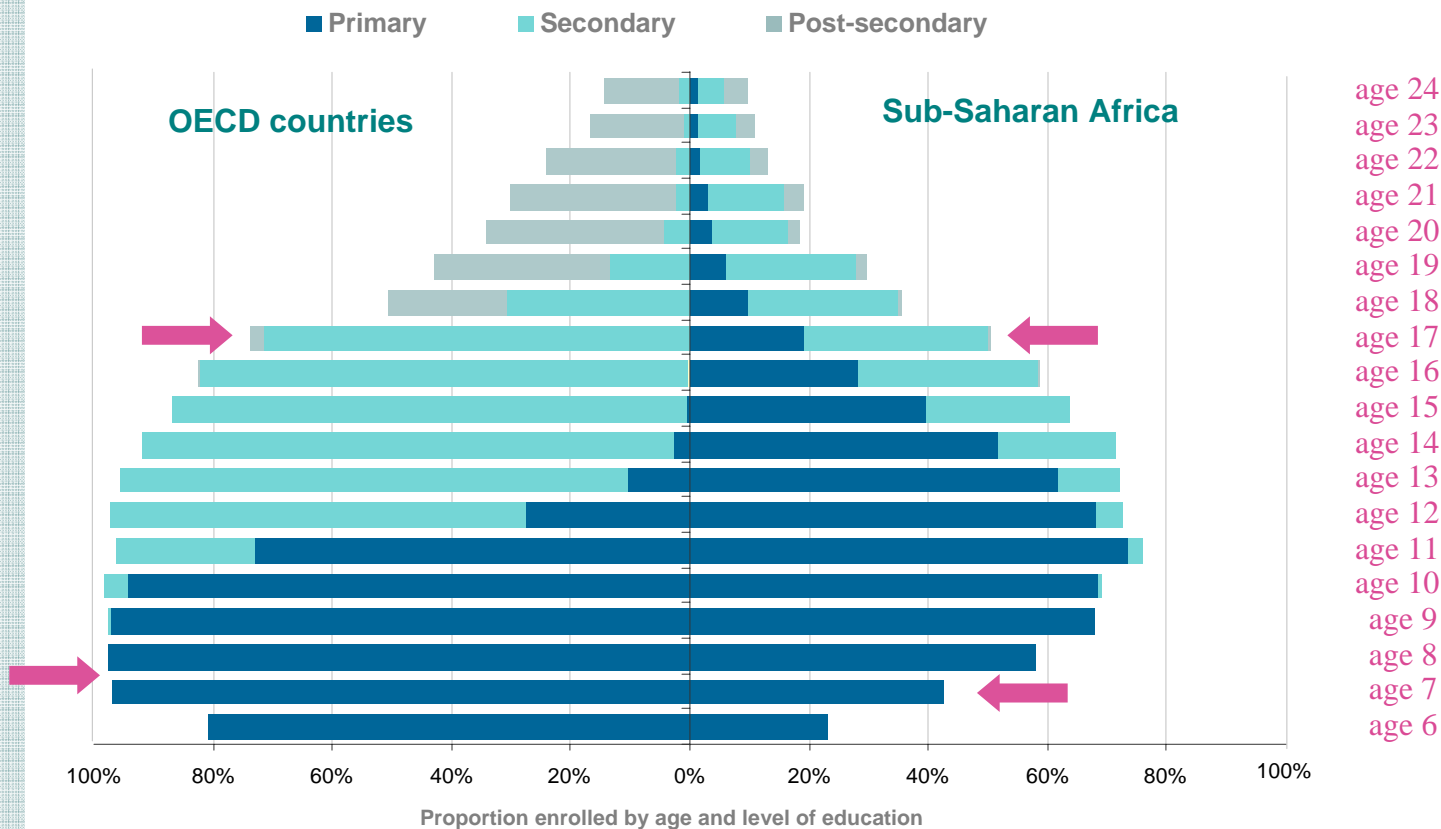
- The global divide: between the world's richest and poorest nations

OECD countries:

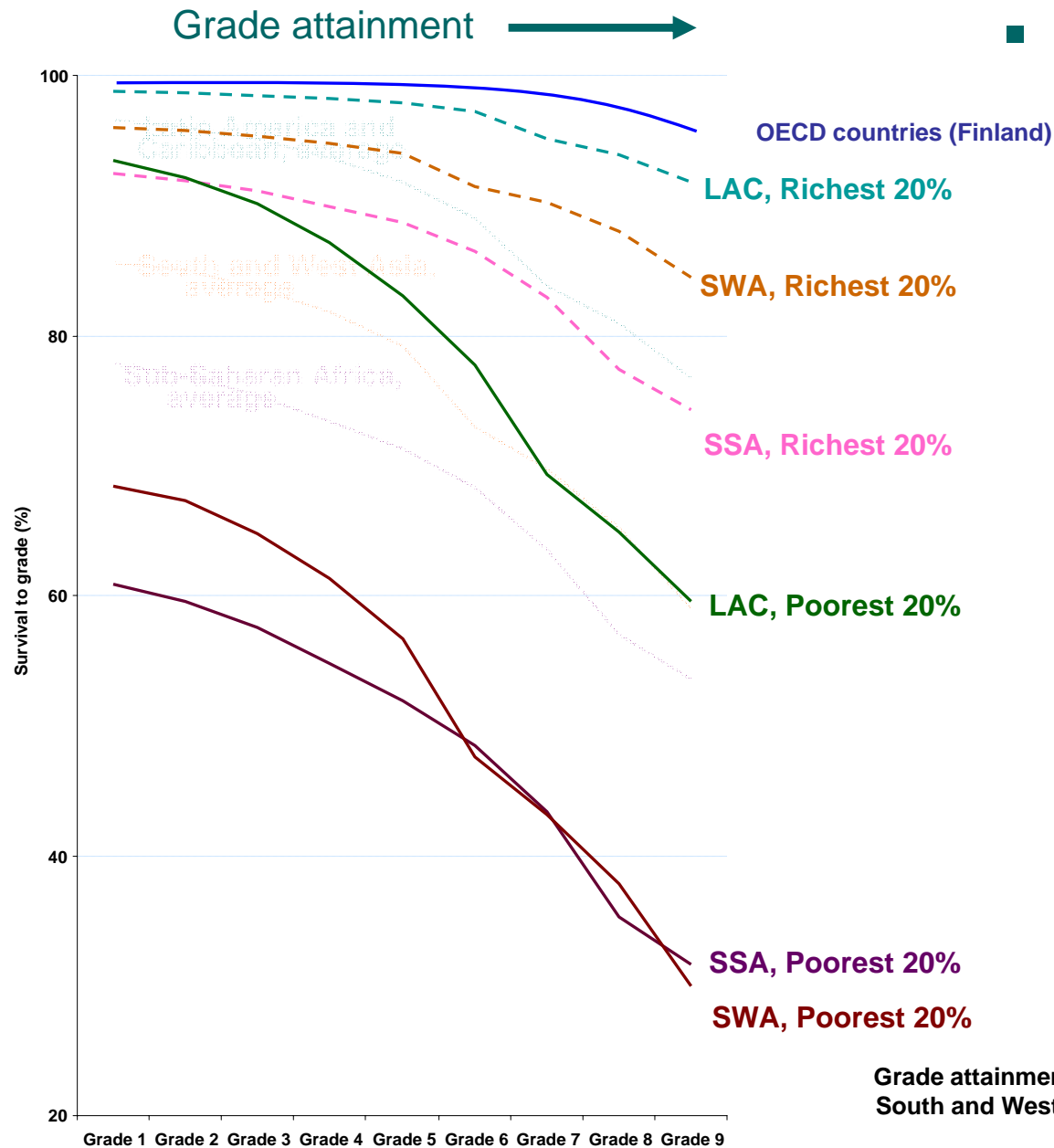
- By age 7, almost all children are in school
- At 17 yrs, 70% are in secondary school

Sub-Saharan Africa:

- At age 7, only about 40% are in school
- At 17 yrs, 30% are in secondary...but 20% still in primary



EFA & the MDGs



■ The wealth gap:

Children in the poorest 20% of households more likely to drop out than those in the richest 20%

Grade attainment by wealth quintile in sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean

EFA & the MDGs

- EFA as a foundation for the MDGs
 - The Education for All agenda is broader than the MDGs
 - Education can help unlock progress on the MDGs:
 - ▷ Broad-based growth to halve extreme poverty
 - ▷ Reducing child and maternal mortality
 - ▷ Tackling child malnutrition
 - ▷ Strengthening democracy and citizenship

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Monitoring EFA

➤ Early childhood education and care (ECCE) is still neglected

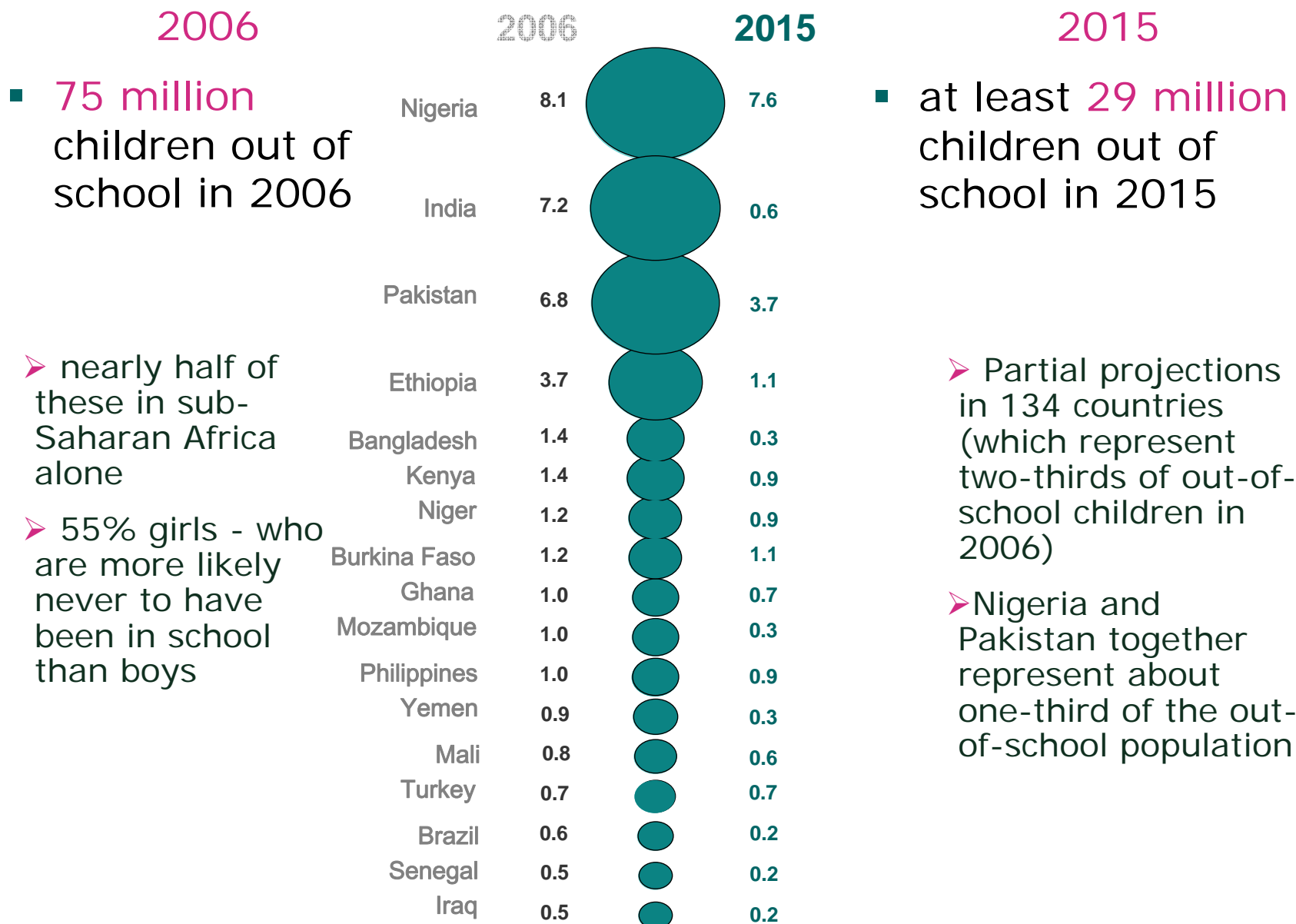
- Malnutrition as a barrier to EFA – 1 in 3 children suffer worldwide (higher in South Asia)
- Economic growth not enough – Despite growth, India's child mortality is declining too slowly
- Successful programmes make a difference
 - ▷ **Mexico:** conditional cash transfer programme achieving gains in school progression and learning
 - ▷ **Bolivia:** integrated programme provides nutrients and learning environments for poor children under 6 with gains in learning and child health
 - ▷ **Philippines:** nutrition programme registered improvements in cognitive development
- Rich countries also face problems
 - ▷ **United States:** poor and ethnic groups lagging behind in ECCE, leading to inequalities in educational outcomes

Monitoring EFA

- **Steady but uneven progress in universal primary education (UPE)**
 - Since 1999, the primary NER for developing countries has increased at twice the rate of the pre-Dakar decade
 - Fewer children out of school in 2006 than in 2000
 - ✓ **Ethiopia** and **Tanzania** have each reduced their numbers of out-of-school children by 3 million since Dakar.
 - ✓ **Nepal** and **Bangladesh** have increased enrolment of girls and the disadvantaged.
 - ✓ **Mauritania**, **Morocco** and **Yemen** have registered strong gains.
 - ... **but** the world is not on track for UPE by 2015

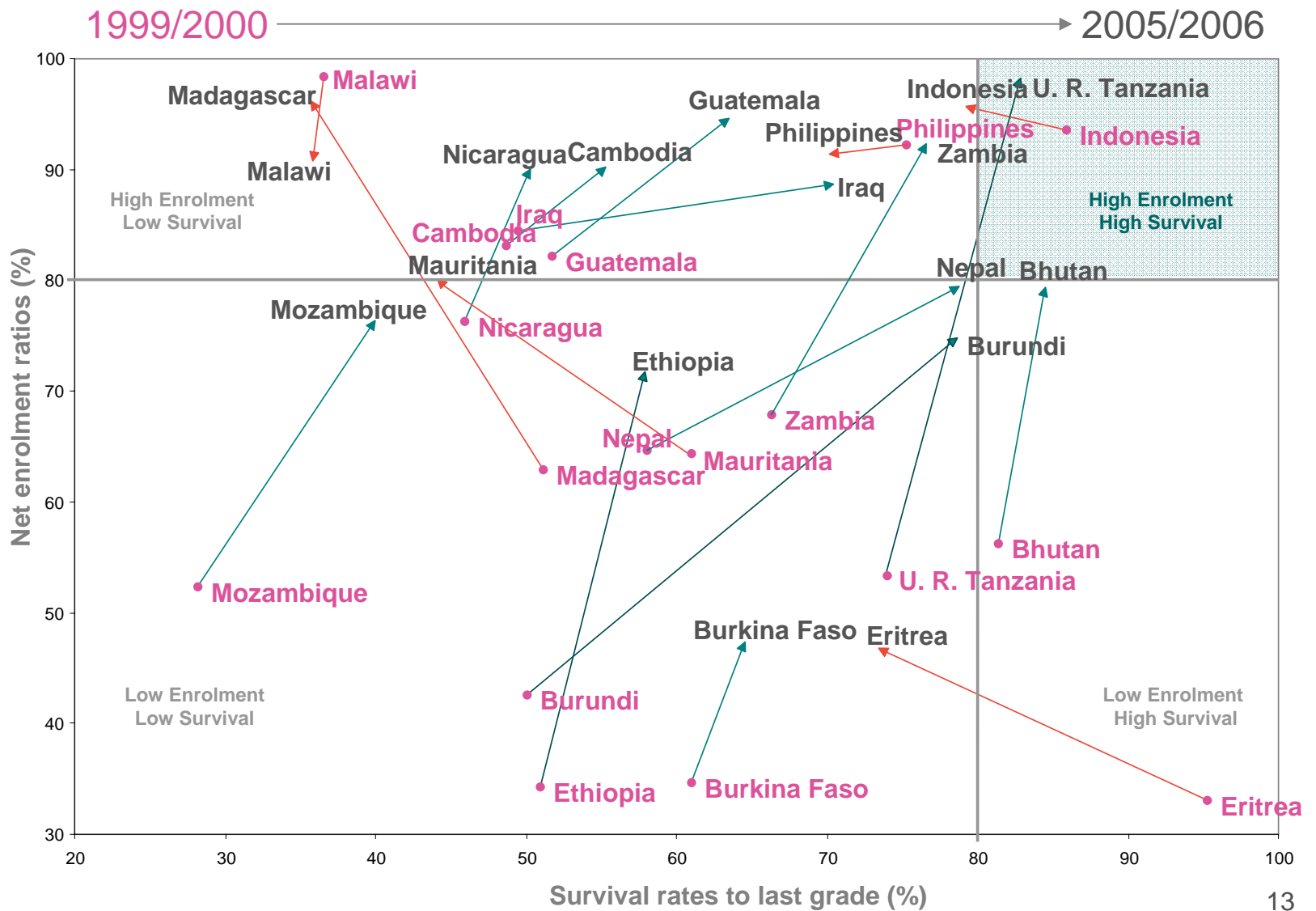
Monitoring EFA

Millions of children



Monitoring EFA

Tracking country progress: changes in net enrolment ratios and survival rates for a selection of countries over a 6-year period



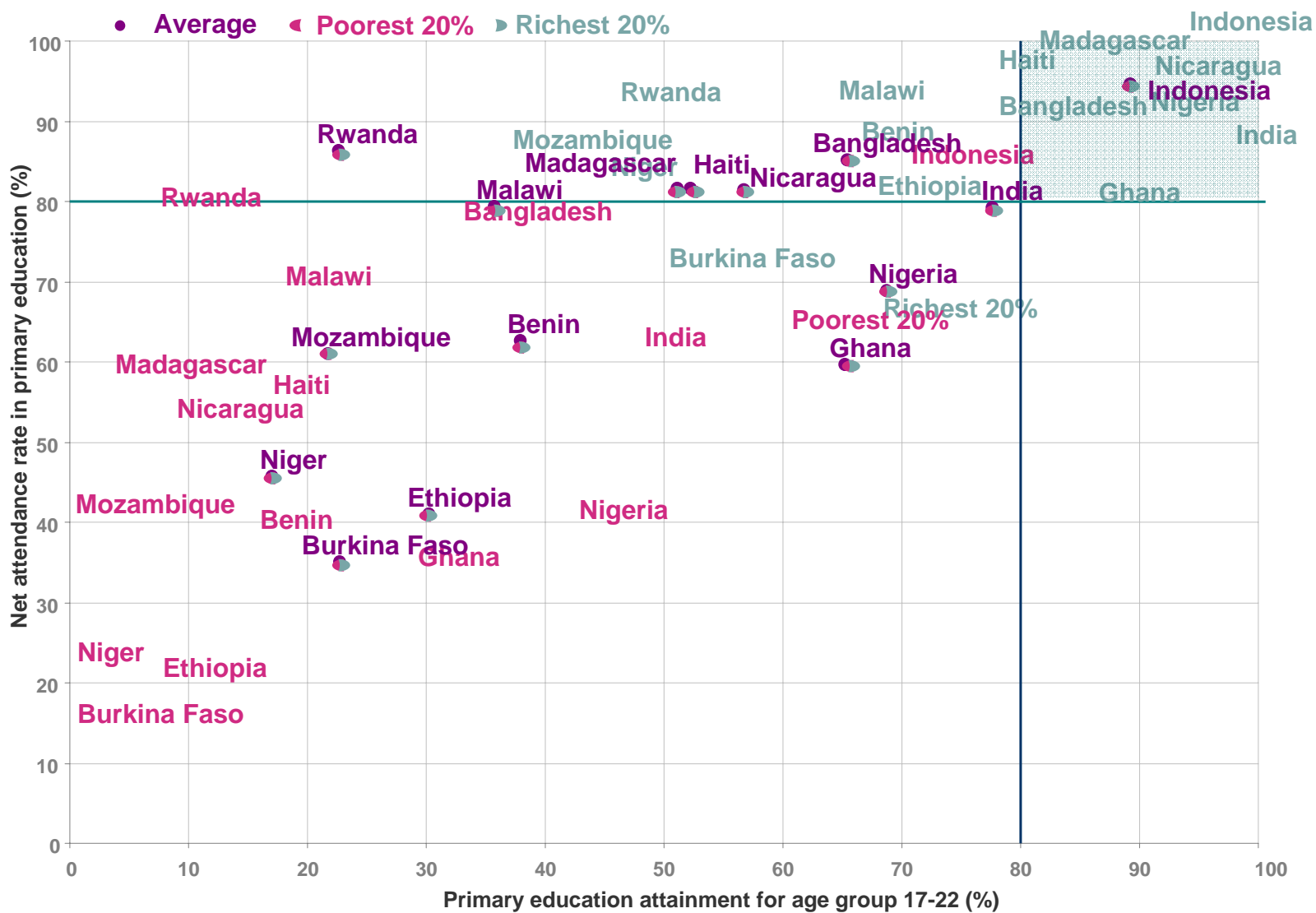
Monitoring EFA

- Global, regional and national inequalities are a barrier to progress in UPE
 - **Wealth:** children from rich and poor backgrounds move in different worlds.
 - ▷ Poor children are heavily over-represented in out-of-school numbers:
 - In Cameroon, Kenya, Indonesia, Nicaragua – poorest 20% make up over 40% of out-of-school children
 - **Other inequalities:**
 - ▷ gender – over half the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and the Arab States have yet to achieve gender parity in primary education
 - ▷ location (rural v. urban)
 - ▷ minorities
 - ▷ language
 - ▷ disability

Monitoring EFA

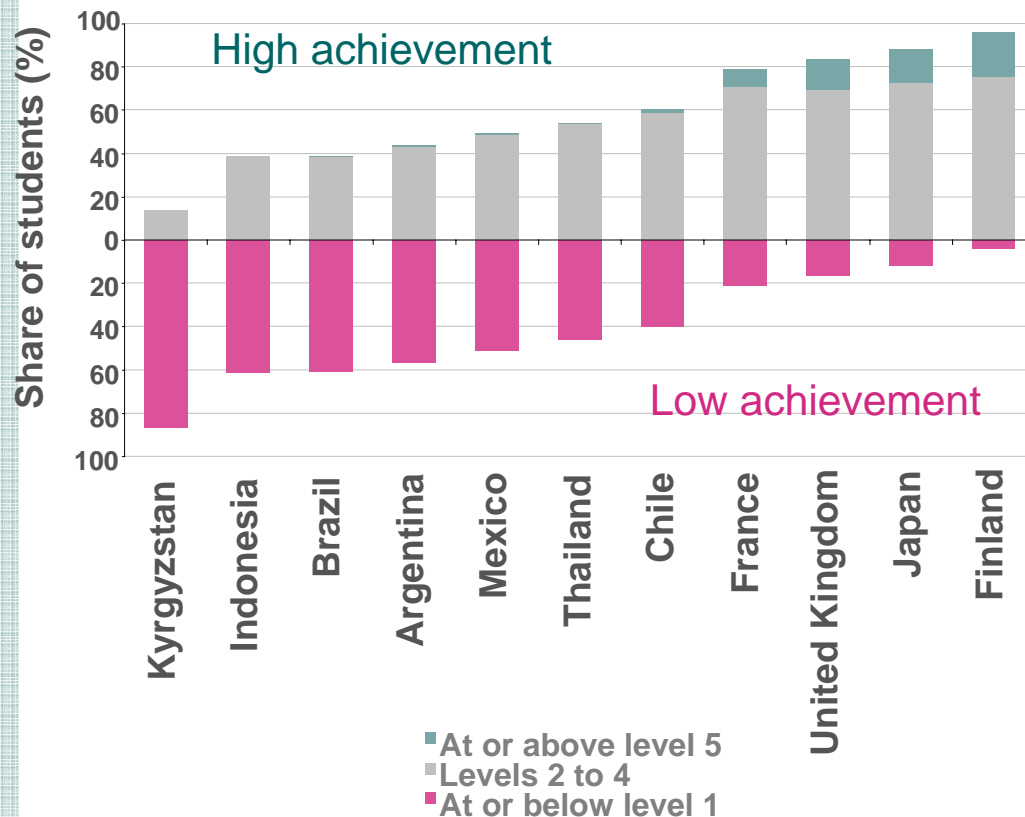
- Inequalities based on wealth in primary attainment

Net attendance rate and primary attainment among the poorest and the richest 20%



Monitoring EFA

➤ Education quality – the learning divide



- Low average level of learning in many developing countries relative to developed countries
- PISA assessments place over 60% of children in Brazil and Indonesia scoring in the lowest score quintile
- Absolute learning levels in many countries are very low
- Global learning divide mirrored by social-economic divide within countries

Monitoring EFA

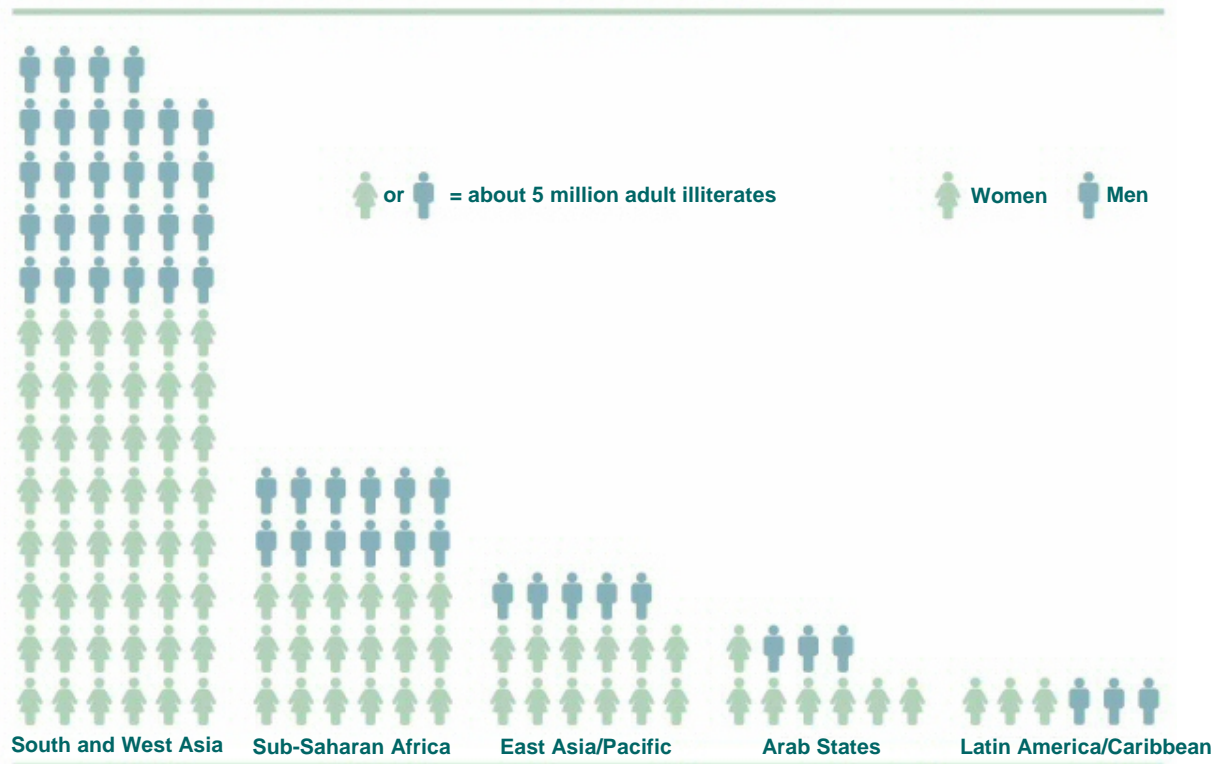
- Acute teacher shortages still a problem
 - To achieve UPE by 2015, we will need to recruit and train:
 - ▷ Sub-Saharan Africa - 3.8 million teachers
 - ▷ East Asia - 4 million teachers
 - ▷ South and West Asia - 3.6 million teachers
 - National pupil/teacher ratios mask large disparities between rich-poor, rural-urban, indigenous-non-indigenous areas.
 - the majority of non-trained teachers are concentrated:
 - ▷ in rural areas in India
 - ▷ in the poorest area of Ghana

Monitoring EFA

➤ Little progress in reducing numbers of illiterate adults

- Still **776 illiterate adults** in 2006, two-thirds are women. This represents 16% of the global adult population

Projected number of adult illiterates (age 15+), by gender and region, 2015



- Projections for 2015 – at least **700 million** illiterate adults
- Literacy gap –Adult literacy rates can vary up to **40 percentage points** between the richest and poorest households within a given country.

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Governance for equity

➤ Governance reform in education

- Education governance = the formal and informal processes through which policies are formulated, priorities identified, resources allocated, and reforms implemented and monitored

Bad education governance is seen in:

- ✗ overcrowded, underfinanced schools
- ✗ absent teachers
- ✗ unaccountable to families
- ✗ high levels of inequality
- ✗ low levels of learning

Good governance aims for:

- ✓ Transparency
- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Equal opportunity for all citizens
- ✓ Enhancing the voice and participation of citizens

➤ The governance reform agenda:

- **Decentralize** to sub-national bodies
- **Devolve** authority and decision-making to schools and parents
- **Expand choice and competition**
- **Flexible recruitment** and **financial incentives** for teachers

Governance for equity

➤ Evidence and lessons

- Financial decentralization comes with threats to equity
 - ▷ **Lesson:** governments should retain a strong role in leveling the playing field
- Devolution to schools can perpetuate and over-burden local providers
 - ▷ **Lesson:** governments need to create an enabling environment to strengthen 'voice' and build capacity
- Choice and competition is not a panacea for state failure, or a prescription for equity
 - ▷ **Lesson:** if public sector provision is broken, the governance challenge is to fix it
 - ▷ **Lesson:** avoid blueprints – and don't export them
- Recognize the limits to contract teacher recruitment and performance-related pay

Governance for equity

- Failure to integrate education into poverty-reduction strategies
 - Weak linkage to the EFA agenda
 - Poor targeting and limited consideration of equity in target-setting
 - No link between education and broader governance reforms
 - Poor integration of cross-sectoral policies

The lesson: integrate education into wider strategies for overcoming poverty and inequality

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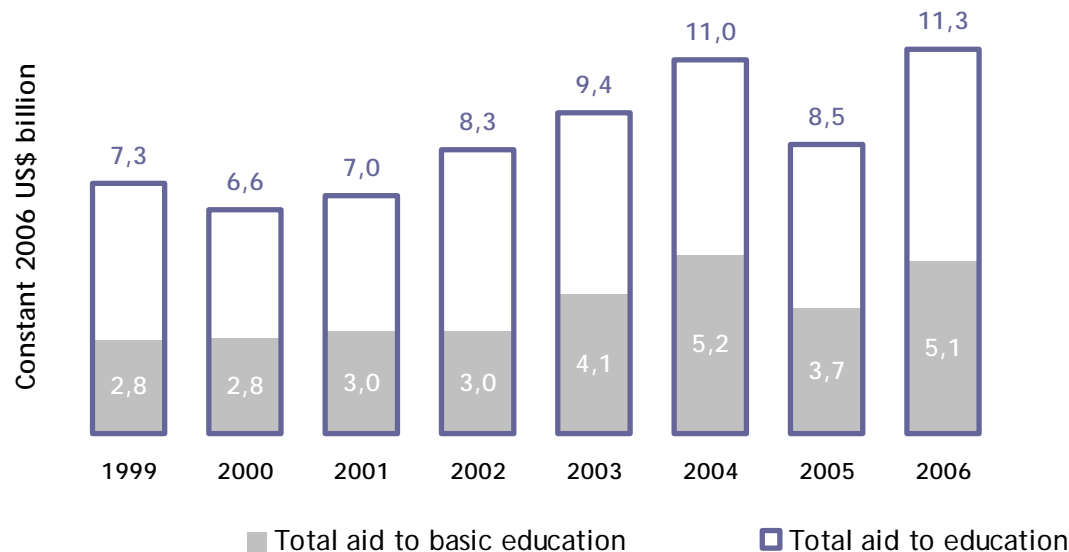
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Aid & aid governance

➤ Donors are failing to deliver on their Dakar commitments

- Aid commitments: global shortfalls and education deficits
 - ▷ Donors falling short of 2010 commitments: meeting these requires additional US\$30 billion
 - ▷ In 2006: aid to basic education US\$5.1bn (same as 2004)
 - ▷ Aid to basic education in low income countries: US\$3.8bn but US\$11bn needed annually to meet EFA goals



▪ Fast Track Initiative under threat:

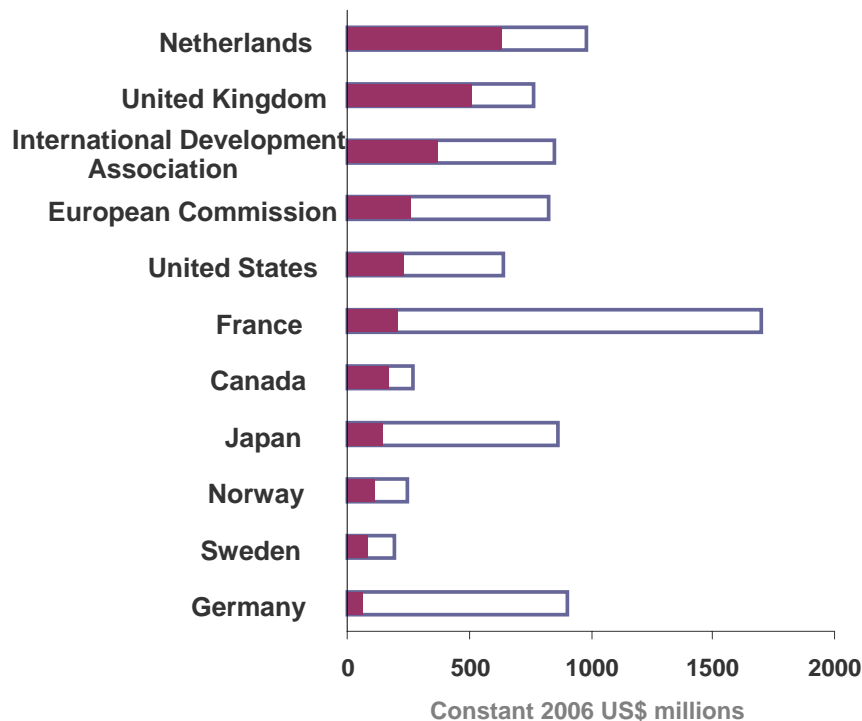
- ▷ Potential financing gap of US\$2.2bn by 2010

Aid & aid governance

➤ Equity matters

- Donors vary in their commitments to basic education in low-income countries

- Total aid to education
- Total aid to education going to basic education in low-income countries



➤ Some countries such as the Netherlands and UK allocate over 60% of aid to basic education in low income countries

➤ ...France, Japan and Germany allocate only a small fraction

➤ The Paris agenda: a mixed record

- Improving aid governance: Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005). Until now, progress is variable:
 - ✓ Shift from projects to programmes
 - Increase from 33% to 54% in 2005-2006
 - ✓ National ownership
 - Conditions vary (India v Mozambique)
 - ✓ Aligning aid to national priorities & improve predictability
 - Some positive examples, but some donors unwilling to work through national structures
 - » Despite Mongolia's strong financial management system, only 17% of aid is managed through it
 - ✓ Improving donor coordination to reduce inefficiency
 - Progress in some countries (Ethiopia – over half of missions were joint missions in 2007), **but...**
 - » In 2007, the Niger hosted 600 donor missions – less than 100 were joint
 - » In 2005, 18 countries had to deal with 12 donors for basic education alone

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Conclusions

➤ Policy recommendations:

- Get serious about **equity** – and set targets for reduced disparities
- Strengthen links between education planning and **poverty-reduction strategies**
- Back EFA targets with **equitable financing**
- Commit to **quality** education
- Recognize the limits to **choice and competition**
- Deliver on **aid** commitments (now)

EFA Global Monitoring Report

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