



# UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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## **Table of Contents**

- 2... An Introduction from your Chairs
- 3... A Note on Research and Preparation
- 4... Committee Background

## **Addressing Education Exclusion in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Introduction and Background  
Issues and Discourse  
International Action

## **Guiding Questions**

## **Must-Know Vocabulary**

## Dear Delegates,

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Hello everyone, my name is Elise Brock, and I am so excited to be your chair for MiniMUN 2024! I love Model UN and I have been going to almost every conference since my sophomore year. I am a senior at Centennial this year, and I plan on majoring in Chemistry when I go to college. Model UN is my favorite club at Centennial, and it has taught me so many life skills that I will value even outside of high school. I'm so excited to help you at the beginning of your MUN career, and it's going to be a great conference! Besides MUN I am a captain on Centennial's girls soccer team and I'm in HOSA, Environmental Club, French Honors Society, and French Club. Outside of school, I love music (Taylor Swift is my favorite artist), concerts, and reading when I have time. I'm so excited to see you all debate and find solutions to the amazing topic that we have prepared. I am so excited to meet you all, and it's going to be a great time! Please be sure to reach out if you have any questions and happy researching!

Hi everyone!! My name is Soraja Omanovic, and I cannot wait to be co-chair for MiniMUN. I am also a senior at Centennial, and I have been going to MUN conference since my junior year. This club is by far one of my favorite clubs at Centennial; I have learned so much since joining and have met some of my greatest friends here in this club. After graduation, I plan on studying Finance in college and traveling the world! Besides MUN, I also do a lot of volunteer work and really enjoy spending my time with friends and family. I am super interested in your solution for the topic that Elise and I prepared and can't wait to see this debate.

We aim to foster an environment in UNESCO that will help you grow and thrive. We are both excited to see a lively debate and meet everyone. Good Luck!

**Please be sure to contact us if you have any questions!**

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## Research and Preparation

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I have found in my time at MUN that research and preparation are essential to being successful as a delegate. Through this background guide provided to you, it is expected that you complete research on your topic and country with reputable sources on your own. When preparing for this conference keep in mind that it is expected that you have extensive knowledge of your country and your topic and that you can demonstrate constant, substantive engagement throughout the conference.

It is also encouraged to print out all helpful research that you have compiled, as **MiniMUN is NOT a tech conference**. This means that any form of technology is not allowed during debate, and all resources including research and position papers must be printed if you wish to refer to them. Any unpermitted use of technology will be considered when chairs are determining awards.

To accurately represent one's country, delegates must be knowledgeable and discuss their country's policies. To do so, delegates are **required** to write a position paper for the topic on the committee's agenda. Any delegation that has not submitted a position paper will **automatically be ineligible for an award**. Additionally, **AI use is prohibited** and any delegate suspected of using ChatGPT or any other generative AI will be reported to their sponsor and will become automatically ineligible for an award. For more information about writing a position paper please refer to our MiniMUN website, but each paper should consist of the following points:

- I. **Topic History** - At the beginning of your paper there should be an overview of the topic alongside any relevant information you think is essential to address before committee. This does not have to be extensive but rather focuses on details that correspond to delegates' countries' policies and proposed solutions.
- II. **Country Policy** - The second aspect of a delegate's position paper should include their countries' policies on the topic. Any past actions (solutions, policies) relevant to the topic are important to demonstrate. Establish why your country is relevant to the topic and include your country's credentials in this paragraph. Simply ensure why they matter.
- III. **Proposed Solution** - The final paragraph of the position paper should be your solution(s) to the problem. Solutions should be meticulous and well thought out, with consideration of the limits of the committee. However, it must be noted that pre-written working papers are against MiniMUN rules, and any delegation in violation of this rule will become automatically ineligible for awards.

## Committee Background

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The United Nations Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organization, or UNESCO, was founded after WWII on November 16th, 1945. It was founded to build peace and security through international cooperation in education, the sciences, and culture. The constitution of UNESCO was created in London in 1945 and adopted in 1946. Following two world wars in 30 years UNESCO was created with a vision to bring people together and strengthen the intellectual and moral solidarity of humankind, through mutual understanding and dialogue between cultures. In the years following UNESCO has developed innovative projects such as The Universal Copyright Convention, Man and the Biosphere Program, and World Heritage Convention. UNESCO maintains its goal of continuing to contribute to the building of a culture of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development, and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication, and information.

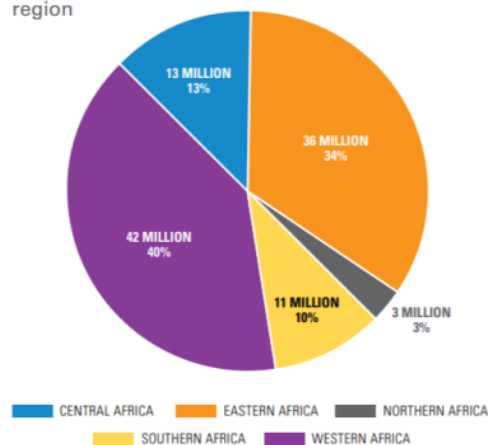
Although UNESCO has made strides in global cooperation it is still dealing with many prevalent issues. With climate change, and many nations having limited access to education, UNESCO plays a major role in addressing said issues. UNESCO focuses on a set of objectives in the global priority areas “Africa” and “Gender Equality”. More objectives include “attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning”, and “addressing emerging social and ethical challenges” among other objectives.

The role of UNESCO is to pass resolutions to build a culture of peace and coordinate efforts to address their outlined objectives. Leading global efforts to reach quality education for all is a major function of UNESCO today. UNESCO provides global and regional leadership in education, strengthens educational systems worldwide, and responds to global challenges through education with gender equality as an underlying principle. UNESCO’s work encompasses quality educational development from pre-school to higher education and beyond. Its commitments to transforming education include making higher education more inclusive, focusing on adult learning, and increasing spending on early childhood care and education. UNESCO’s educational priorities are the right to education, gender equality and education, literacy, and teachers.

Delegates should know that UNESCO is subjected to power limitations, like other UN committees. Resolutions within the committee do not carry any binding authority. By this logic, this committee bears no ability to enforce its resolutions. UNESCO solely has the power to recommend solutions to the issue on this committee’s agenda. It is also crucial that all solutions are created diplomatically as all 194 member states have an equal say. **For more information about UNESCO, its activities, reports, and resolutions, please visit the official website: [United Nations Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organization](https://www.unesco.org/)**

## Addressing Education Exclusion in Sub-Saharan Africa

**FIGURE 1.7:** Distribution of out-of-school children of primary and secondary school age in Africa by region



Source: Calculations based on data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics

### Introduction and Background

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 tackles education, stating “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promoted lifelong opportunities for all”. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of education exclusion of all world regions according to UNESCO. Over one-fifth of primary-aged children are out of school and almost 60% of youth between the ages of 15 and 17 are not in school. Furthermore, the Africa Learning Barometer indicates that only about half of Sub-Saharan Africa’s 128 million school-aged children currently attending school are likely to acquire the basic skills needed for them to live healthy and productive lives. The research further suggests that if you are a poor female child

currently attending school in a rural region you are far more likely to not be learning the critical skills. COVID-19 has only exacerbated the issue as there are higher rates of poverty and greater pressure placed on education budgets. UNESCO must implement immediate action as the situation is threatening to worsen due to the region facing a rising demand for education due to a growing population.

### Issue and Discourse

Socioeconomic conditions and inequalities have greatly impacted the quality of education in Sub-Saharan Africa. Socioeconomic conditions and inequalities greatly impact the quality of education in rural areas compared to urban areas. In the region the issue of poverty has great significance as according to UNICEFF, 11 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are estimated to each have extreme child poverty rates of over 60%. Rural schools have less qualified teachers and not enough teachers for the number of children enrolled in school. A reason for this is that teachers prefer urban schools over rural schools because urban areas offer greater opportunities and higher incomes. There is also a better quality of life in urban areas, with better access to quality infrastructure, and services such as healthcare and public goods. In contrast, rural areas in Sub-Saharan Africa are characterized by poor or nonexistent infrastructure and few provisions for critical social services. This hurts the quality of education for rural-area children as getting to school is more difficult and a family member coming down with an illness can cause a child to drop out entirely. Students are further disadvantaged as their parents are uneducated.

Girls' education should also be considered as there is a gender disparity in access to education. Across Sub-Saharan Africa, 9 million girls between the ages of 6 and 11 will never go to school compared to 6 million boys according to UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) data. This disparity begins from an early age as 23% of girls are out of primary school compared to 19% of boys and by adolescence, the exclusion rate for girls is 36% compared to 32% for boys. UNESCO has suggested some ideas such as collecting specific data through the UIS such as developing specific indicators related to access to separate toilets for girls and boys, and the presence of female teachers, who can serve as role models and encourage girls to continue their education.

There is also a major teacher shortage in Sub-Saharan Africa. African countries are facing the world's worst teacher shortage. To achieve universal primary education by 2030, 6.1 million primary school teachers need to be hired in Africa alone. According to UNESCO, the shortage of teachers is due to an increase in the number of students seeking education and a lack of resources in the education sector.



### International Action

The United Nations has previously created recommendations to combat the growing problem of education exclusion in Sub-Saharan Africa. UNESCO has been using the UIS to create specific statistics regarding education in nations of concern. For example, the UIS tracks the extent to which schools lack basic amenities. Furthermore, with seven out of ten countries facing an acute shortage of teachers, the institute also produces a range of data on teachers' training, recruitment, and working conditions. The data given by the UIS can help with the understanding of the issue and how to create catered solutions. UNESCO is also proposing a series of recommendations such as making secondary education compulsory, building more schools, developing adapted curricula, improving the quality of teachers, and providing financial and academic assistance to children.

Finally, delegates should consider solutions to address the high prevalence of poverty in the region such as improving infrastructure and improving health and sanitation conditions. Delegates may also consider creating incentives for teachers to work in rural areas. Most importantly, all proposed solutions should consider sources of funding.

## Guiding Questions

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1. How can the gender education disparity be reduced?
2. How can quality teachers be incentivized to teach in rural areas?
3. How can UNESCO address the underlying socioeconomic problem in Sub-Saharan Africa?
4. What has your country done in the past that can apply to the arising issue in Sub-Saharan Africa?
5. Does the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) play a significant role in creating solutions?

## Words to Know

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**Sub-Saharan Africa:** The geographical area of the continent of Africa that lies south of the Sahara, consisting of 42 countries that can be found here: [worldbank.org/sub-sah-africa](https://worldbank.org/sub-sah-africa).

**UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS):** Dataset showing the educational composition of the population aged 25 years and above in over 130 countries– it better reflects the structure and performance of the education system and its accumulated impact on countries.

**Rural Areas:** Describes certain parts of a country that are characterized by a relatively low number or density of population and settlement, or by certain socio-economic features.

**Urban Areas:** Describes certain parts of a country that are characterized by a relatively high number or density of population and settlement, or by certain socio-economic features.