

Conflicts and Their Impact on Education

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Background – Why is international cooperation in education indispensable?

World Bank

Economy

UNICEF

Human
rights

UNESCO

Peace

Rights-Based Approach:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Article 26

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Rights-Based Approach

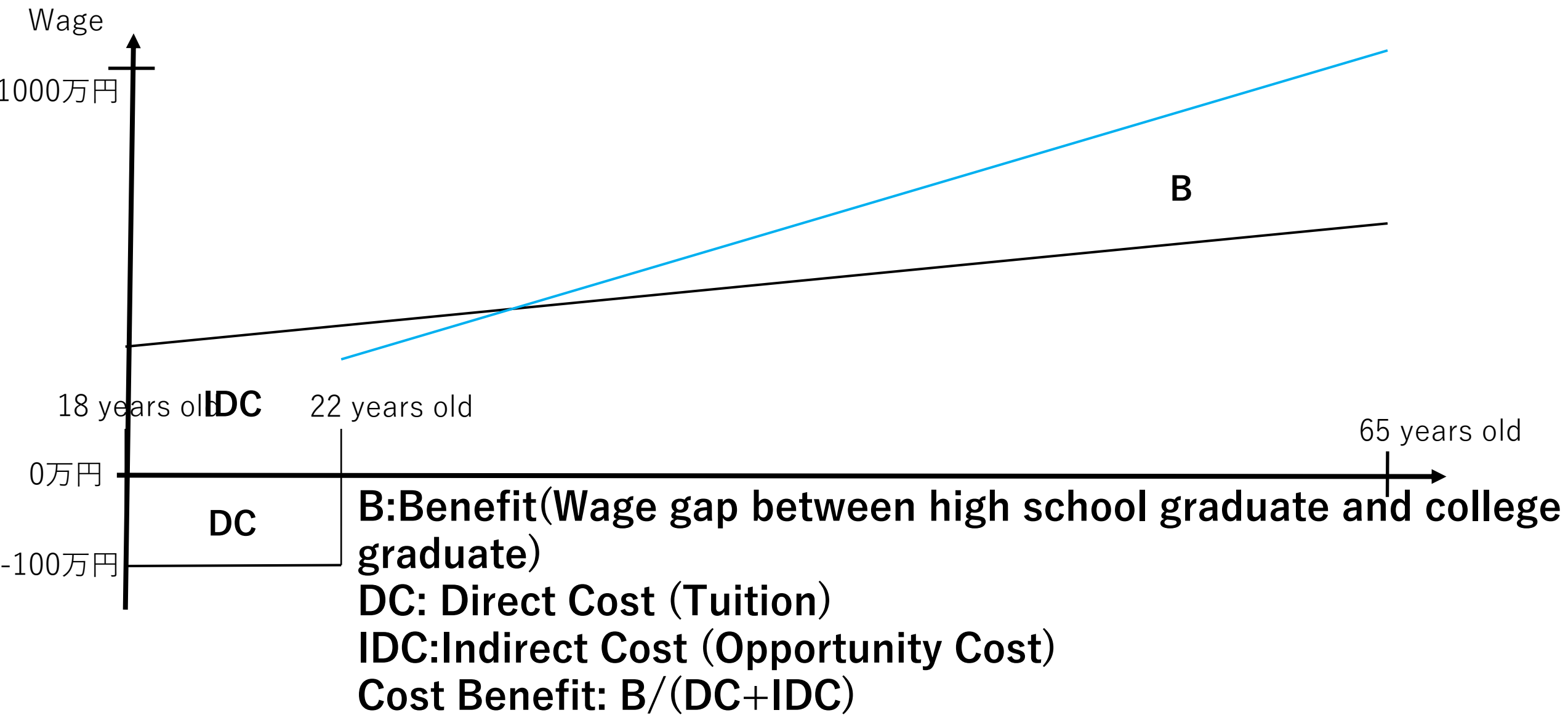
UDHR

The Convention on the Rights
of the Child

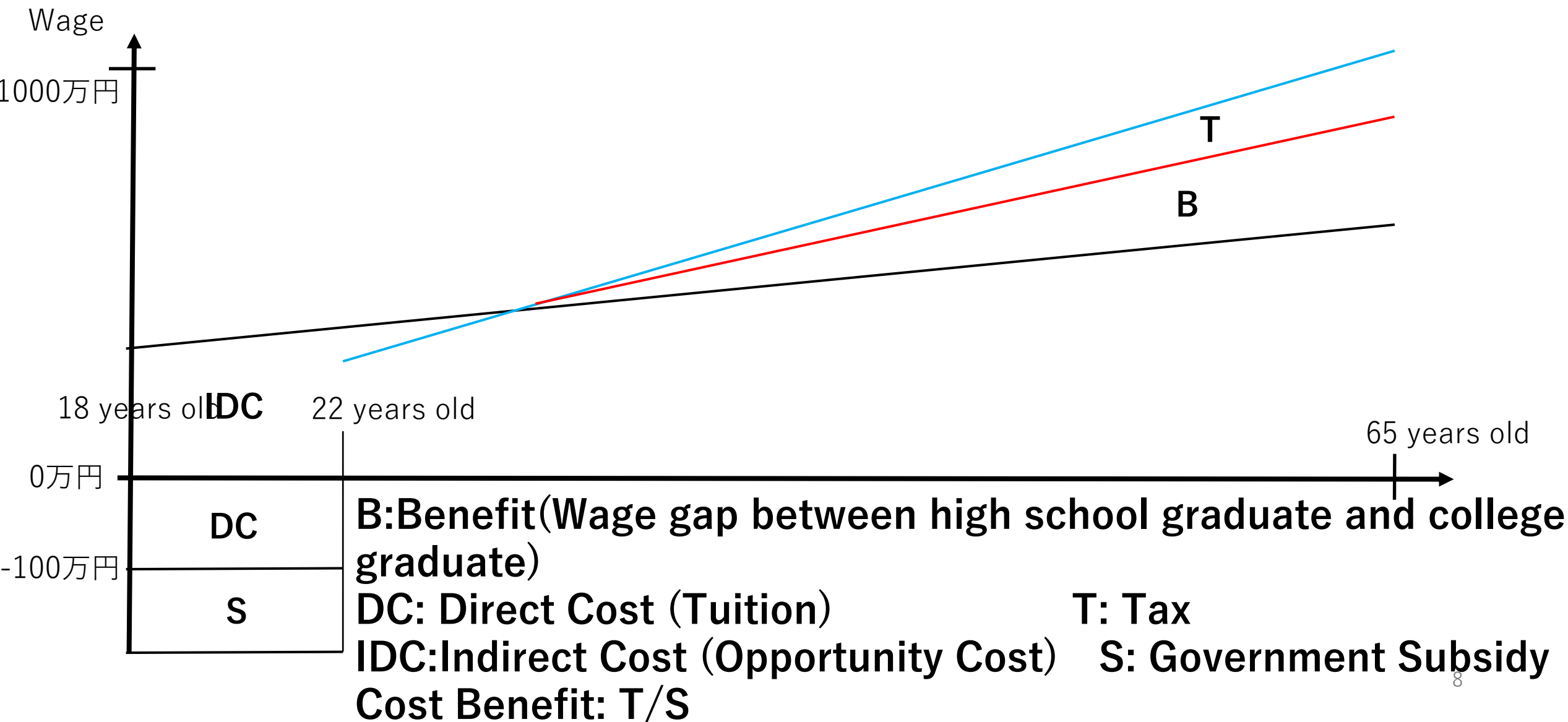
The Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of
Discrimination against Women

UNICEF

Economic Approach: How education contributes to poverty reduction



Economic Approach: Why should the government support education?



To what extent education eradicates poverty?

Table 3a. Average Returns to Schooling (latest period for each country)

Region	Average returns to schooling			Average years of schooling			N
	total	male	female	total	male	female	
High Income economies	10.0	9.5	11.1	12.9	12.7	13.1	33
East Asia & Pacific	9.4	9.2	10.1	10.4	10.2	10.7	13
Europe & Central Asia	7.4	6.9	9.4	12.4	12.2	12.7	20
Latin America & Caribbean	9.2	8.8	10.7	10.1	9.5	10.9	23
Middle East & North Africa	7.3	6.5	11.1	9.4	9.2	11.0	10
South Asia	7.7	6.9	10.2	6.5	6.5	6.4	7
Sub-Saharan Africa	12.4	11.3	14.5	8.0	8.1	8.1	33
All economies	9.7	9.1	11.4	10.4	10.2	10.8	139

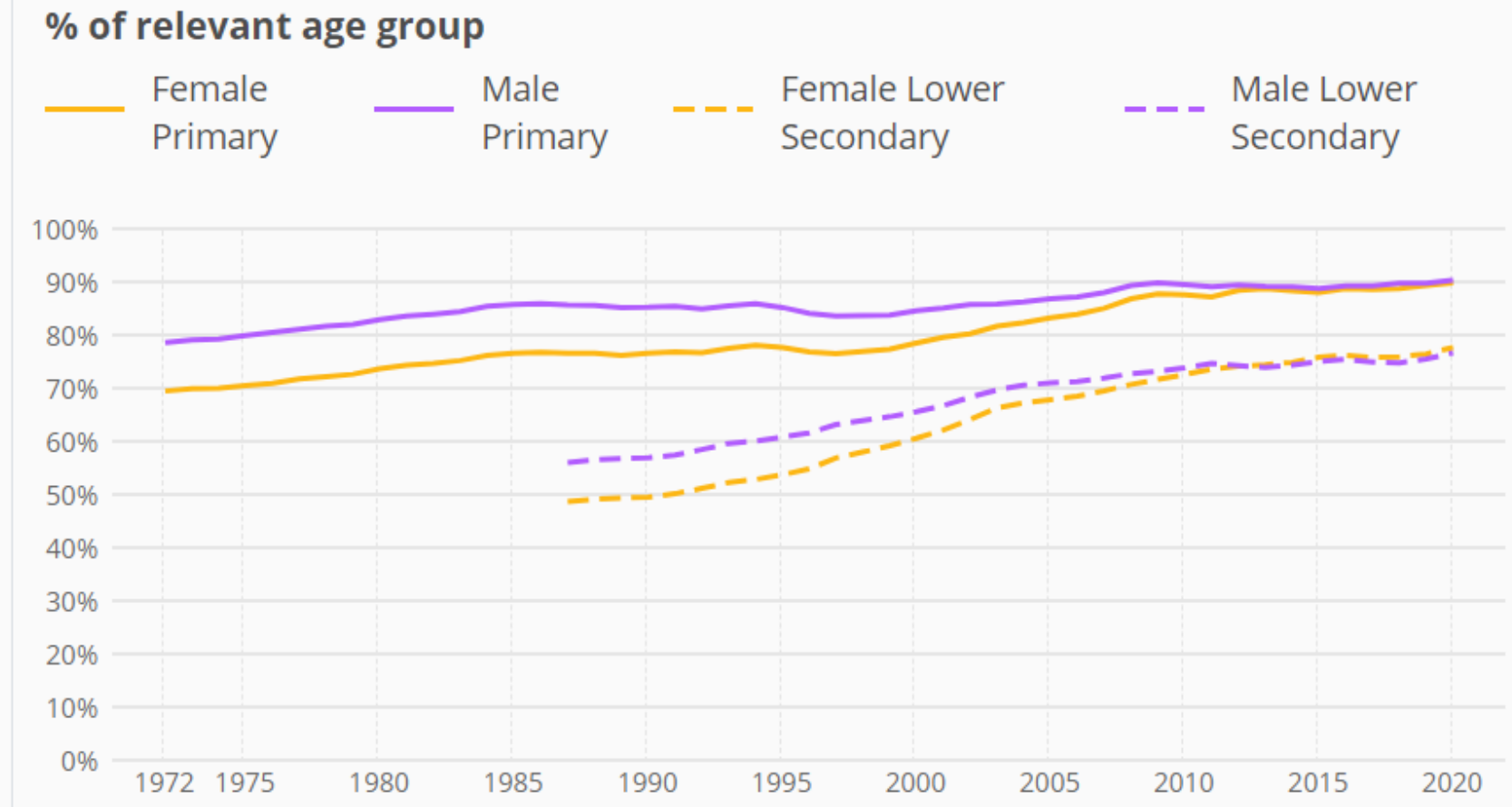
Peace Approach (Positive and Negative)

- Promoting socioemotional skills, such as tolerance and perseverance (if successful)
- Reducing poverty and inequality, which can be a source of conflict. Also, augmented human capital indicates a more expensive opportunity cost of conflicts
- Advancing Human Rights and democratic values, including social cohesion (if successful)

The impact of conflicts on education

Most children now can complete basic education, but who are left behind?

Global completion rates for primary and lower secondary education by sex



World Bank (2024)

Key statistics of the impact of conflict (Before COVID-19)

- About 30% of global children live in conflict-affected countries
- About half of global out-of-school children live in conflict areas
- About one-third of children in conflict areas are out-of-school
- Unlike the global trend, more secondary school age girls (73%) are out-of-school than boys (64%)
- However, only 2.4% of humanitarian assistance go into education sector

(INEE, 2020)

Issue 1: Gender-based violence

Issue 2: Impact on children with disabilities

Issue 3: Impacts on quality of education

Demand-side interventions:

- Families and communities need to be supported and rehabilitated so that they can support children and youth
- The basic needs of families need to be satisfied so that education can receive its attention
- Future educational and career opportunities need to be ensured so that they are motivated to learn
- Children should be able to receive psychosocial support to recover from their trauma, PTSD, etc

Without quality, education is almost meaningless

Issue 3: Impacts on quality of education

Supply-side interventions:

- The education system needs to be flexible so that out-of-school children can be reintegrated into the system, but stakeholders tend to be absent
- Teachers are also victims of conflicts
- Education facilities and learning tools need to be reestablished, and they need to be safe
- Education data (EMIS) is absent

Without quality, education is almost meaningless

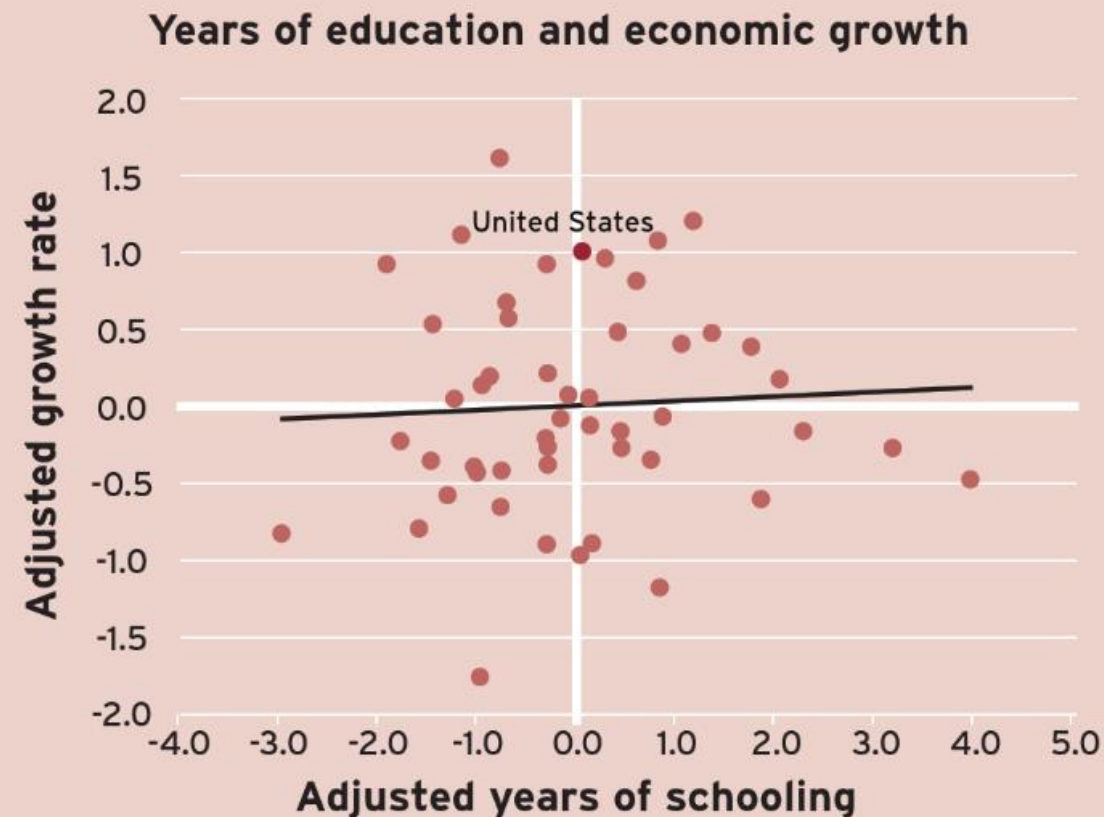
Explaining Economic Growth (Figure 3)

How much students learn, not how long they stay in school, is the key to economic growth. The United States, however, has had a higher growth rate during this period than would be expected given its test scores and levels of school attainment.



Note: The y-axis indicates growth rates from 1960 and 2000, adjusted for GDP in 1960 and school attainment. The x-axis shows test scores adjusted for school attainment. The solid line plots the relationship between the two variables among the 50 countries with available test score information, each of which is represented by a dot.

Hanushek and Woessmann (2008)



The y-axis indicates growth rates from 1960 and 2000, adjusted for GDP in 1960 and test scores. The x-axis shows school attainment adjusted for test scores. The solid line plots the relationship between the two variables among the 50 countries with available test score information, each of which is represented by a dot.

Opportunities to respond to
emergencies in education

Global Support Architecture in EiE

- Global Education Cluster: UNICEF and Save the Children
 - Cluster system is adopted to provide a predictable and accountable response and have clear leadership
- Global Funding Mechanism: Education Cannot Wait + Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
- Global Knowledge Hub: Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)
- Education in refugee camps: UNHCR

However...

- Post-conflict education focuses on DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration). Accordingly, stakeholders tend to focus on TVET for youth
- However, TVET might not be sufficient for longer-term peacebuilding because
 - Socio-emotional skills might not be enhanced
 - Elements of peace education might not be integrated well
 - Is TVET effective?
- Early childhood education might be an interesting area

Early childhood education in emergencies

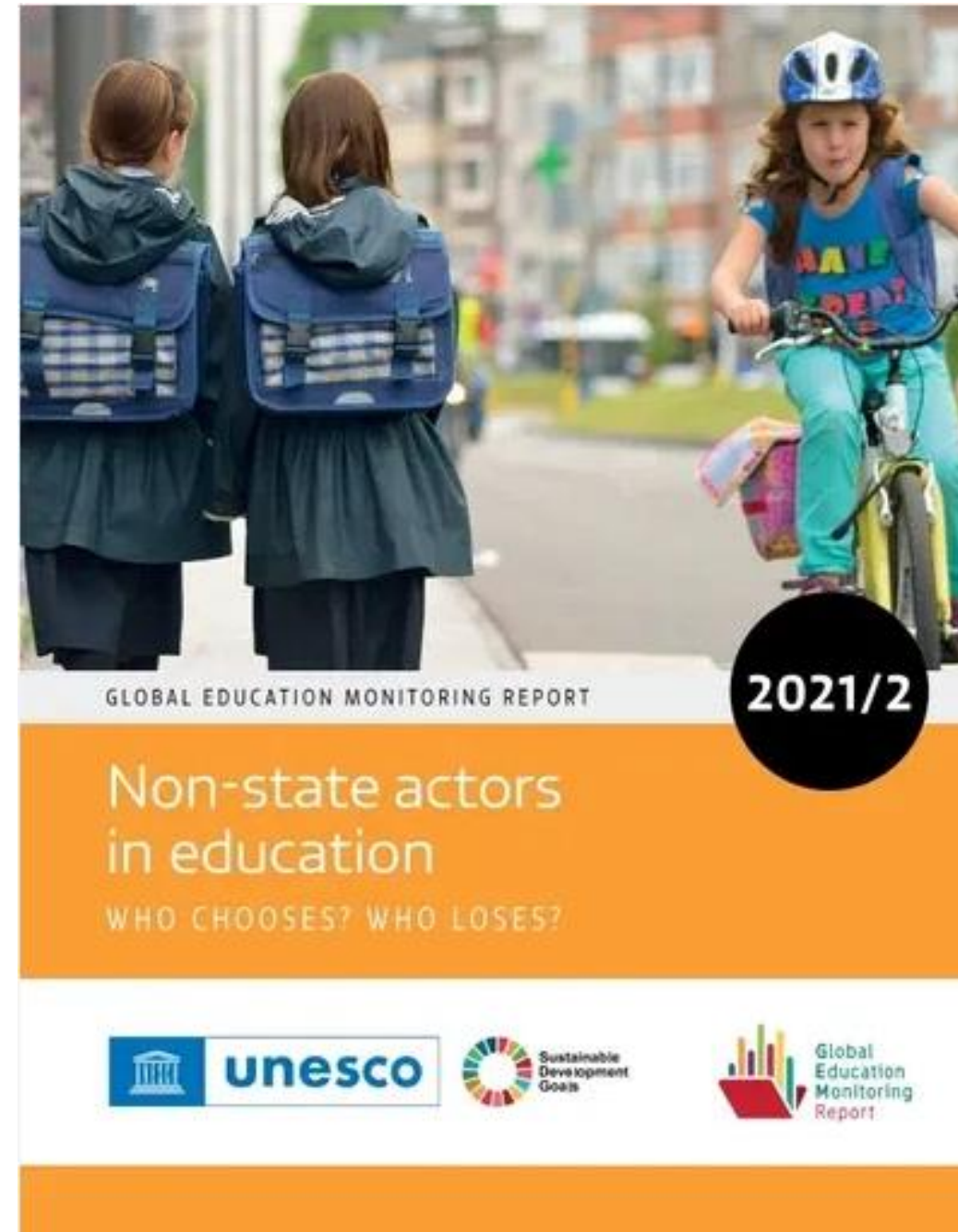
- Early childhood education has a substantial economic return and augments economic return from the later stages of education (Johnson & Jackson 2019)
- Early childhood education improves non-cognitive skills and leads less violence (Heckman 2004)

However,

- Less than 1% of humanitarian resources for education go into early childhood. As a result, less than half of pre-school age children can attend early childhood education

Private actors in ECE

- Privatization of education progresses globally in various forms
- New donors, such as companies and philanthropies, come into international cooperation in education
- Early childhood education is the most privatized sector in education



Private actors in early childhood education in emergencies



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The LEGO Foundation Announces US\$25 Million in New, Additional Funding to Education Cannot Wait at Global Citizen Festival, Bringing Total Contributions to US\$65 Million

Partnership announcement

The LEGO Foundation donates \$7m to help Ukrainian refugee children with access to play and learning

The funds will be used to create play and early learning hubs in host countries Moldova and Romania for young children and families fleeing the war in Ukraine



Conclusion of my discussion

- Education should be prioritized even under conflicts because education is human rights, peacebuilding, and economic development
- However, conflicts significantly negatively impact the education sector, and major donors provide meager support
- Private donors might fill the void in the future. However, we cannot be optimistic due to the current global economy and political situation