

Conference "Inequity in Education from a Global perspective. Systemic challenges amidst the multiple crisis"

The struggle for the right to education has always been linked to the promise of equal opportunities. Yet, inequities in terms of access to education, learning achievements and social mobility effects have characterized education systems since their conception. While the UN-Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) had re-introduced a focus on inequity within the international development debates, the latest multiple crisis has exacerbated educational disparities within and between countries, as well as in a North-South perspective. What are the causes of these inequities, which particular challenges arise from the current multiple crisis and which strategies do we have to overcome them?

In the last few years, we have experienced various global phenomena of crisis: The Covid 19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the climate crisis have all triggered socioeconomic hardship that has resulted in inflation, rising poverty, decreasing educational participation and exacerbated social inequity. The prospects of reaching the SDG 4 on education by 2030 are worse than ever before.

Yet, educational inequities had proved to be persistent already earlier, both within and between countries, as well as in a North-South perspective. Major "inequality axes" are socio-economic background, gender, ethnicity/language, religion and disability. International efforts in earlier decades such as the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All had increased educational participation, but not diminished educational inequities in developing countries. Similarly, in the Global North, inequities continue to be transmitted from generation to generation.

While there is international consensus about the urgency to redress the widening gaps, discussions at the policy level remain pragmatic. Major international players such as the OECD and the World Bank continue recommending policies of targeted support for disadvantaged groups rather than addressing the system level. Within academia, discussions are more sophisticated in trying to understand the root causes for inequities. Empirical evidence suggests that the stronger education systems are segregated the harder it is to overcome inequities. Other factors add to this, and many of them hit the Global South disproportionately harder, such as asymmetric impacts of globalisation, commercialisation and privatisation processes. In poor countries, they seriously curb the budgetary scope and regulation capacities of national governments and exacerbate economic asymmetries. The heritage of colonialism leaving behind highly exclusionary education systems is another heavy burden in many countries of the Global South.

The conference will discuss educational inequities in a global perspective and from various angles. It intends to bring together the academic community, policy makers and civil society organisations in a dialogue, which shall range from the measurable phenomenon to the systemic causes of education inequities. In particular, it shall discuss the causes and persistence of educational inequities as well as strategies of how to overcome them.

Registration: <https://bit.ly/48lumUg>

The conference will take place in a hybrid format. Upon registration, the link will be sent to those who wish to participate online.

Inequity in Education from a Global perspective. Systemic challenges amidst multiple crises

Conference

January 19, 2023, 10.00-16.00

C3 – Centre for International Development
Sensengasse 3, 1090 Vienna

Foto: Akshay Chauhan

Speakers:

Natascha Khakpour is a university professor for Urban Diversity Education at the University College of Teacher Education Vienna (PH Wien). Her research interests include language and speech relations, racism theory and postcolonial perspectives as well as methodologies informed by social theory.

Jacqueline Murekasenge is a Lecturer at Hope Africa University in the department of Social Work and Community Development, and board member of the National Association of Social Workers in Burundi. She is also a PhD student at the University of Vienna. Her academic and research interest focus on social development and education policies, as well as indigenous methods and practices of social work.

Malte Pfau has been responsible for political work for the right to education in Kindernothilfe's advocacy team since 2021. He is the spokesperson for the Global Campaign for Education Germany, a global movement of non-governmental organisations and trade unions in over 100 countries. Malte Pfau previously worked as a school teacher. He is still active in teaching with a small position at a school and a lectureship at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf.

Martina Raytchinova graduated in 2007 with a Master's degree in Communication Sciences from the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn. She initially managed projects at Caritas Bulgaria to support asylum seekers and refugees in their integration process and took on the task of developing and implementing new projects in partnerships with state institutions and NGOs. Since 2020, she has been International Programme Director for CONCORDIA Social Projects.

Philipp Schnell is a researcher in the Education Department of the Chamber of Labour, Vienna, where he is responsible for apprenticeship training and education policy. His work focuses on the economics of education, educational equity, educational inequalities and educational funding. He is also a lecturer at the Department of Sociology at the University of Vienna, a member of the Advisory Board for Educational and Cultural Statistics at Statistics Austria and spokesperson for the Sociology of Education section of the Austrian Sociological Association.

Leon Tikly is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences and UNESCO Chair on Inclusive and Good Quality Education for all at the University of Bristol. His scholarship over many years has focused on globalisation and education policy in the postcolonial world and on initiatives to improve the quality of education for disadvantaged learners, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. He has also conducted a number of research projects and written extensively on issues of race, ethnicity and education in the UK and globally.

Veronika Wöhrer is a sociologist and Professor of Education and Inequality at the Department of Education at the University of Vienna. Her research focuses on intersectional analysis of educational pathways, transition between school and work and school leaving. Her methodological focus is on qualitative and participatory research. She has been co-leader of the longitudinal mixed-methods study "Pathways to the Future" that was conducted with students of lower secondary education in Vienna between 2016-2022; and leader of the Austrian case study of the EU Horizon2020 project „Co-Designing Citizen Social Science for Collective Action (CoAct)“.

Conveners:

Programme:

10:00 Welcome and Introduction

10:10 Keynote 1

Educational Inequities in the Global South in times of the multiple crisis.

Leon Tikly, Bristol University (online)

10:50 Q&A

11:05 Coffee break

11:20 Keynote 2

Educational inequities in OECD countries in times of multiple crisis.

Veronika Wöhrer, University of Vienna

12:00 Q&A

12:30 Lunch break

13:30 Working groups (including coffee break)

WG 1: The contribution of civil society actors to educational equity in the Global South

Facilitation: Gerald Faschingeder

Input: Martina Raytchinova, CONCORDIA Sozialprojekte

WG 2: Global education policies and local needs. How to bridge the gap? – Hybrid session

Facilitation: Margarita Langthaler

Input: Malte Pfau, Kindernothilfe Deutschland / Global Campaign for Education, Germany
Jacqueline Murekasenge, Hope Africa University, Burundi (online)

WG 3: Will Austria reach SDG4? Educational inequities in Austria and how to tackle them.

Facilitation: Veronika Wöhrer

Input: Philipp Schnell, AK Wien

Natascha Khakpour, PH Wien

15:00 Conclusions in a plenary session

Input: WG rapporteurs, Veronika Wöhrer, Leon Tikly (online t.b.c.)

16:00 Closure of Event