



According to World Bank, how many children are out-of-school in Pakistan?

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1 million

12 million

22 million

1 billion

Show Answer...

**Correct Answer: (12 million)**

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B. 12 million

C. 22 million

D. 1 billion

### **Introduction**

Education is a fundamental right, yet millions of children in Pakistan are out of school, with a significant number being girls. Let's explore the staggering number of out-of-school children in the country. Statistics from the [World Bank Data show](#) that of the **22 million out-of-school children in Pakistan**, 12m are girls. Of those going to school, learning outcomes remain poorer for girls compared to boys due to lack of focus.

According to the [World Bank's Report](#), Pakistan was among the first countries in the world to institute widespread school closures as a result of COVID-19. Schools in Sindh were closed starting from February 27, 2020. School closures in the rest of the country started from the weekend of March 14, 2020. As of this writing, schools have begun a staggered re-opening starting with Classes 9-12 on September 15. Classes 6-8 started on September 23. Nursery to class 5 started on September 30. All children—regardless of whether they attend private or public schools—will attend on alternate days.



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What are the expected levels of learning that teachers will have to deal with in the class? Will children have lost learning while schools were closed? What should teachers, parents and children expect from the first few weeks of schooling? How can parents, teachers and the school system as a whole help children catch up?

We have learned from earlier crises that the effects of school closures can persist for many years. An entire cohort of students aged 3–15 at the time of the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan had lower academic scores four years later, despite substantial remediation efforts.<sup>1</sup>

While school closures have been effective in supporting efforts at social distancing, they may well have serious consequences for schooling and learning. This note presents results from a series of simulations that aim to capture the impacts that school closures in Pakistan might have on the learning levels, enrollment and future earnings of children and students.<sup>2</sup> In this note, we present an overview of how these numbers are calculated and how to interpret them. This note draws on a simulation exercise for all countries on which data is available, including Pakistan, conducted by researchers at the World Bank (Azevedo et. al, 2020).

## **The Challenging Situation**

Pakistan faces a critical challenge when it comes to education, particularly the enrollment and retention of children in schools. The statistics reveal a concerning reality: “12 million” children in Pakistan are out of school. This means that these children, many of whom are girls, are deprived of their right to education.

### **Gender Disparity**

The gender disparity in access to education remains a major issue in Pakistan. Of the 12 million out-of-school children, a substantial portion consists of girls. This gender gap in education has far-reaching consequences, affecting not only the lives of these girls but also the overall development of the country.

### **Implications**

The lack of educational opportunities for these children perpetuates inequality, limits their future prospects, and hinders the country’s socio-economic growth.



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Ensuring access to quality education for all children, regardless of gender, is essential for a brighter and more equitable future for Pakistan.

**Do you know: [According to the Pakistan Economic Survey 2022-23, what is the literacy rate in the country?](#)**

## Conclusion

The high number of out-of-school children in Pakistan, especially the significant portion of girls among them, underscores the urgent need for comprehensive education reforms and initiatives. Education is not just a right; it is the key to unlocking a nation's full potential. The following estimates are **subject to change** and can be influenced through collaborative efforts with the government and development partners, especially now that schools have reopened:

1. **Preventing Dropout:** It is crucial to prevent students from dropping out. Initiating an enrollment campaign and utilizing cash incentives to promote the enrollment or re-enrollment of children is essential.
2. **Assessing Student Performance:** The use of student assessments is pivotal in accurately understanding the extent of the issue. This data can assist in empowering teachers to tailor their teaching methods to match students' needs and enable better planning.
3. **Enhancing Remote Learning Access:** Expanding connectivity and increasing access to devices are imperative steps. Furthermore, ensuring that families are well-informed about the availability of educational programs is vital.
4. **Elevating Remote Learning Quality:** Efforts should be directed towards improving the quality of remote learning materials. This includes developing content, optimizing its sequence, and enhancing interactivity.

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5. **Strategic Reopening:** Careful planning for the initial months after schools reopen is essential. Strengthening curricula and providing robust support to teachers to facilitate a rapid recovery from learning losses is critical.

This is the opportune moment to **rebuild and improve**. Although there have been notable improvements in both access to education and learning outcomes in recent years, the pandemic has dealt a significant blow, undoing some of these hard-earned gains.

It is our collective responsibility to **bolster our support** for the education system, recognizing education as an essential service. Additionally, safeguarding the budget allocated for education is imperative. While COVID-19 impacts everyone, we cannot allow the youngest and most vulnerable members of society to bear the brunt of a crisis that jeopardizes both their present and future.

Reference: [Dawn news' Article](#) □

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