

# THEMAG

## AIDE ET ACTION

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Special Report

# EARLY CHILDHOOD, A MAJOR ISSUE

 Aide et Action

Changing the world through Education

# IMAGE OF HERE AND NOW

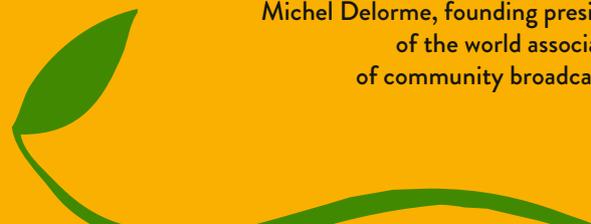


© Christine Redmond/AEA

Before the summer and to deal with the COVID-19 crisis we distributed more than 1,000 radios to children from ethnic minority groups in the Mondulakiri province, Cambodia. During the national closure of schools, broadcasts from educational radio stations were sometimes the only way for these young primary school pupils to access education in their language. We also provided them with masks, soap and school supplies. 🌱

“RADIO IS AN EXCELLENT MEDIA FOR KIDS. EVERY BIG CITY OF MORE THAN 250,000 INHABITANTS SHOULD OFFER ITS CHILDREN EDUCATIONAL AND ENTERTAINING RADIO.”

Michel Delorme, founding president  
of the world association  
of community broadcasters



# “Learning starts at birth.”



© Aide et Action

For 40 years Aide et Action has been committed to ensuring quality education for all. For this, we have made early childhood one of our priority areas of intervention. Indeed, early childhood care and education (ECCE) lay the foundations of lifelong learning and well-being. This component is an integral part of basic education and is a right for all children.

Research is showing increasingly clearly the beneficial effects that ECEC produces on abilities, academic success and future prospects of children. This is why, for the years to come, we have decided to strengthen our strategy in this area, prioritizing innovative approaches to improve cognitive development and children’s learning outcomes from the ages 0 to 8.

Through this new issue of our Magazine discover how we support young children in Laos, India or even in Togo in order to build them a broad and solid base and enable them to become future citizens who are open, capable and responsible.

With solidarity,

**Charles-Emmanuel Ballanger**  
CEO of Aide et Action

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YOU HAVE BEEN IN **LOCKDOWN**,  
YOU HAVE BEEN **SEPARATED** FROM YOUR LOVED ONES,  
YOU HAVE FEARED FOR THEIR **HEALTH**  
AND FOR YOURS,  
YOU HAD TO WORK **REMOTELY**  
AND PROVIDE **HOME-SCHOOLING**

*YET, YOU HAVE REMAINED GENEROUS,  
IN SOLIDARITY AND YOU SUPPORTED US.*

**THANK YOU !**



Changing the world through Education

## BACK TO SCHOOL

## « CLASSROOM RESCUE »: NEW SOLIDARITY GAME FROM AIDE ET ACTION

On the occasion of the start of the 2020 school year, Aide et Action is launching a new awareness campaign, in partnership with the LS agency. The concept: to offer a video game which embraces solidarity and is for free. The objective of this game will be to support an imaginary school. A fun and efficient way to understand the challenges of education!



# 200

This is the number of levels that you will have to pass to finish the storyline of the game. However, the player may continue playing while waiting for future updates.

**C**lassroom Rescue is a game for free and with solidarity where the player must join the Aide et Action teams to improve and support an imaginary classroom. At the start there is nothing other than an empty, stripped bare and rundown classroom. **The player's mission** will be to keep virtual children busy via a puzzle game (type "Bubble shooter") while the Aide et Action teams install, renovate and improve infrastructure.

### DISCOVER PRIORITY ISSUES

The more the levels advance, the more the classroom will transform. At each stage, information will be shared on the issues linked to the association's priority areas, namely access and quality of education, early childhood, women and girls etc. In each chapter it will then be necessary, by taking turns, to clean then equip the classroom to be able to recruit a teacher, improve the layout of spaces to accommodate more minorities, and install electricity to improve learning conditions. To advance in the game, "boosters" will be proposed; these will translate, in reality, into donations for the association. This concept therefore allows to combine the useful with the fun part: play while being informed and by supporting the cause of education! All actions presented in this game have been inspired by work conducted by Aide et Action in Togo since 1986. **PLAY!** 🌱

To play "Classroom Rescue" please visit our website  
[www.classroomrescue-thegame.com/en/](http://www.classroomrescue-thegame.com/en/)

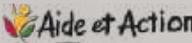
**Good to know** The game does not require any specific installation. Users can easily add the game on the home screen of their phone,

## CLASSROOM RESCUE: THE FUTURE OF SCHOOL IS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS !



**THREE GOOD REASONS TO DOWNLOAD OUR GAME WHICH IS FREE AND SUPPORTIVE.**

- You will renovate a virtual school.
- You will contribute to changing the world through education.
- You can finance field projects of the association.

  
Changing the world through Education

[www.classroomrescue-thegame.com](http://www.classroomrescue-thegame.com)



# Early childhood A major issue

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*Worldwide 175 million children aged 3 to 5 do not have access to preschool education. Yet early childhood care and education (ECCE) is an absolutely crucial stage. It allows the holistic development of social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs of a child, in order to guarantee its well-being and lifelong learning.*

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# Early childhood The starting point

*Currently, 175 million children worldwide aged 3 to 5 do not have access to preschool education. This observation is synonymous with failure because it is right from the youngest age that a child should benefit from cognitive and social care and get emotionally adapted. Aware of the challenges this period represents, Aide et Action has made early childhood one of its priorities of intervention.*

It goes without saying that taking care of toddlers is crucial in their proper development. Through early childhood care and education (ECCE), children are in good health, happier and curious, and they are well prepared for primary school. They do better and progress on the path to learning, throughout their life. In addition, through its compensatory effects, ECCE helps reduce inequalities by offering to everyone, from an early age, the same opportunities.

According to the former Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon, «The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) acknowledge that Early Childhood Development can participate in the transformation that we hope to achieve over the next 15 years.» Indeed, SDG target 4.2 specifies that, by 2030, we must ensure that all girls and boys have access to early childhood development and care and quality preschool education that prepare them for primary education.

## AN OBJECTIVE FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

For Aide et Action, the support of early childhood should be done in a way which is comprehensive, integrated and multi-layered. This is why, our actions in this area aim to cover the essential needs of health, protection and nutrition. We act then at three levels: devel-

opment of the child in order to acquire necessary social, emotional, cognitive, physical and linguistic skills; preparation for school so that it welcomes children in an environment that is adapted to their needs; and finally support for parents and supervisors so that they in turn support the children in this period at best.

## Definition

Early childhood is defined as the period between birth and the age of eight; it's a great moment of growth, when development of the brain is at its maximum.

## A STILL NEGLECTED ISSUE

ECCE aims to build the foundations of the child's well-being and its learning throughout life. Unfortunately, many countries still neglect this issue and are not investing enough. As the UNICEF says, "the first moments of life offer a unique chance to develop the brains of young children who will build the future. This opportunity is nevertheless a lot too often missed. For states, neglecting to invest in early childhood has a price, that is to say: children in poor health and less able to learn. [...] For children, in particular underprivileged children, the price of this failure is untapped potential." 



“

IT IS POSSIBLE TO  
CHANGE THE COURSE  
OF A STORY BY BEING  
ATTENTIVE TO ITS  
BEGINNING ”

Raffi Cavoukian  
Singer and founder of the Centre  
for Child Honouring (Canada)



**175 MILLIONS**

This is the number of children aged 3 to 5 worldwide who do not have access to preschool education (UNICEF, 2019).

**2%**

This is the very low share of national budgets allocated to education around the world which are devoted to programs dedicated to early childhood. (UNICEF).

**1 MILLION**

This is the number of neural connections per second that the brain can train up to the age of 3. A pace never equalled afterwards. (Child Development Centre of Harvard University).

## Early childhood

# A matter of equality

*The major interest in developing quality early childhood care and education lies in the possibility of guaranteeing all children, without exception, real equality of opportunity. Indeed, by offering appropriate care, states then allow toddlers to have a good start, both in school and in life.*

In low and middle income countries, 250 million children under 5 years old may not reach their development potential due to extreme poverty and stunted growth (UNICEF). This figure reflects injustice faced by young children, even before they start school. The Child Development Centre of Harvard University has established that up to the age of 3, the brain can form 1 million neural connections per second; a pace never equalled thereafter. And more generally, the period between birth and the age of eight years is recognized as a formidable moment of growth.

### A GREAT MOMENT OF GROWTH

“For children who approach life in a feeble environment, each new step in development is more difficult than the previous one. The disparities between children who have a strong start in life and others appear very early, increase rapidly and become more difficult to bridge as time passes”, specifies Linda M. Richter, Emeritus Researcher at the Human Sciences Research Council at the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa. This is exactly where the development of early childhood is a powerful equalizer.

Yet governments around the world spend, according to estimates, less than 2% of their budget allocated to education in programs dedicated to early childhood. In order to break

the circle of inequalities, we must take action at this level. This is why Aide et Action focuses its efforts on early childhood care and education (ECCE). Our objective is to improve the cognitive development of children, to strengthen their learning capacities and ensure a smooth transition towards primary school. Our intervention, especially focused on vulnerable and marginalized populations, allows, among other things, underprivileged children such as, for example, those from ethnic minorities, ensure appropriate early support.

**“THE DISPARITIES BETWEEN CHILDREN WHO HAVE A STRONG START IN LIFE AND OTHERS APPEAR VERY EARLY”**

The transition from home to primary school is one of the biggest challenges children are confronted with during their educational journey. Moving from the family environment, which is child-centred, to what is usually a more rigid, and more formal environment focused on the primary school teacher can be a challenging experience. This is why early childhood programs are fundamental; they allow certain continuity. But outside the school framework, they also offer parents, often poor, better ways to support their children.

### **Barely 11%**

of children aged from 3 to 4 years old, in low income countries master early skills, such as identifying letters and sounds, and counting.

(Source : IUS - UNESCO)

### **In 44 low**

and middle income countries, only about 7.5% of children under the age of five years – and only 0.3% of those from the 20% of the poorest – live in houses with at least 10 books.

(Source : IUS - UNESCO)

### **80%**

of children living in low income countries are deprived of early childhood care and education versus only 20% in rich countries.

(Source : Theirworld)



We now know that it takes more than education for a child's brain to develop... much more. This new knowledge should cause a revolution in our way to think and act on the development of early childhood.

**Anthony Lake**  
former Executive Director of UNICEF

#### PARTICIPATION INDICATORS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD, 2018

	Gross early childhood schooling rate (%)	Participation one year before age of entry to primary school (%)
WORLD	52	67
Sub-Saharan Africa	33	42
North Africa and Western Asia	32	50
Central / South Asia	26	59
East and South-East Asia	82	87
Latin America and the Caribbean	78	96
Oceania	76	80
Europe and North America	86	64
Low income	24	41
Lower middle income	37	61
Upper middle income	78	83
High income	83	91

Source : UIS database



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#### AN EARLY INVESTMENT

In France, too, improvements are required. Despite the recent obligation to register children in school from the age of 3, some other aspects need to be reinforced, such as support for parents. In one recent report entitled "From birth to adult age, moving towards a more just society", the collective Acting Together for the Rights of the Child (AEDE), of which Aide et Action is part, affirms: "Becoming and being a parent cannot lay on the parents' sole responsibility but requests involvement of society. Shared knowledge of basic rights and needs is one of the keys to best meet the requirements in the best interests of the child."

In this context, the launch of **the mission of the First 1000 days** (see definition) by the French government is a step forward. Indeed, the President of the Republic incorporated this question at the heart of government action by creating a mission whose objective is to develop numerous means to support parents. "Scientific progress, from several fields of research, indeed justifies the earliest investment possible in this important period of life of every human being and it is essential to support at best the parents to answer in a manner adapted to the needs of their children", specifies the Ministry of Solidarity and Health.

#### The mission of the First 1000 days

Confronted with a feeling of being often too lonely in the face of parenthood, parents express a growing need to be better accompanied. Facilitating their access to services of health and care, providing them with reliable information in terms of nutrition, improving baby-sitting facilities, proposing parental leave adapted to the needs of each family, and above all, giving them trust in their role as parents: this is the ambition of the "1000 days" of support to parenthood soon to be put in place by the government.

## Early childhood

# An overall approach

*As we have seen, the development of toddlers is based on three essential needs that are: health, protection and nutrition. It is in respect of these fundamentals that Aide et Action develops its projects for early childhood. Find out how through these examples.*

### Our projects related to early childhood

Our projects have as objective to reduce infant mortality and abuse, but also to promote early learning and develop good learning conditions as well in the family as in day care and in the kindergarten classroom. Our association works on development of skills of professionals that are involved in centres for development of early childhood, and overall monitor health. The association conducts preschool actions, especially in the mother tongue to familiarize children and their families as early as possible to the benefits of education. Finally, it focuses on awareness and parent training in good development of their children.

#### NUTRITION, CHILDREN'S NECESSARY ENERGY

**Vietnam** What is food security? How to prepare meals for children? What kind of energy does a child need? The answers to these questions are far from obvious in countries where health messages and how they are spread are almost non-existent. These are all questions to which the Nutrition and Parental Education project, developed by Aide et Action in Vietnam, chose to respond. The goal: to reduce a high rate of malnutrition with the main means of practical and theory workshops organized between nutrition professionals and parents of kindergarten class pupils.



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Each year in Vietnam, more than 230,000 children under five suffer from severe acute malnutrition. (Source : UNICEF)

#### EDUCATION, A SMOOTH TRANSITION

**Togo** For Aide et Action, the generalization of preschool education is one of the essential means to improve quality education. This key step makes it possible to prepare children for learning and to ensure the transition between home and school. That's why we have developed small community centres for early childhood based on the architectural model of a local family concession, so that children keep their bearings. In Nasong, for example, in the north of the country, the project raised awareness in the community and offered a suitable reception for toddlers, until then non-existent.



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Today all 3 to 5-year-old children from the village are enrolled in preschool.

© Naïade Plante



In the city of Chennai, Aide et Action opened 5 reception centres for 60,000 migrants.

© Christine Redmond/AEA



In Lao, 44% of children are not enrolled in any early childhood education program.

## **PROTECTION, KEEP THE YOUNGEST AWAY FROM DANGER**

**India** Migrants are among the poorest people of the country. Parents, who work on construction sites or brick factories, are often forced to leave their children alone in the slums or take them with them, despite the danger that this represents. To resolve this issue Aide et Action develops reception centres, directly within parent work sites, to support children aged 0 to 6. They can thus follow courses from 9 AM to 1 PM., have lunch with their parents, then return to school until 4 PM.. Children do group activities: songs, rhymes, mathematics, writing ... corresponding to the official Indian national education programs.

## **INCLUSION, DROP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE LANGUAGE BARRIER**

**Lao** Aide et Action operates in the provinces of Vientiane and Oudomxa, with children from the H'mong ethnic minority, considered to be the most underprivileged in the country. By joining school, many children face a language barrier, which is a hindrance to quality education. Unsuitable to their specific needs, this teaching involves illiteracy and early dropout of pupils. These factors led Aide et Action to develop a bilingual education program focused on early childhood, in order to guarantee the most vulnerable ones the right to inclusive quality education from an early age.

## **IN CONCLUSION, IT IS TIME TO ACT**

If there is good news that we can retain from this file, it is that by allocating sufficient means, and sufficiently early, it is possible to stimulate the development of each child, to break intergenerational cycles of inequalities and give all children a fair start in life. This is why, if we want, in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), education and lifelong learning to become fair and of good quality, it is imperative to take early childhood care and education as a starting point. In its report "The first moments count for every child", UNICEF says: "It is time

to accelerate progress and transform knowledge acquired concerning the development of early childhood in investments and interventions that support families, communities and states. "This is what we do, at our level, by developing projects dedicated to this key period, among the most underprivileged communities. We also advocate for a massive investment by governments and various stakeholders. "The challenge is major, UNICEF concludes. Success or failure will leave its imprint on the brain development of young children that will build tomorrow's world." 🍀

## ROMANIA

## Guiding the most vulnerable ones

In Romania, we work in partnership with the local association Stea, in order to **guarantee social and economic inclusion of the underprivileged slum community of Sat-marel** by providing access to quality education to children and accompanying young adults. This slum, located

in the north-west of the country, hosts 350 inhabitants including about **150 children**. Their living conditions are extremely precarious and constitute a serious obstacle to access education, health, social welfare services and employment.

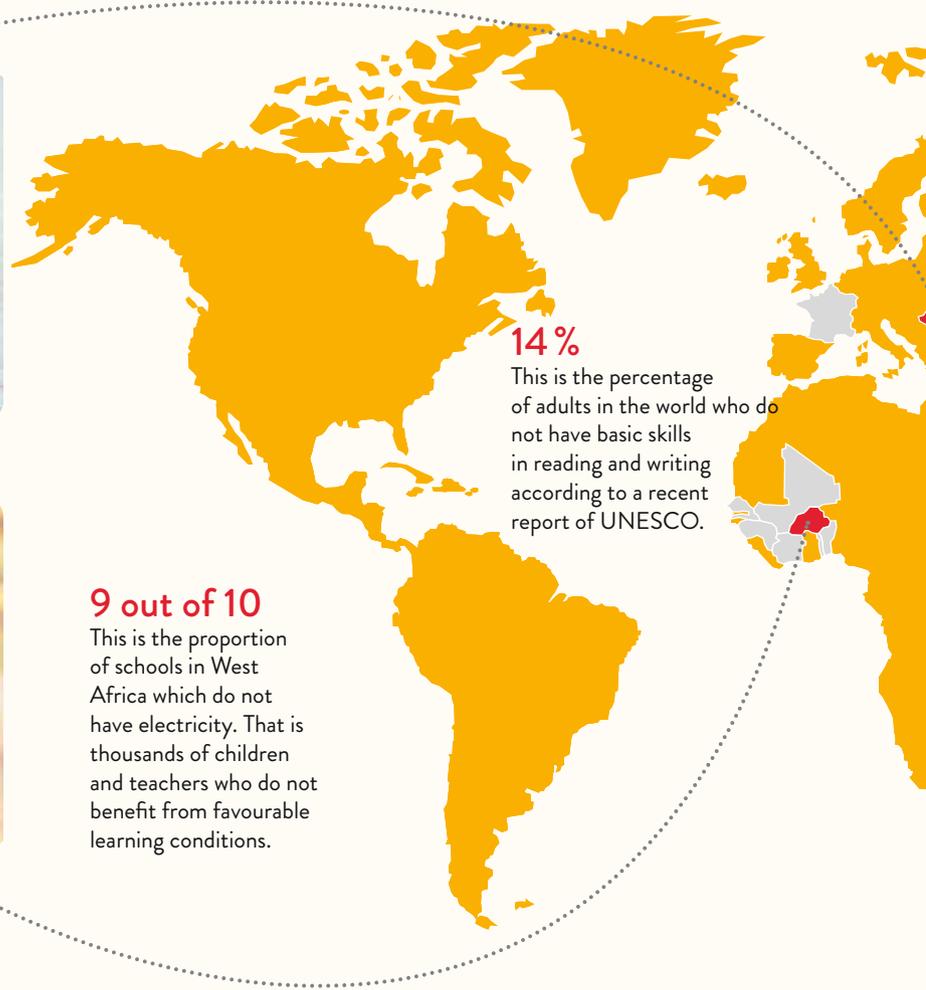
**Good to know** the school dropout rate of children living in rural areas in Romania is particularly high (25%) compared to those living in urban areas (4%).



© Kristen Poels/AEA



© Charlotte Fortuni/AEA



14%

This is the percentage of adults in the world who do not have basic skills in reading and writing according to a recent report of UNESCO.

9 out of 10

This is the proportion of schools in West Africa which do not have electricity. That is thousands of children and teachers who do not benefit from favourable learning conditions.

## BURKINA FASO

## Lighting up children's future

Aide et Action is developing a school illumination project in order to improve the learning conditions of **9,000 primary school pupils in Burkina Faso**. Thanks to generating electricity (solar energy) schools are becoming more attractive to

parents, students and teachers, as they provide additional teaching and learning facilities. **What's more, the school building can thus be used in an extended way and become a resource centre for the entire community.**

**Good to know** In rural areas in Burkina Faso, the rate of the population benefiting from electricity is extremely low since it is 4.7% (World Bank).

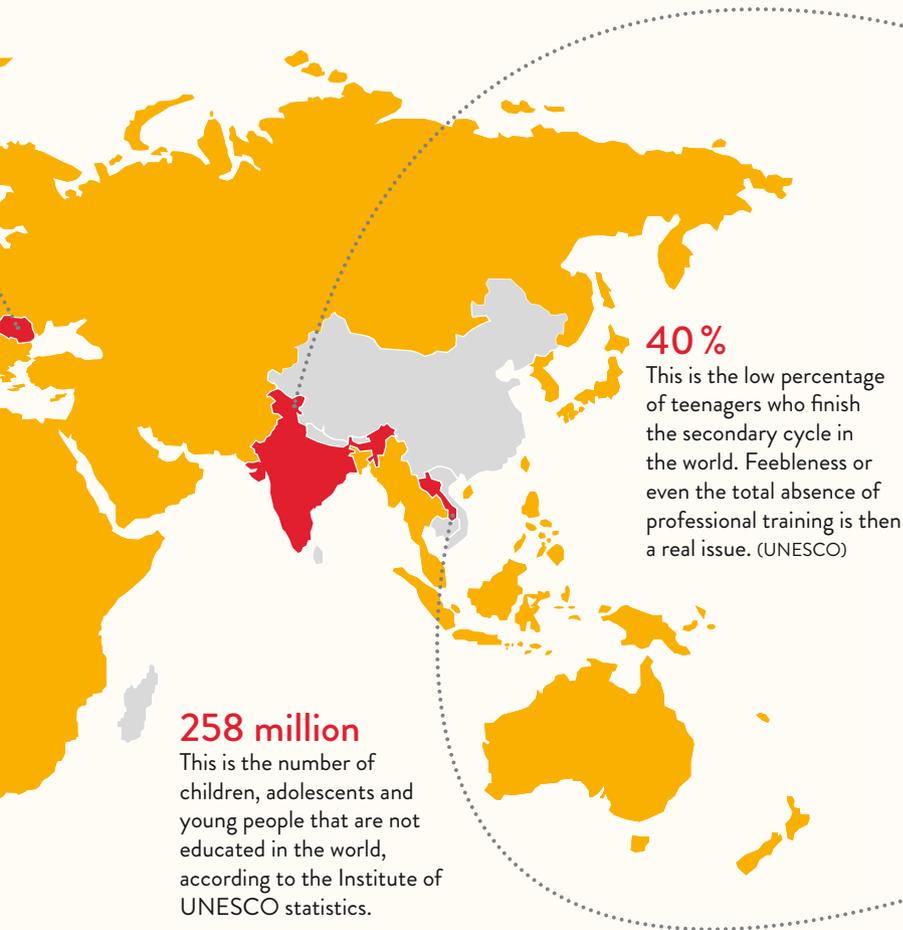
## INDIA

# Training youngsters for tomorrow's skills

In India, **almost all young people from marginalized communities are excluded from education** and deprived of any opportunity to access employment. Our **program iLEAD**, intended for 18-32 year olds, offers three months training

as well as assistance with professional integration through advice, preparation workshops for interviews and a network of partners and mentors. It even encourages them to start their own business.

**Good to know** since 2005, our program has trained more than 245,000 young people across India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Philippines.



## LAO

# Developing basic skills

A project set up by Aide et Action aims to **develop basic skills in reading**, writing and arithmetic in kindergarten and elementary school pupils. "We are proud to contribute to efforts to improve the education system in Laos, says the Aid et Action team in Lao. With this new project, we will

create inclusive and child-friendly school environments and thus improve basic skills of students in 30 schools in the provinces of Vientiane and Oudomxay. **In total, more than 7,000 people will benefit from this initiative.**

**Good to know** In Lao, only 82% of children enrolled in school complete their primary education. And for those who do, learning outcomes are often poor.

Coronavirus

# Will France really help to restart schools in the southern hemisphere?

Opinion column published by the Education Coalition on Le Monde.fr

*The Covid-19 pandemic has caused an unprecedented educational crisis with the closure of schools in 191 countries and 1.57 billion learners affected (UNESCO). The Education Coalition, of which Aide et Action is a member, is worried about the commitments that will be made by France in its development aid since they will be essential for the future of education around the world.*

**T**he risk that the temporary break in learning becomes permanent endangers the future of a generation. School closures deprive many children and young people of accessing essential services and have significant psychosocial effects. If all learners are affected, the most marginalized populations are the hardest hit: girls and young women, low income families, learners living without parents, in rural areas or without access to healthcare, refugees, and people with disabilities. The combination of a health, food and education crisis could have devastating effects on generations already weakened. The continuity of the right to education is a pivotal point and essential to

maintain social rights altogether. Alternative remote learning methods have been developed. They, however, often reveal to be insufficient: digital lapses, poor parents, lack of teacher training. In addition, companies are taking advantage of the alarming context to provide paid educational services for profit, risking an increase in inequalities and, in the long term, a strong involvement of the commercial sector in education systems that are already poorly equipped.

## 29%

This is the share of aid to education that France has dedicated to sub-Saharan African countries in 2018.

© Vincent Reynaud-Lacroze



## AMBITIONS NOT UP TO THE TASK

There is an urgent need to act to strengthen these educational public services in order to not feed a circle of great poverty that would become fatal thereafter.

We welcome the significant commitments of France in favour of education in countries in development since 2018, including its contribution of 200 million Euros to the worldwide Partnership for education. However, we emphasize the importance of imbalance that persists within aid



The Education Coalition, of which Aide et Action is a member, published the 2020 edition of its Observatory of French public aid for education. This document entitled “French aid to education: half-hearted progress”, paints a mixed and questionable picture.

for education and this requires renewed efforts, all the more important in view of the current crisis which strongly shakes education systems.

In our new report “French aid to education: half-hearted progress”, we find that aid to education, such that is currently distributed, is not up to the stated standards of France’s ambitions, nor of the importance that our leaders say they agree in their declarations to this essential public sector, both nationally and internationally. In 2018, France devoted only 29% of its aid to education in sub-Saharan African countries and 5% to countries in the Sahel that

NEXT >

NEXT &gt;

are going through an alarming educational crisis. Support for basic education systems represents only 16% of bilateral aid to education in sub-Saharan African countries and 34% in the Sahel countries.

### SUPPORT STRONG PUBLIC SERVICES

And with a French contribution of 2.3 million dollars to Education Cannot Wait (multilateral fund dedicated to education in crisis contexts) since 2016, France's commitment is not up to the challenges of education in emergency and post-emergency humanitarian situations. The role of education is fundamental to respond to this crisis but also to prepare for the aftermath. The crisis recalls the importance to support strong public services and continuous ties between education and health, hygiene, food, water, sanitation, prevention, social and childhood protection, rights in sexual and reproductive health. Should we be reminded that if all women in the world completed the primary school cycle, this would induce a 49% drop in number of child deaths; that in regions where the rate of transmission is high, the risk to be a carrier of malaria is 36% lower in children whose mother has been educated in secondary school. (UNESCO). In order for French aid to education to meet basic and urgent education needs, France must allocate more resources to fragile education systems. This, in order to strengthen their ability to anticipate crises, build resilience and avoid learning breaks for the most vulnerable ones.



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### PROMOTE ALTERNATIVE MODELS

France must prioritize education in countries from sub-Saharan Africa and crisis contexts, including through a contribution of 40 million Euros to the Education Cannot Wait fund which aims to mobilize 1.8 billion dollars by 2021 to reach 9 million children and young people in affected countries by crises. We must think systemically about crises and post-crisis. This involves continuous evaluation, to analyze actions and education policies implemented in the context of Covid-19 and, by doing so, involving civil society, children and young people in this process. It is also about promoting alternative learning models that are innovative and

efficient and ensure continuity of quality education, a protective learning environment and hope for a better future for the most marginalized ones during and after emergencies. Education systems must be built in anticipation of possible crises (conflict, climate disruption, etc.). On the other hand, a transversal response which is well coordinated with the stakeholders concerned is crucial. More than ever, the lack of current investment jeopardizes entire generations. In order to limit the disastrous effects of Covid-19, France must strengthen its aid to education towards education systems in sub-Saharan Africa, primarily for basic education and in contexts of crisis and fragility where the investments remain well below the needs of populations. 🍷

COVID-19

# Aide et Action is launching a special Fund for education in response to the crisis

*At the height of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis, more than 90% of the world's student population was deprived of education. To resolve this unprecedented situation and resolve its disastrous consequences, Aide et Action launches its special Fund for Education with the aim of raising 8.8 million Euros before the end of 2021. The association calls on all companies, foundations, philanthropists and institutions to join the movement and take action, without any further delay, for education, which is a key element in preventing and overcoming any crisis.*



© Christine Redmond/AEA

## A REMARKABLE PARTNERSHIP

Aide et Action is proud of its new partnership with «Women's forum» which allows it to increase its reputation at an international scale, to make its actions and projects known, and promote education for all, especially for girls and women. The «Women's forum» supports initiatives and activities launched by our organization around the world in order to overcome the disastrous effects of COVID-19 on education and youth.



**T**he global health crisis that we are going through deprived up to 1.53 billion learners of education. All of the 8,325 schools where Aide et Action intervenes were closed and the 1.9 million underprivileged and vulnerable people that we accompany were impacted; including 950,000 children and young people, of which nearly 50% are girls. Faced with this unprecedented situation, our teams immediately put in place an emergency response via hygiene awareness

actions, moral and material support and maintaining pedagogical continuity (see our June 2020 Magazine). But now we want to build a more sustainable approach.

### PREVENT DRAMATIC RESULTS OF THE CRISIS

This is why Aide et Action is launching a call to the business world in order to unite, from now on, and promote education and sustainable development as tools of response to the COVID-19 crisis, and all to come together.

UNESCO already alerted on the consequences of increased school dropout rates that will affect adolescent girls disproportionately, reinforce gender disparities in the field of education and will result in an increased number of cases of sexual exploitation, early pregnancies, and forced marriages. These are in reality the harmful effects of this pandemic and they will be particularly damaging to children living in

the poorest countries, already underprivileged or vulnerable. As a consequence, child labour could also increase, representing an adaptation mechanism which is important for households that are falling into poverty.

### ACT TOGETHER, NOW

Faced with all these dangers, Aide et Action is convinced that education and solidarity can change everything. This is why we are launching an intervention Fund for education in response to the COVID-19 crisis. **Our goal is to mobilize 8.8 million Euros by the end of 2021**, in order to set up activities for urgent prevention and health education, and ensure learning continuity. Then we will focus on a long term

approach to limit negative impacts of this crisis on access to education for the most vulnerable and marginalized populations. In order to ensure that the gains already obtained under the Sustainable Development Goal no4 (SDG4) are not lost and that the most vulnerable and marginalized communities may continue to live in dignity and in good health, Aide et Action calls all companies, corporate foundations, civil foundations, philanthropists, institutions, to act now! 🍀

For more information please contact us at this email address:

[covid19.response@aide-et-action.org](mailto:covid19.response@aide-et-action.org)  
or visit: <https://info.aide-et-action.org/covid-education-fund>



*21<sup>st</sup> century science emphasizes our shared duty to offer to all young children, as soon as possible, solid foundations of strong relationships, attentive experiences, positive learning and environments conducive to good health [...].* ”

**Jack P. Shonkoff,**  
Director of the Centre

on Child Development of Harvard University.



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### EDUCATION CHANGES OUR LIVES

Since May 2020, Aide et Action has been running an international awareness campaign entitled «Education changes our lives». Composed of three components «Education takes care», «Education empowers» and «Education includes», this sample web-documentary series aims to show the direct impact of education in all areas of life, from health to gender equality, through socio-professional integration. For the occasion, personalities such as the emergency doctor Patrick Pelloux, top chef Thierry Marx or journalist and film director Anastasia Mikova supported us by sharing their conviction on the importance of education.

To discover the campaign :

<https://education.aide-et-action.org/en/>

# ANASTASIA MIKOVA



© Peter Lindbergh

*Journalist and film director, Anastasia Mikova has always been interested in social and humanitarian issues. This committed woman, originally from Ukraine, co-directed the documentary «Woman» with Yann Arthus-Bertrand. On the occasion of our campaign «Education changes our lives», she agreed to support us by testifying about her experience and sharing her point of view on the importance of education for girls' empowerment and the place of women in the world.*

## A committed journalist and film director

«**F**or me, women are resilient beyond what one can imagine. They are strong, beyond what one can imagine and, sometimes even understand. There [in the documentary «Woman»], there were women who came to me and who wanted to tell their story. It was as if it had become a visceral need for them. So it was not even our choice, it was almost the women who made it clear that it was the right time today to give them the word, because

they were ready to take it. We really saw it, all over the world. We were in more than fifty countries where we interviewed 2,000 women. So it's not at the level of one or two countries! It has been felt globally that, finally, women who had access to education were women who managed to get a different place in society. Today still, there are over 750 million people who are not educated in the world. And out of these 750 million people, two thirds are women.



*Women who had access to education are women who manage to have a different place in society.*

In a family, when you don't have the means to send all children at school, in most cases, in many countries, we go instead send the boys to school and the girls; we'll keep them at home. Then there is also the women's body. At some point, we're going to have our period and that, likewise, is another reason why we are going to stop sending girls to school.

Third reason: very often, people live quite far from schools so you have to make a whole trip. For a girl it is potentially more dangerous than for a boy. We go tell her: «this will expose you to things so you better stay at home». This is a huge stake for tomorrow because all these uneducated girls, they are women who, later in life are going to be much more likely to deal with forced marriages, to intra-marital violence, to lots of things; that's why what is needed, from the start, is to take action.»

**To discover the full interview on film of Anastasia Mikova and other videos of our campaign, please visit our special website dedicated to this subject**  
<https://education.aide-et-action.org/en/empowers/>