Children Out of School

Malaysia | The Sabah Context

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION MALAYSIA

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ABBREVIATIONS

CLCs	Community Learning Centres
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Information Management System
ESSCOM	Eastern Sabah Security Commance
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
KAP	Kurikulum AsliPenan/Asli Penan Curriculum
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRD	National Registration Department
NSC	National Security Council
OOSCI	Out-Of-School Children Initiative
PAV	Pendidikan Asas Vokasional
PKPM	Persatuan Kebajikan Pendidikan Kanak-Kanak/ Children's Education Welfare Society
PLI	Poverty Line Income
POW	Prisoner-of-War
SOS	Sabah OOSC Side Study
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Glossary

Term	Definition
Bumiputera	Refers to ethnic Malays, the Orang Asli of Peninsular Malaysia and the indigenous people of Sabah and Sarawak[1].
Irregular migrants	Irregular migrants are persons who partake in migration that occurs outside the laws, regulations or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination[2]. This category can include the undocumented, foreign nationals who violate travel laws, foreign nationals who overstay, asylum seekers and refugees[3].
Others	In the context of population statistics, "Others" refer to Malaysian citizens who are not of main ethnic categories i.e. Bumiputera, Chinese, and Indian. It includes Siamese or Kampuchea roots[4].
Undocumented children	It includes both Malaysian and non-Malaysian children. The common feature is the absence of birth certificates or other legal identity documents. The undocumented children may have been born in Malaysia or may have come from other countries at some point of their life[5].
Universal enrolment	Universal enrolment refers to enrolment which has reached 95% as defined by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)[6].

1   DOSM, 2011. Population and housing census of Malaysia. Population distribution and basic demographic characteristics 2010. Putrajaya: Department of Statistics Malaysia. Pp 129-130.
2   IOM, n.d. Key Migration Terms. Geneva: International Organisation for Migration. Accessed in https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms.
3   Azizah Kassim, & Zin, R. M. (2011). Irregular migrants and the law. Philippine Journal of Development, 38(1), 2, pp 86-87.
4   DOSM, 2011. Pp 129-130.
5   State Economic Planning Unit, Sabah (UPEN) & UNICEF, 2015. Situation Analysis of Children in Sabah. Kota Kinabalu: State Economic Planning Unit, Sabah & UNICEF Malaysia, pp. 15.
6   EPU, 2018. Mid-term Review of the Eleventh Malaysia Plan 2016-2020. Putrajaya: Economic Planning Unit.

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- Economic Planning Unit
- Economic Planning Unit, Sabah
- Educational Planning and Research Division
- Federal Special Task Force for Sabah and Labuan
- Ministry of Education Malaysia
    - Educational Planning and Research Division
    - Private Schools Division
    - School Management Division
- Ministry of Rural Development, Sabah
- National Registration Department, Sabah
- National Security Council, Sabah
- Oxford Policy Management
- Private Schools Division
- Sabah Immigration Department
- Sabah Social Welfare Department
- Sabah State Health Department
- Sabah State Islamic Religious Affairs Department
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- UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office
- UNICEF Malaysia
- University Malaysia Sabah

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Executive Summary

This Report is part of the global Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI), which is a joint initiative by UNICEF and UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). The initiative is aimed at providing support for countries in reducing or eliminating incidences of out-of-school children using pre-primary, primary and secondary school datasets as well as household survey and other data. The report compiles comprehensive profiles of excluded children in Sabah, the barriers keeping them from going to school, and recommendations to address this issue.

The study was undertaken from January 2016 to April 2017 and the final Draft Report was presented to the national Steering Committee in January 2018. Sabah was chosen due to its diverse ethnic composition and geographical variety that make education provision a challenge. The indicators used in this report are based on the Five Dimensions of Exclusion model whereby out-of-school children and those at risk of dropping out are placed in five categories. The report is split into two parts.

Part 1 captures children who have access to mainstream schooling in Malaysia. Data was based on MOE official statistics and the Labour Force Survey. Among legal Malaysians and non-citizens, it was found that the children most likely to be out-of-school or at risk of dropping out were often boys from rural areas of Bumiputera ethnicity (if Malaysian), or non-citizen children. Financial barriers, parental apathy towards education and documentation issues were factors that kept children out of school for this group.

Part 2 is an additional side study that examines 'invisible children' i.e. children excluded from official databases because of lack of documentation. The study was conducted through questionnaires that were sent to individual Alternative Learning Centres (ALCs). Among these children, boys are more likely to not attend school compared to girls in all levels of education. Children are also more likely to be out of school if the parents do not have formal education. The majority who did not attend school cited financial reasons followed by gender-based reasons (such

as participating in the labour force for boys and housework for girls), parental apathy, lack of resources for ALCs and school accessibility as barriers to attendance. The Malaysian public and authorities' lack of awareness towards the consequences of excluding 'invisible children' from education is also a significant barrier in providing them with education.

Since many out-of-school children live in rural low-income households, it was recommended that remote schools should be made free of charge from not only school fees but also incidental costs (e.g. costs of meals, transportation, stationery, etc). Possible interventions to socio-cultural barriers include increasing the literacy rate among the parents themselves, involving the community in the school management, developing curricula that is more relevant to each local community and building more K9 schools to site both primary and secondary education in the same school.

As for undocumented children who are out of school, recommendations include increasing awareness among law makers, reviewing existing policies on invisible children (with regard to education) and the establishment of a database of these children. The problem of poorly resourced ALCs would need the cooperation of various bodies to promote teacher training, capacity building and allocate teaching resources. Support groups to advocate alternative education funding can help alleviate the costs of education for this group of people. Awareness should be increased along with offering more vocational education in schools and contextualising the curriculum to address the needs of the community.

Part One:
The Out-of-School
Children Initiative

The Sabah Context

Chapter One

Background

Children gather outside a village shop within a slum settlement built on water in the state of Sabah.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia's investment in education is the largest compared to other sectors. In 2019, government spending on education was 20% of the entire budget (RM60.2 billion) followed by health at 9% (RM28.7 billion)[7]. Malaysia's public expenditure on education[8] at primary and secondary level were also at par with the likes of Germany and Finland. In 2017, Malaysia's public per capita expenditure at secondary level was at 23%, the same as Germany and slightly lower than Finland at 25.9%[9].

Compared to many of its South East Asian neighbours, education in Malaysia is provided free of charge from primary to secondary level. Fees are payable only at tertiary level which is heavily subsidised at almost 90%[10].

Around 90.9% of students were enrolled in some form of preschool education in 2017[11]. Primary education has attained universal enrolment rate[12], at 97.9% in 2017 compared to 92% in the 1980s[13]. During the same period, lower secondary enrolment has also improved from 84% to 95.6%[14]. The most significant improvement was at the upper secondary level where the enrolment rate almost doubled from 45% to 84.8% in the same period[15]. Primary level enrolment is higher than secondary level enrolment because the former is compulsory in Malaysia while the latter is optional.

However, there are still children who do not enrol or end up dropping out of school. Education for All (EFA) estimates that there are approximately 100,000 children not in primary school and another 250,000 children not in secondary school, for various reasons[16].

This study aims to determine the profiles of out-of-school children in Sabah and the factors that keep them out of school. Policy recommendations to address this issue ultimately requires cooperation between government agencies, local NGOs, private entities and international bodies to enable comprehensive and lasting solutions. Moving forward, it is hoped that this method of analysis will eventually be scaled up to the national level.

7   Ministry of Finance, 2018. Budget 2019. Putrajaya: Ministry of Finance.
8   Initial government funding per student as percentage of GDP per capita.
9   MOE, 2019a. Malaysia Educational Statistics: Quick Facts 2019. Putrajaya: Ministry of Education Malaysia.
10   The Star, 2015. "Fees in public universities among lowest in the world - Zaini Ujang, Secretary General, Ministry of Education Malaysia. 31 October 2015. Accessed in https://www.thestar.com.my/opinion/letters/2015/10/31/fees-in-public-universities-among-lowest-in-the-world.
11   Economic Planning Unit, 2018. Mid-term Review of the Eleventh Malaysia Plan 2016-2020. Putrajaya: Economic Planning Unit.
12   Universal enrolment refers to enrolment which has reached 95% as defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute of Statistics. Source: EPU, 2018. Mid-term Review of the Eleventh Malaysia Plan 2016-2020. Putrajaya: Economic Planning Unit.
13   EPU, 2018.
14   PADU, 2017. Malaysia Education Blueprint Annual Report 2017; Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013. Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025: Preschool to Post-Secondary Education, pp. 3-3, Chapter 3: Current Performance.
15   EPU, 2018.
16   Education for All, 2015. National Review Report: Malaysia, 2015.

1.2 THE SABAH CONTEXT

Sabah has a diverse population of about 3.2 million people according to the latest available figures[17]. As shown in Figure 1.2.1, the Orang Asal (Original People) of Sabah constitute 55.5% of the population, with Kadazan/Dusun and Bajau being the two biggest ethnic groups. More than one in four people living in Sabah are non-citizens, which is higher compared to Peninsular Malaysia[18].

Sabah is vast and contains flatlands, mountainous regions and small islands, making it a challenge to ensure education is accessible. The population is mostly rural with many schools sited in poor communities with difficult land access and inhospitable road conditions[19].

Although Sabah's GDP per capita in 2018 (RM25,861) is higher than Perlis (RM24,442), Kedah (RM21,410), and Kelantan (RM13,668), access to basic amenities especially among rural households in Sabah is still lower compared to these states[20]. Almost two in five rural households in Sabah (37.4%) live more than 9km away from secondary schools[21], which is higher than Perlis (0.3%), Kedah (1.9%), and Kelantan (4.9%). It is seven times the national rate (5.3%) and the second highest after Sarawak (50.9%).

FIGURE 1.2.1
SABAH HAS A DIVERSE AND UNIQUE POPULATION
Population of Sabah in 2010 by ethnic breakdown (%)

- Malay
- Kadasan/Dusun
- Bajau
- Murut
- Non-Malaysian citizens
- Other Bumiputera
- Chinese
- Indians
- Others
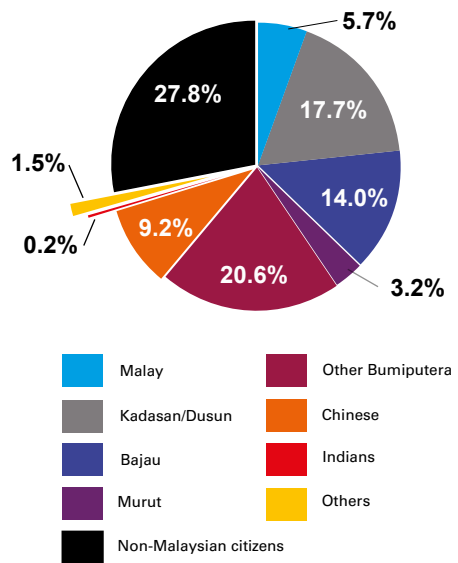
Source: Department of Statistics, 2011.

17   DOSM, 2011. Population and housing census of Malaysia. Population distribution and basic demographic characteristics 2010. Putrajaya: Department of Statistics Malaysia.
18   Ibid, pp 45.
19   UNICEF, 2015a. Mapping Alternative Learning Approaches, Programmes and Stakeholders in Malaysia. UNICEF.
20   DOSM, 2019. State of Socio-economic report 2019: Perlis, pp 45, Putrajaya.
21   DOSM, 2017. The Household Income and Basic Amenities Survey 2016. Putrajaya: Department of Statistics, Malaysia.

Chapter Two
Profiles

Children fly kites in slum settlement on water in the state of Sabah.

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2.1 OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN IN SABAH

The total number of school-aged children in Sabah is 625,325 in 2015. Almost 9 in 10 (89.6%) are Malaysians. Out of that, 10.8% are 5+ years old (pre-primary), 59.8% are 6 to 11 years old (primary), and 29.4% are 12 to 15 years old (lower secondary).

The majority of students in Sabah are Bumiputera, followed by non-citizens and the Chinese (Figure 2.1.1). Children in the pre-primary and lower secondary levels have the highest percentage of non-attendance, at 16.7% and 12.2% respectively (Figure 2.1.2). More boys tend to be out of school compared to girls (Figure 2.1.3).

FIGURE 2.1.1
FOR ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION, THE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS ARE BUMIPUTERA, FOLLOWED BY NON-CITIZENS AND THE CHINESE
Overall distribution of children according to age group and ethnicity in Sabah, 2015
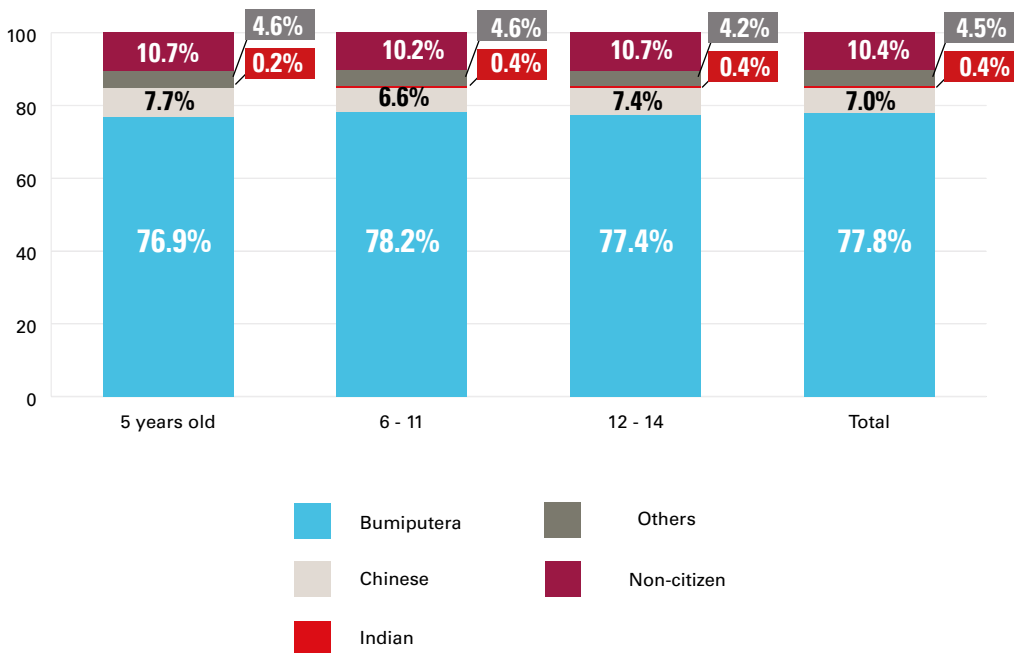
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

■ **FIGURE 2.1.2**

THERE ARE MORE CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL AT PRE-PRIMARY AND END OF LOWER SECONDARY

Children in Sabah by school attendance and levels of education (%)
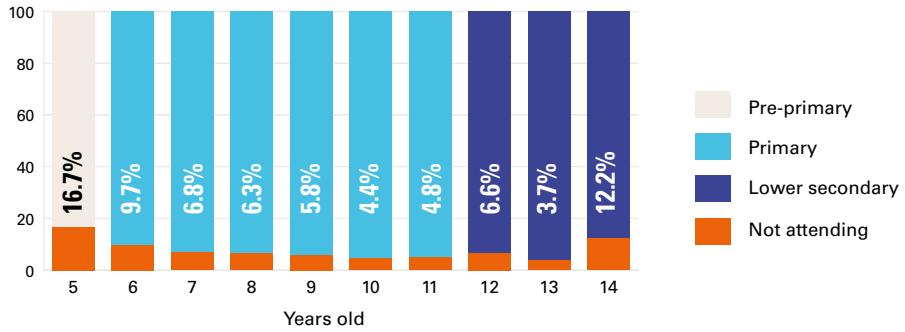
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

■ **FIGURE 2.1.3**

MORE BOYS ARE OUT OF SCHOOL COMPARED TO GIRLS

Children not attending school by age and gender (%)
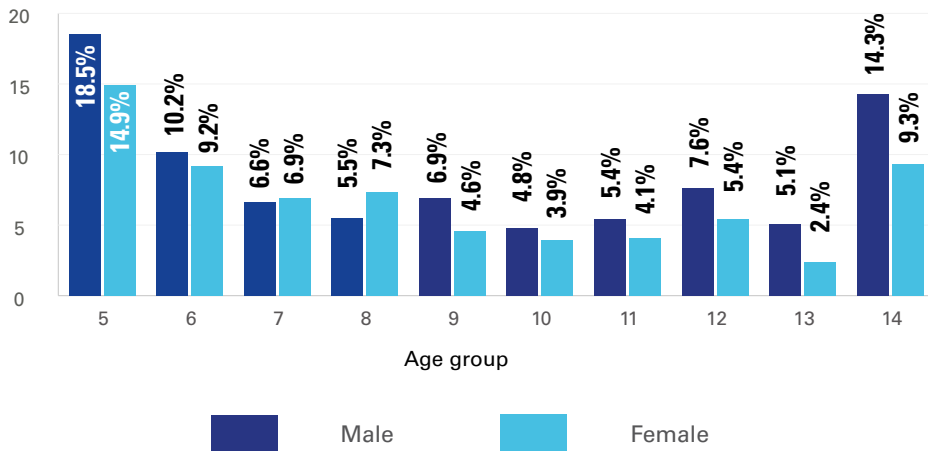
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

2.2 DIMENSION ONE: OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AT THE PRE-PRIMARY LEVEL (AGE 5+)

One in six children are not attending pre-primary school (Figure 2.2.1). Most out-of-school children are non-citizens (Figure 2.2.2). In recent years, attendance has risen before dropping slightly (Figure 2.2.3).

Among Malaysians, more Bumiputera children are out of school compared to other ethnic groups (Figure 2.2.4). In terms of gender, more boys are not attending school (Figure 2.2.5), and rural children are more likely to be out of school (Figure 2.2.6).

FIGURE 2.2.1
ONE IN SIX CHILDREN ARE NOT ATTENDING PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL
Attending and non-attending children for pre-primary education (%)

16.7%
83.3%

Attending pre-primary school

Not attending school
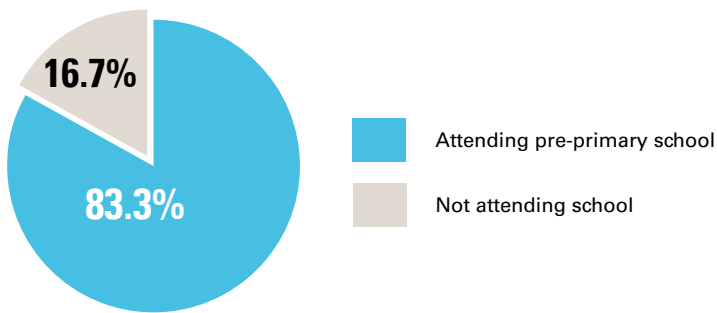
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.2.2
MOST OOSC ARE NON-CITIZENS
Out-of-school children at pre-primary level by citizenship

	Male	Female	Total
Non-citizen	90.3%	91.4%	90.7%
Citizen	8.2%	7.5%	7.9%

Non-citizen   Citizen
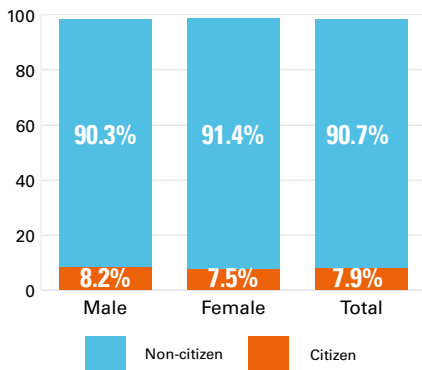
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.2.3
ATTENDANCE HAS RISEN BEFORE DROPPING SLIGHTLY
Attendance at pre-primary level, 2012-2015 (%)

73.9%   79.6%   84.1%   83.3%
2012   2013   2014   2015

Attending school
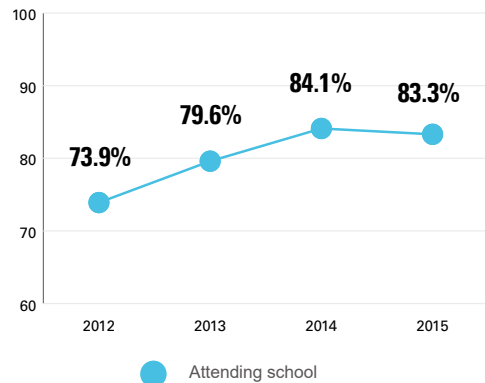
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.2.4

AMONG MALAYSIANS, THERE ARE MORE BUMIPUTERA CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL COMPARED TO OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS

Out-of-school children at pre-primary level by ethnic group (Malaysian citizens only) (%)
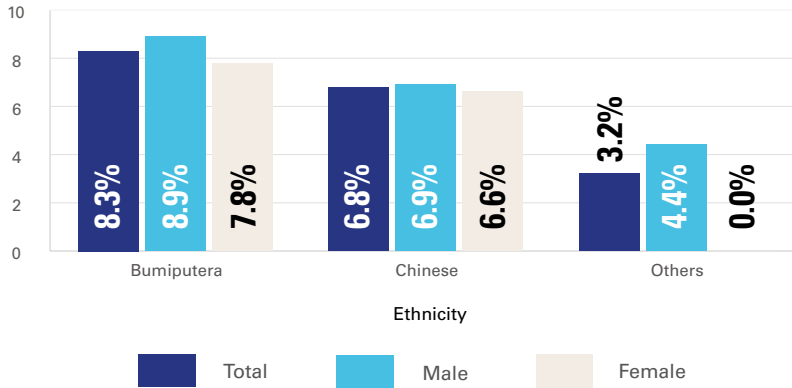
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.2.5

MORE BOYS ARE OUT OF SCHOOL COMPARED TO GIRLS

Out-of-school children at pre-primary level by gender (%)

Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.2.6

MORE SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS ARE OUT OF SCHOOL

Out-of-school children at pre-primary level by strata/residence (%)
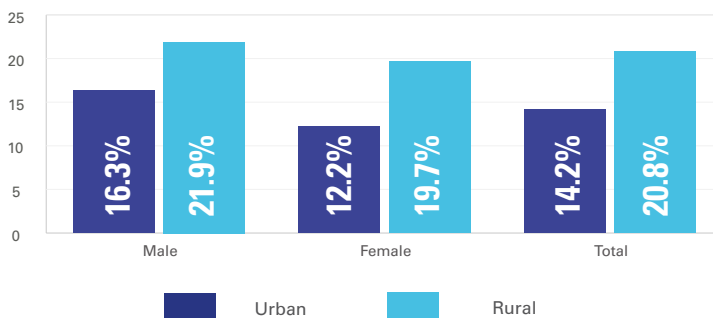
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

2.3 DIMENSION TWO: OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL (AGE 6+ TO 11+)

Although enrolment rates for primary education almost reached universal level (95%), there is still a significant number of children who are not attending primary school. 23,560 or 6.3% of primary school-age children do not attend school (Figure 2.3.1). Similar to children aged 5+, out-of-school children in this age bracket are more likely to be non-citizens (Figure 2.3.2). In recent years, the rate of attendance has been steady at around 93% (Figure 2.3.3). Children aged 6+ make up the highest percentage of children who are out-of-school (Figure 2.3.4).

Among Malaysians, the 'Others' category has 3 times higher incidence of out-of-school children compared to Bumiputera. The incidence is worse among girls, where it is 6 times higher among 'Others' compared to Bumiputera (Figure 2.3.5). More rural children do not attend primary school compared to urban children (Figure 2.3.6).

FIGURE 2.3.1
ENROLMENT RATES IN PRIMARY SCHOOL ALMOST REACHED UNIVERSAL LEVEL
Attending and non-attending children at primary level (%)
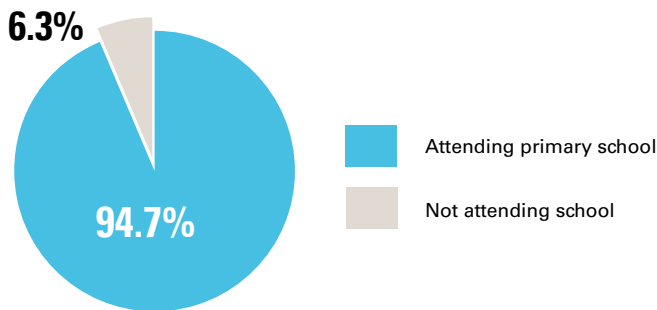
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.3.2
NON-CITIZENS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE OOSC
Out-of-school children at primary level by citizenship (%)
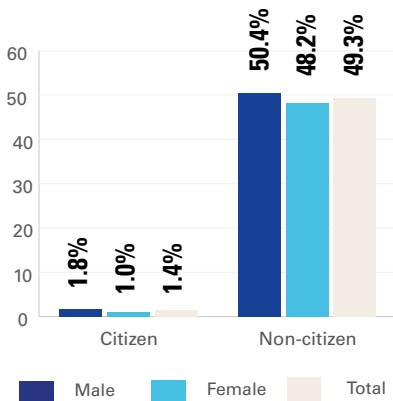
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.3.3
RATE OF ATTENDANCE FOR PRIMARY LEVEL HAS BEEN STEADY
Attendance at primary level, 2012-2015 (%)
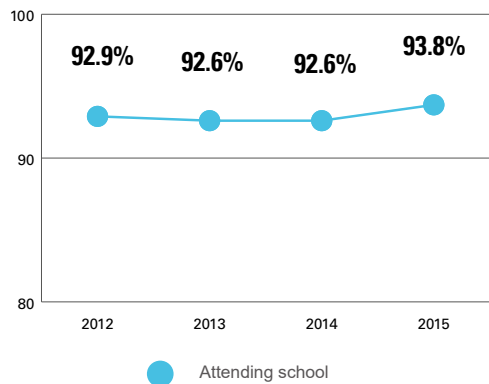
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.3.4

CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO NOT BE IN SCHOOL IN THE EARLIER YEARS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL

Out-of-school children at primary level by age and gender (%)
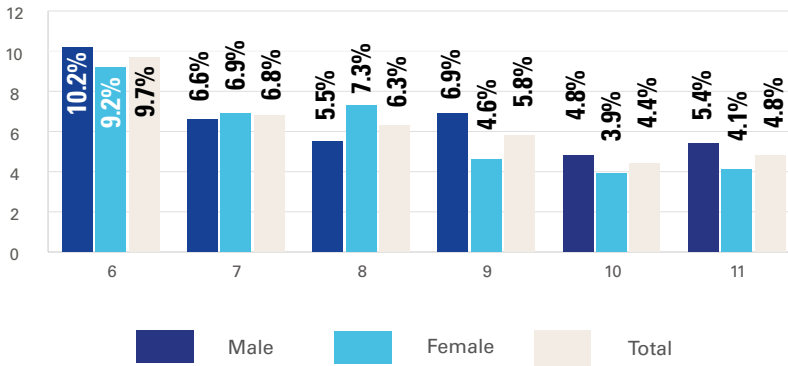
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.3.5

NON-ATTENDANCE RATE IS 3 TIMES HIGHER FOR "OTHERS" COMPARED TO BUMIPUTERA. THE INCIDENCE IS HIGHER AMONG GIRLS COMPARED TO BOYS.

Out-of-school children at primary level by ethnicity (%)
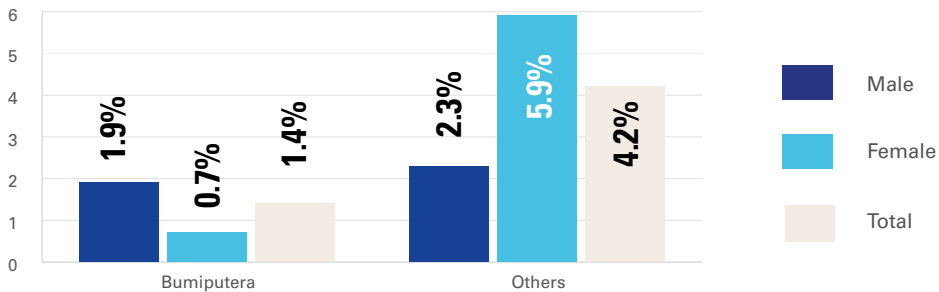
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.3.6

CHILDREN FROM RURAL AREAS ARE MORE LIKELY TO NOT BE IN SCHOOL

Out-of-school children at primary level by strata/residence (%)
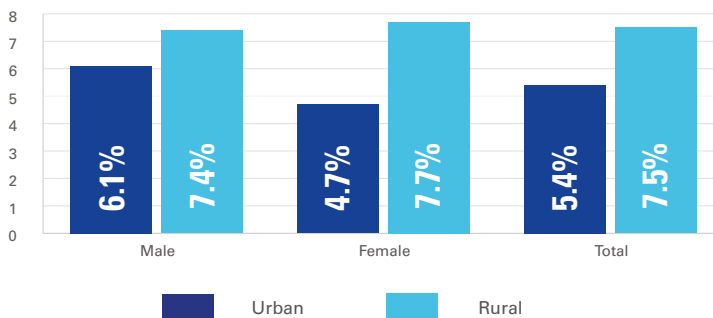
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

2.4 DIMENSION THREE: OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL (AGE 12+ TO 15+)

Almost one in ten children are not attending lower secondary schools (Figure 2.4.1). Similar to pre-primary and primary levels, non-citizens are more likely to be out of school (Figure 2.4.2). Attendance has decreased from 94% to 91% in recent years (Figure 2.4.3). Children who are supposed to attend the final year of lower secondary school (14+ year olds) are more likely to be out of school compared to the other age groups (Figure 2.4.4).

Among Malaysians, Bumiputera boys have a higher probability of not attending school (Figure 2.4.5). Rural boys are more likely to be out of school compared to urban boys. In contrast, urban girls are more likely to be out of school compared to rural girls (Figure 2.4.6).

FIGURE 2.4.1
ALMOST ONE IN TEN CHILDREN ARE NOT ATTENDING LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL
Attending and non-attending children at lower secondary level (%)
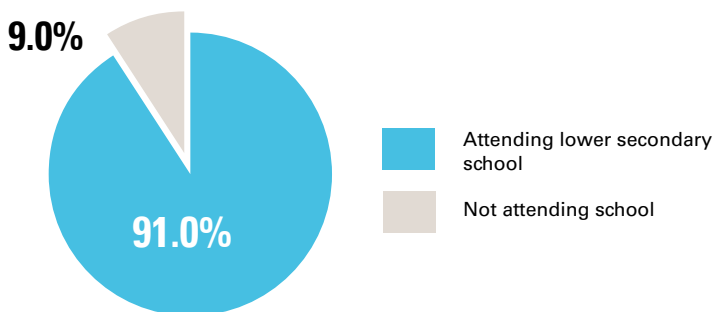
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.4.2
NON-CITIZENS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE OOSC
Out-of-school children at lower secondary by citizenship (%)
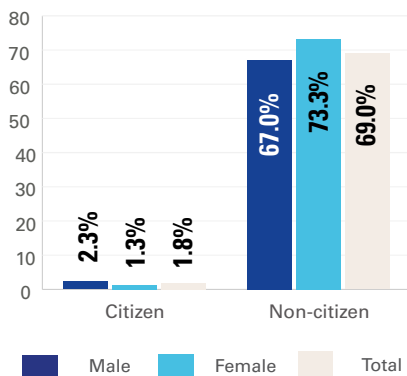
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.4.3
ATTENDANCE HAS BEEN DROPPING SLIGHTLY
Attendance at lower secondary, 2012-2015 (%)

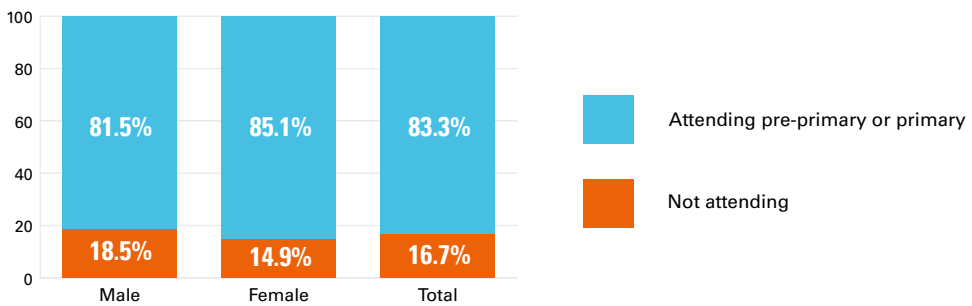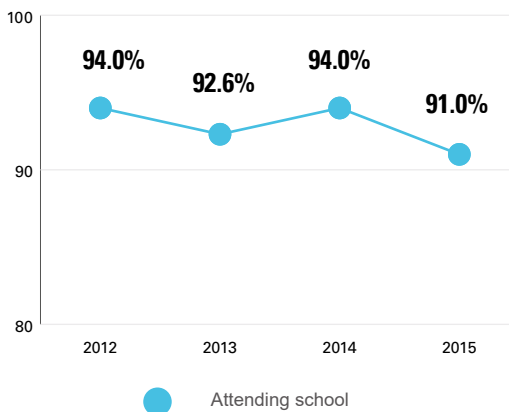Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.4.4

THERE IS A HIGHER INCIDENCE OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AMONG 14 YEAR OLDS

Out-of-school children at lower secondary level by age and gender (%)
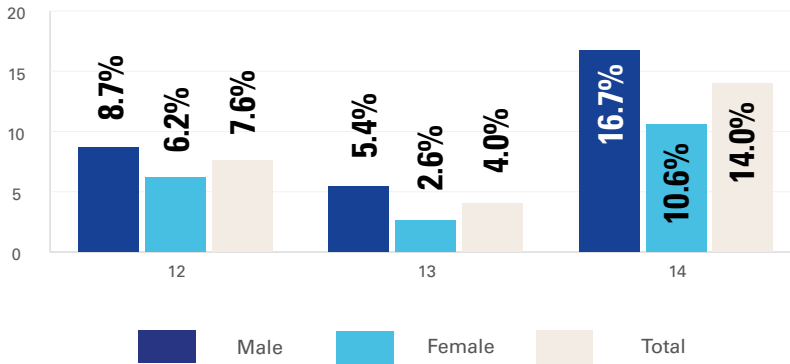
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.4.5

AMONG MALAYSIANS, BUMIPUTERA BOYS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE OUT OF SCHOOL

Out-of-school children at lower secondary level by ethnicity (%)
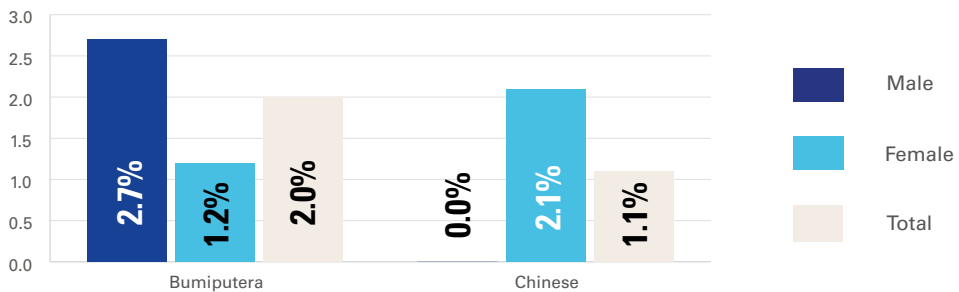
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.4.6

AMONG BOYS, THOSE FROM RURAL AREAS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE OUT OF SCHOOL, WHILE FOR GIRLS IT IS THE OPPOSITE

Out-of-school children at lower secondary level by strata/residence (%)
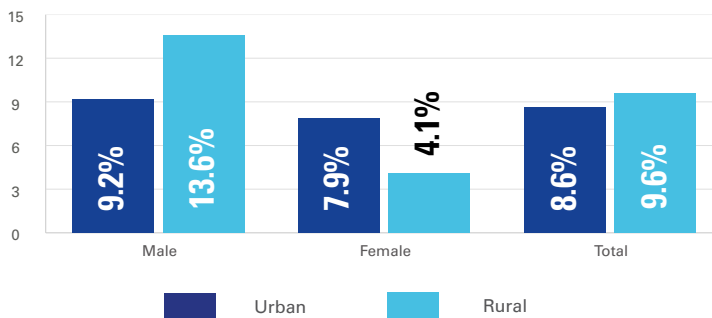
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

2.5 DIMENSION FOUR AND FIVE: CHILDREN AT RISK OF DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL[22]

The survival rate for primary school children is higher compared to children in lower secondary education (Figure 2.5.1 and Figure 2.5.2). More boys compared to girls have been expected to drop out in the period from 2012 to 2015 for both primary and lower secondary level. Although the percentages may seem small, 1% is equivalent to 2,153 children in this sample.

FIGURE 2.5.1
DIMENSION 4: AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS, BOYS ARE MORE LIKELY TO DROP OUT OVER THE YEARS
Children in primary education expected to drop out before the last grade, 2012-2015 (%)
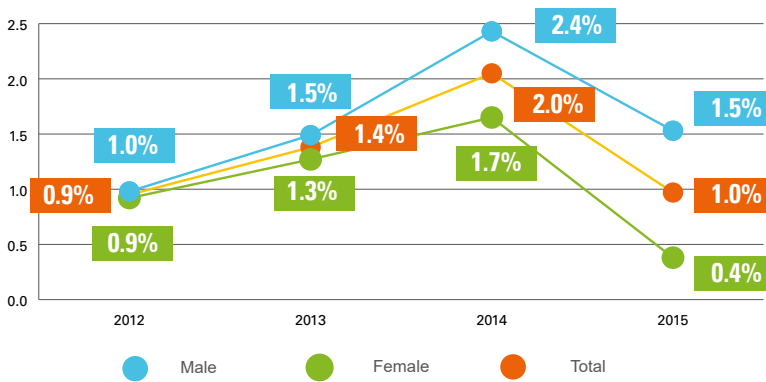
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.5.2
DIMENSION 5: THERE ARE LESS EXPECTED AT RISK STUDENTS DROPPING OUT AT LOWER SECONDARY IN 2015
Children in lower secondary education expected to drop out before the last grade, 2012-2015 (%)
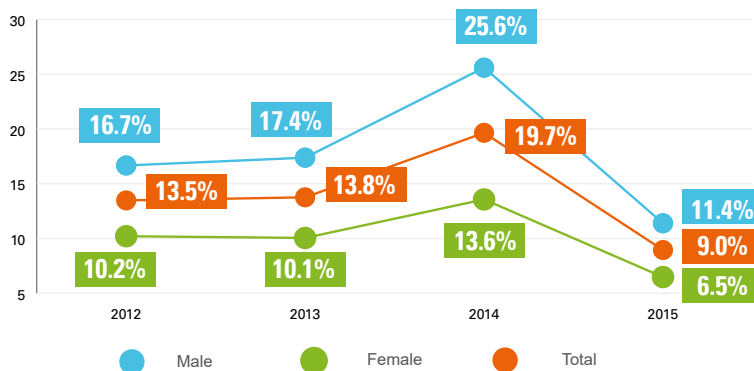
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

22   Dimensions 4 and 5 examine children who are at risk of dropping out, whereby Dimension 4 is concerned with primary school aged children and Dimension 5 is concerned with lower secondary aged children. A basic definition of a school dropout is a person who does not complete their education.

2.6 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

At least half of registered children with disabilities do not attend school at all levels of education, with the highest percentage found at the pre-primary level (Figure 2.6.1). At all levels of education, children with disabilities are more likely to be absent from school compared to children without disabilities (Figure 2.6.2). Children with disabilities are four times more likely to not attend school, especially at the primary level.

FIGURE 2.6.1

ACROSS ALL LEVELS, MORE THAN HALF OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES ARE NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL
Children with disabilities out of school by by school attendance (%)
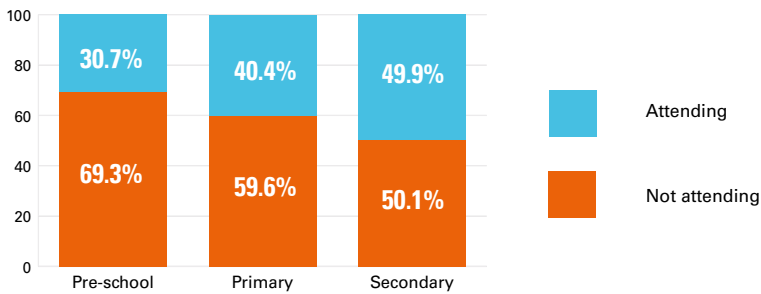
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

FIGURE 2.6.2

THERE ARE MORE OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES COMPARED WITH CHILDREN WITHOUT DISABILITIES
Out-of-school children by level of education and disability status (%)
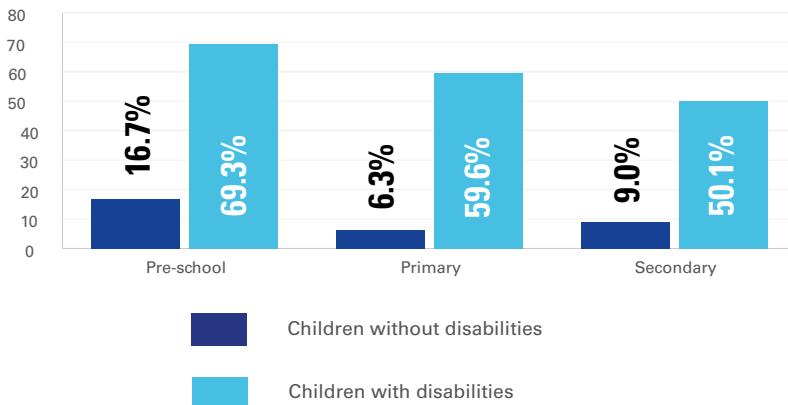
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases

Chapter Three

Critical Barriers and Policy Recommendations

Sitting amongst other children in grade 6, Abdullah Tahera (extreme right, front row), 15 years old, attends a social studies class at CLC Java in Kesingam. Sabah.

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3.1 INTRODUCTION

The most significant barriers to schooling are poverty, attitude towards education, geographical factors, and lack of documentation. Although these factors could be universally applied across Malaysia, several issues are more prevalent in Sabah.

3.2 ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Although government primary schools do not charge fees for Malaysian students, there are still households that cannot afford the additional costs for putting a child through school (e.g. food and transportation).

Despite ongoing efforts by the state government to address poverty, as of 2016, Sabah has the highest poverty rate out of all states in Malaysia at 2.9%, while the national figure is 0.4%[23]. Rural areas have a 5.3% poverty rate compared to 1.6% in urban areas. Incidentally, more out-of-school children in Sabah are from rural areas (Figure 3.2.1).

Although not Sabah-specific, many other studies point to a strong correlation between family socio-economic status and school attendance[24]. When a household is living in poverty, every member is seen as a contributor to its daily survival. Children are expected to assist parents by either earning additional money or doing housework whenever the parents are working. This leads to non-enrolment or bad attendance that can result in dropping out of school entirely.

■ FIGURE 3.2.1
Out-of-school children in rural areas and urban areas according to dimension (%)

Source: Labour Force Survey, 2015; MOE databases
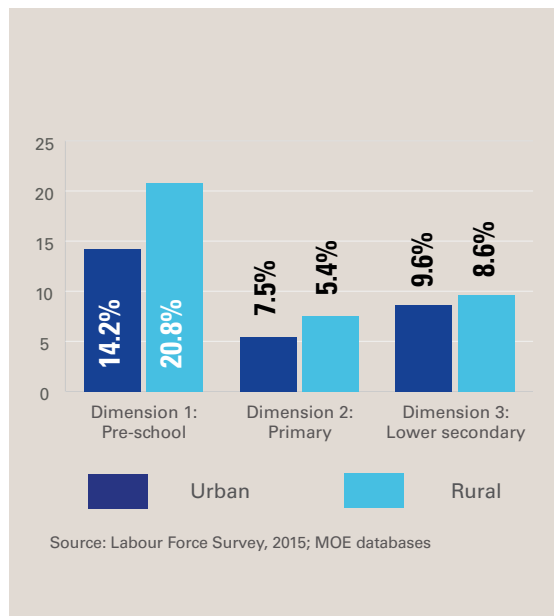
23   DOSM, 2017. The Household Income and Basic Amenities Survey, 2016. Putrajaya: Department of Statistics, Malaysia.
24   UNICEF, 2018. Children Without: A study of deprivation in low-cost flats in Kuala Lumpur. New York: The United Nations;
      Greenberg, E., G. Adams, and M. Michie, Barriers to Preschool participation for Low-Income Children of Immigrants in Silicon Valley, Urban
      Institute, 2016, <www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/76991/2000586-Barriers-to-Preschool-Participation-for-Low-Income-Chil
      dren-of-Immigrants-in-Silicon-Valley.pdf>;
      Leseman, P. P. M., Early childhood education and care for children from low-income or minority backgrounds, OECD, 2002, Accessed in http://
      www.oecd.org/education/school/1960663.pdf.

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3.2.1 CHILDREN IN THE LABOUR FORCE

Children living in poverty often enter the labour market early to help increase the family income. Those who become wage earners at 15 years old or younger would be engaged in menial labour or basic unskilled work.

In 2018, Sabah has the highest labour force participation rate among 15 to 19 year olds at 32% compared to other states (Figure 3.2.1.1). In terms of absolute numbers, Sabah also has the highest number of 15 to 19 year olds either actively looking for jobs or employed, at 143,800[25]. Additionally, the unemployment rate in Sabah for 15 to 19 year olds was at 18.6%, which is 1.2 times higher than the national average.

As child workers grow older, they are likely to remain as unskilled workers with little opportunity of increasing their income. This helps perpetuate the cycle of poverty[26].

■ FIGURE 3.2.1.1

AMONG 15 TO 19 YEAR OLDS, SABAH'S LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE IS HIGHER THAN THAT OF OTHER STATES

Labour force participation rate by states for 15-19 year olds, 2018 (%)
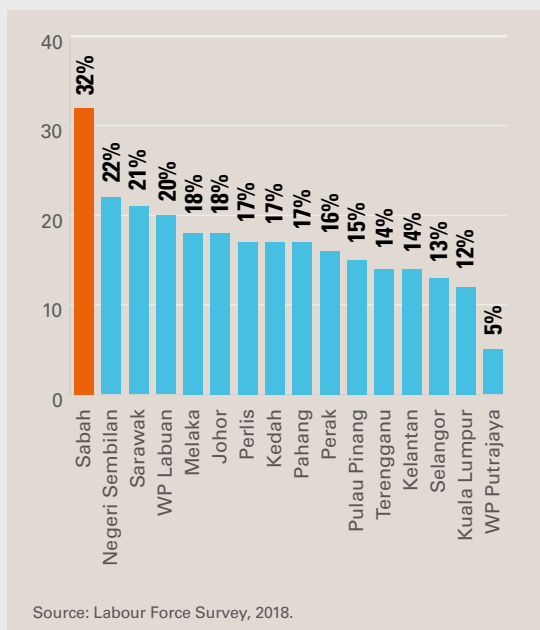
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2018.

25   DOSM, 2018. Labour Force Survey 2018. Putrajaya: Department of Statistics Malaysia.
26   Aziz, R. A., & Iskandar, S. (2013). Working children and knowledge of right to education: A study of child labour in Sabah, Malaysia. Asian Social Science, 9(8), 23. pp. 31.

3.2.2 ADDRESSING ISSUES OF POVERTY AND ECONOMIC DIVIDE

The state government has allocated almost RM12.6 million in 2019 for several financial aid programmes for school children[27]. The programmes are expected to benefit approximately 276,000 students in 1,072 primary schools in Sabah. Table 3.2.2.1 outlines our proposed recommendations to address financial barriers to schooling in other ways.

▪ TABLE 3.2.2.1
POLICIES AND INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF POVERTY AND ECONOMIC DIVIDE

Proposed Policies	
1. Education made free without incidental cost for remote schools	To introduce a policy whereby education is made free without any incidental costs for children in Category 3 Remote Schools[28].
2. Flexible school hours	To introduce a flexible school hour system to cater to the needs of children living far from school.
Implementation	
1. Review the Student Transportation Aid	To review the Student Transportation Aid to include (1) children living in rural, remote and urban poor areas where boarding or residential school facilities are not available, and (2) water and land transportation in Sabah.
2. Expand awareness on education	To extend the current Kelas Dewasa Orang Asli dan Pribumi (KEDAP) programme, targeted for indigenous and Penan communities, to parents in other Sabah indigenous groups living in rural areas to raise awareness on the importance of education.
3. Replicate the Sekolah Bimbingan Jalinan Kasih (SBJK)	To replicate the Sekolah Bimbingan Jalinan Kasih (SBJK) concept for rural communities with its main objective focused on the provision of better education access to undocumented, marginalised and street children regardless of socio-economic backgrounds.
4. To expand the K9 and Centralised School frameworks	To expand the Comprehensive Special Model School (K9) and Centralised School frameworks to remote areas in Sabah.

27   Sabah State Government, 2018. State Budget Speech 2019. Accessed in https://sabah.gov.my/cms/sites/default/files/file-upload/STATE-BUDGET-SPEECH-2019.pdf
28   'Remote Schools' refer to schools in remote localities - along coastal areas, islands, riverbanks, and mountainous regions. These schools are categorised by the difficulty of accessibility, with Remote 3 (P3) being the most inaccessible.

3.3 SOCIOCULTURAL BARRIERS

The family's socio-economic status, parental involvement and attitude towards education impact their children's school performance and perceptions[29]. When families face economic and social adversities, schooling becomes less important and expectations for the children's academic performance can be low[25]. Parents will then withdraw their children from school since education is not seen as a good investment and children can be put to work right away. Boys are especially affected, since males could potentially obtain higher wages than females[26]. Table 3.3.1 below shows recommendations to these sociocultural barriers.

TABLE 3.3.1
POSSIBLE INTERVENTIONS TO SOCIOCULTURAL BARRIERS

Factor	Description
1. Parents education background	Parents with no formal education are more likely to see education as irrelevant for their children. Improving the literacy rate among parents can raise awareness on the importance of education and its potential in improving their economic status.
2. Development of a contextualised curriculum	A more contextualised curriculum has to be crafted to cater to the needs of children from specific backgrounds. One such example is the KAP curriculum for the Orang Asli. So far, the programme has shown positive results in increasing awareness and motivation in schooling for both parents and children because it is more relevant to the community.
3. Community-owned schools	Community involvement in a school can contribute to increased awareness and engagement in the education of their children.
4. Appointment of local teachers	Teachers appointed from local communities can make the learning more meaningful as the teacher is able to empathise better with their students. In 2016, the Malaysian government implemented the 90:10 policy whereby 90% of teachers in Sabah schools should be locals with the remaining 10% from other parts of Malaysia. However, the full impact of this policy is yet to be determined.

29   MOE, 2018. Annual Report 2017. Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025. Putrajaya: Ministry of Education Malaysia. Available at https://www.moe.gov.my/index.php/en/arkib/pemberitahuan/2018/2-uncategorised/3427-annual-report-2016-malaysia-education-blue print-2013-2025.; EPU, 2018. Mid-term review of the Eleventh Malaysia Plan 2016-2020. Putrajaya: Economic Planning Unit.
30   Mortimer, J.T., Zhang, F. L., Hussemann, J., & Wu, C.Y., 2014. Parental Economic Hardship and Children's Achievement Orientations. Longi tudinal and life course studies, 5(2), 105–128. doi:10.14301/llcs.v5i2.271; Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2016b. Kajian kebolehlaksanaan kelas bercantum dan pengajaran pelbagai gred di sekolah berenrolmen 50 ke bawah.
31   Abdul Aziz, R., & Iskandar, S. (2013). Working Children and Knowledge of Right to Education: A Study of Child Labour in Sabah. Asian Social Science, 9, 23-33. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ass.v9n8p23; UNGEI (United Nations Girls Education Initiative), 2012. Why are boys underperforming in education? Gender analysis of Four Asia- Pacific Countries. Retrieved from http://www.unicef.org/ eapro/report_why_are_boys_underperforming_FINAL.pdf.

3.4 ADDRESSING THE 'LOST BOYS' SCENARIO

The 'Lost Boys' scenario refers to the higher incidence of drop-outs and non-attendance among boys compared to girls (see Figure 2.3). This could be due to a few factors:

(i) Labour: The role of providing for the family is generally assumed by males. Economic pressures become intertwined with gender expectations.

(ii) Children are demotivated from continuing their schooling beyond the compulsory education stage because joining the labour force seems more exciting to them.

Introducing vocational-based content might serve as a pull factor for boys to remain. The Pendidikan Asas Vokasional (PAV) or Basic Vocational Education was introduced for some lower secondary schools in 2012 as an alternative programme for those with the talent and interest in vocational subjects[32]. This programme is focused on giving opportunities for children to develop their potential and to prevent drop-outs. PAV can be extended to more schools and include more courses that might appeal to boys.

The Malaysian government is also currently considering **extending compulsory education** to 11 years, covering secondary schooling. This may ensure students of all genders to remain in school.

At the same time, **discussions on gender-in-education should focus equally on boys** and policymakers should seek strategies to address the particular needs of male students.

3.5 ADDRESSING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

More than half of all registered children with disabilities are not enrolled in mainstream education or in special education schools.

In Malaysia, several education options are available for children with physical and learning disabilities, but schools with such facilities are usually located in urban areas. Hence, children with disabilities in rural areas still lack access to school[33].

However, even with the provision of special education systems, not all children are provided with the specific intervention or learning they require due to high costs, shortage of specialised teachers, inadequate infrastructure, assistive technology and lack of public awareness.

Parents perceive education as unnecessary or beyond the capability of their children with disabilities, which make them reluctant to put the child into mainstream education. Awareness and behaviour change campaigns must be encouraged to overcome social stigma and promote openness to disability-inclusion. Building the capacity of all teachers with disability-inclusion training in combination with disability-inclusive system strengthening of the Education Sector will help provide a supportive environment for both the parent and child. In addition, a more efficient person with disabilities registration system and systematic use of the Washington Group/UNICEF Child Functioning Module within household/institutional surveys and censuses, would enable better planning and policy implementation at both national and sub-national levels.

32   MOE, 2016. Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (KPM) - Buku Informasi - Buku Perangkaan Pendidikan Malaysia 2016.
33   Symaco, L.P., 2014. Perspectives on Practice and Policy: Success Increasing Access and Retention in Primary Education in Malaysia. Educate a Child.

Part Two:
Sabah Out-of-School Children
Side Study

Chapter Four

Invisible Children Profiles, Barriers and Policies

A young boy does addition on a whiteboard during mathematics class at CLC Java in Kesingam, Sabah.

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4.1 BACKGROUND

Part 2 complements Part 1 of this report by capturing undocumented children who would not be present in official data. A total of 138 ALCs were surveyed in this study and the methodology can be found in Appendix 1 (page 50). The data provided by the centres include insider information of what kept children out of school.

4.1.1 MALAYSIA'S EDUCATION POLICY AND INVISIBLE CHILDREN

Sabah hosts many categories of non-Malaysians, consisting of former Filipino refugees, regulated Indonesian plantation workers, undocumented or stateless persons, and the Bajau Laut, amongst others. There are also irregular migrants from Indonesia and the Philippines.

The end of the 1980s witnessed an influx of migrants from both Indonesia and the Philippines arriving in Sabah through unregulated points of access[34]. These arrivals are due to a mix of political and economic instability, such as the Moro conflict in the Southern Philippines and the desire for better economic prospects. The inflow of immigrants has become a cause of concern for the local population in Sabah, with Indonesians and Filipinos (whether former refugees or irregular migrants) increasingly viewed with suspicion. At the same time, the survival of certain sectors in Sabah is highly dependent on migrant labour[35]. In 2010, 85% of total non-citizens in Sabah are Indonesians and 15% are Filipinos[36]. Undocumented and stateless people in Sabah are not included in this statistic.

The term 'undocumented' can apply to both citizens and non-citizens without legal identity documentation. As of October 2017, Sabah has the highest number of undocumented children or young adults (23,154)

compared to other states where at least one of their parents is a Malaysian citizen[37]. Children in Sabah could become undocumented due to any of the factors listed in Appendix 2 (page 53).

In 2002, the Education Act was amended so that enrolment in Malaysian government schools would only be available to children posessing valid documents[38]. All children born in Malaysia are eligible to register for birth certificates[39], but this documentation is not enough to admit certain children to public schools. As of January 2019, the process for admission to government primary schools was simplified, which allowed undocumented children with at least one Malaysian parent/guardian to be enrolled[40]. However, this provision is not extended towards undocumented children with foreign parents.

For those who cannot attend public schools, another alternative would be enrolment in private schools, an unlikely scenario given that private schools tend to be more expensive and non-registration of births is more prevalent among families that are already living in poverty.

Children who cannot attend mainstream schools or expensive private schools can only access education through Alternative Learning Centres (ALCs), which are offered by NGOs, community and faith-based groups, and concerned individuals. A full list of available ALCs in Sabah can be seen in Appendix 3 (page 54). ALCs are not an ideal alternative to mainstream schooling due to a lack of certification, accreditation, and commercial value. The ALCs can also be subjected to crackdowns by some government departments because the non-citizen students do not possess valid papers for their stay in Malaysia[41].

34   Azizah Kassim, 2005. Cross-border movement of foreign workers in Malaysia: A comparative analysis. Master Builders Journal, 3. pp. 78, 82.
35   Kurus, B. Goddos and Koh, R., 1999. Migrant labours flows in the East ASEAN region: Prospects and challenges. Borneo Review, IX(2), pp. 156–186.
36   Lasimbang HB, et al., 2015. Migrant workers in Sabah, East Malaysia: The importance of legislation and policy to uphold equity on sexual and policy to uphold equity on sexual and reproductive health and rights, Best Practice & Research Clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Accessed in http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.bpobgyn.2015.08.015. pp. 2.
37   UNHCR, 2016. Filipino Refugees in Sabah: Global focus. http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/9993
38   Education (Amendment) Act 2002. Education Act 1966.
39   State Economic Planning Unit, Sabah (UPEN) & UNICEF, 2015. Situation Analysis of Children in Sabah. Kota Kinabalu: State Economic Planning Unit, Sabah & UNICEF Malaysia, pp. 15.
40   MOE, 2019b. "Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the Admission of Undocumented Children of A Malaysian Father or Mother", 9 January 2019. Accessed in http://jpnkedah.moe.gov.my/index.php/soalan-lazim/71-sektor-pengurusan-sekolah/600-soalan-lazim-berkaitan-penerimaan-kemasukan-murid-tanpa-dokumen-anak-kepada-salah-seorang-ibu-atau-bapanya-adalah-warganegara-malaysia.
37   UNICEF, 2015a. Mapping alternative learning approaches, programmes and stakeholders in Malaysia .Kuala Lumpur: UNICEF.

4.2 ALC STATISTICS

The majority of the ALCs in Sabah offer both pre-primary and primary level education simultaneously (Figure 4.2.1). One in four ALCs provide the schooling free of charge (Figure 4.2.2).

FIGURE 4.2.1

THE MAJORITY OF THE ALCS IN SABAH OFFER BOTH PRE-PRIMARY AND PRIMARY LEVEL EDUCATION
Level of education offered by ALCs (%)
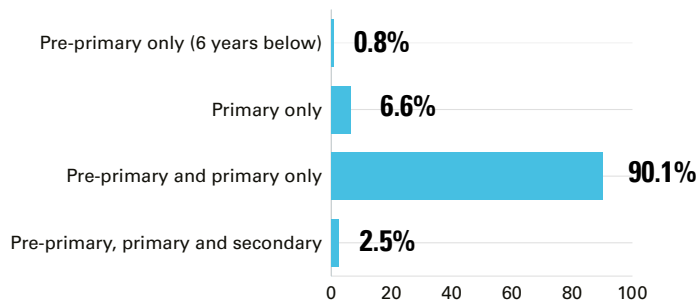
FIGURE 4.2.2

ONE IN FOUR CENTRES PROVIDE THE SCHOOLING FREE OF CHARGE
Number of ALCs that charge tuition fees (%)
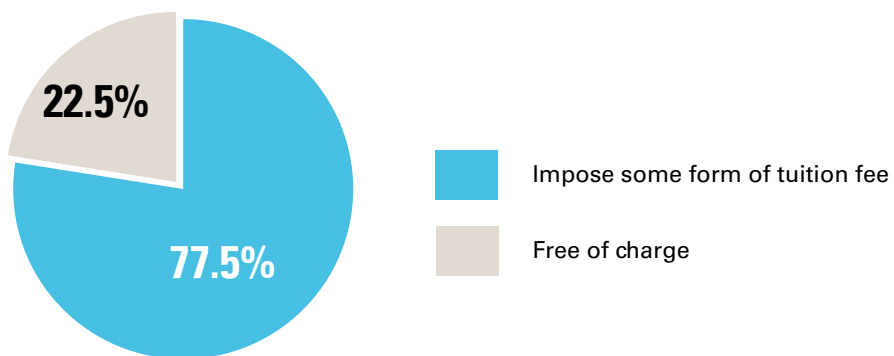
4.3 ALCS TEACHER STATISTICS

Slightly more than one in four (26.2%) ALC teachers have tertiary education (Figure 4.3.1). Almost all teachers are certified[38] (Figure 4.3.2) and the majority earn a salary (Figure 4.3.3). Almost one in four ALCs in Sabah are managed by a single teacher (Figure 4.3.4).

FIGURE 4.3.1
THE MAJORITY OF ALC TEACHERS HAVE UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION
Highest education obtained by ALC teachers (%)
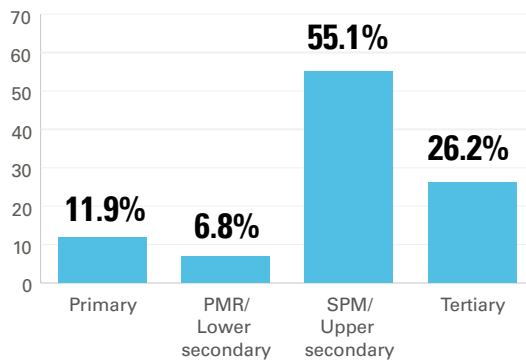
FIGURE 4.3.2
ALMOST ALL TEACHERS HAVE TRAINING CERTIFICATION
Teacher training and certification (%)

7.6%

92.4%

With training certification

Without training certification
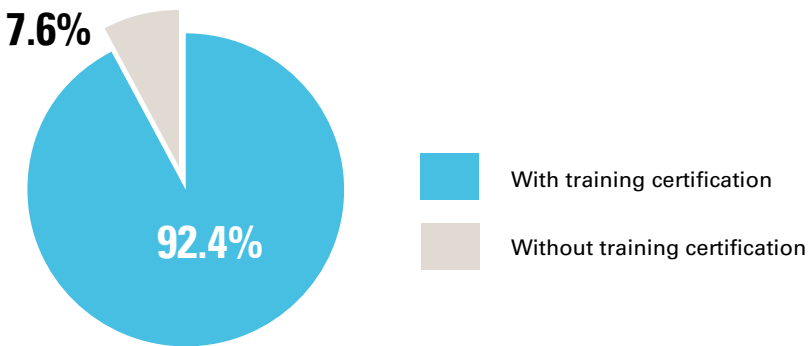
FIGURE 4.3.3

THE MAJORITY OF TEACHERS ARE SALARIED TEACHERS

Mode of work for ALC teachers (%)

12.4%

87.6%

- Salaried teachers
- Volunteer teachers
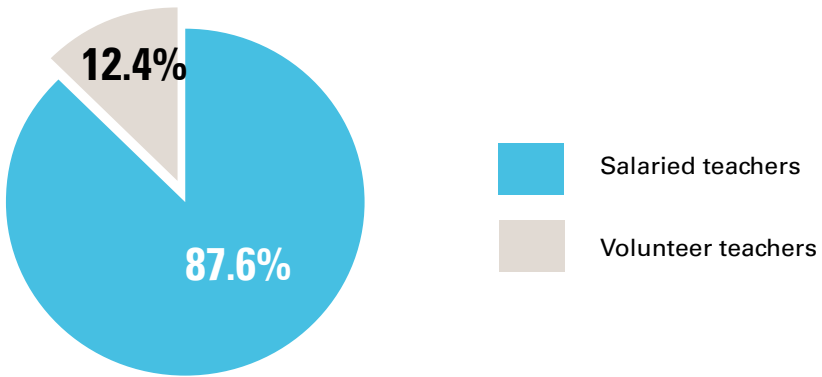
FIGURE 4.3.4

ALMOST ONE IN FOUR OF ALCS IN SABAH ARE MANAGED BY A SINGLE TEACHER

Number of teachers in ALCs (%)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
22.4%	26.1%	23.9%	10.4%	5.2%	6.0%	2.2%	2.2%	0.7%	0.7%
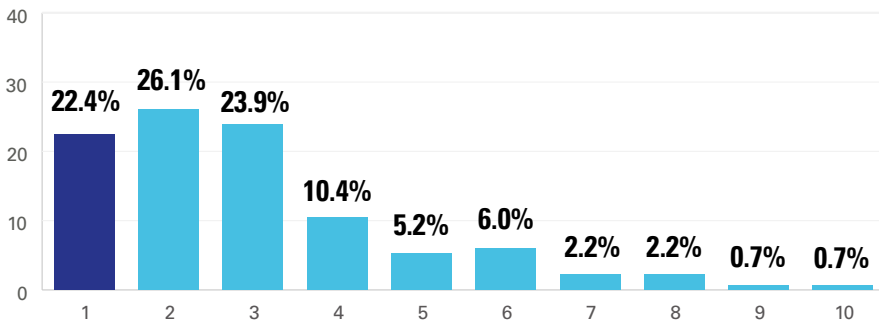
© UNICEF/UN0248142/Noorani

4.4 PROFILE OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL INVISIBLE CHILDREN

There are an estimated 18,781 children 'invisible' or missing from official government databases. 2 in 5 of these children are at primary school age and 1 in 5 is at secondary school age (see Figure 4.4.1). The difference between primary and lower secondary school level enrolment points to possible issues of child employment/labour, early marriage, and families moving from place to place.

FIGURE 4.4.1
MOST CHILDREN IN THE SAMPLE ARE OF PRIMARY-SCHOOL AGE
Children of the sample according to age group (%)
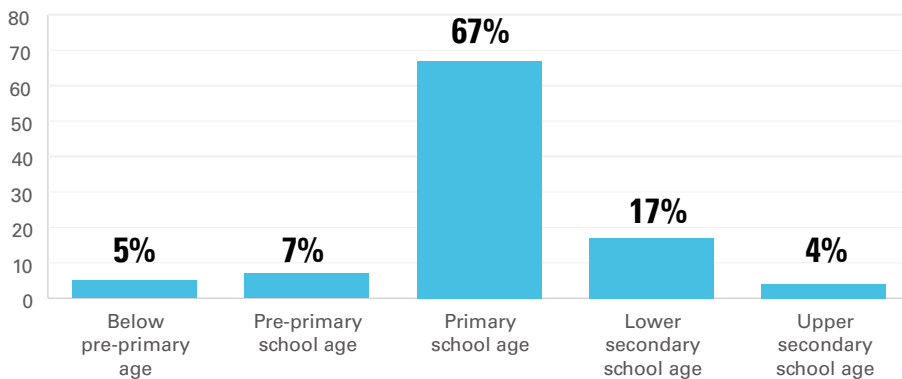
4.5 GENDER AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Almost one in four children (23.4%) have never attended school (Figure 4.5.1). Of this figure, slightly more males are not attending school (51.4%) compared to females (48.6%).

There is also an incidence of education mismatch, where pre-primary and lower secondary students are older than usual for the respective level of education. Almost 2 in 3 of those in pre-primary school are actually over-aged, due to late enrolment (Figure 4.5.2).

FIGURE 4.5.1

BOYS ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE NEVER ATTENDED SCHOOL
School attendance and drop outs by gender (%)
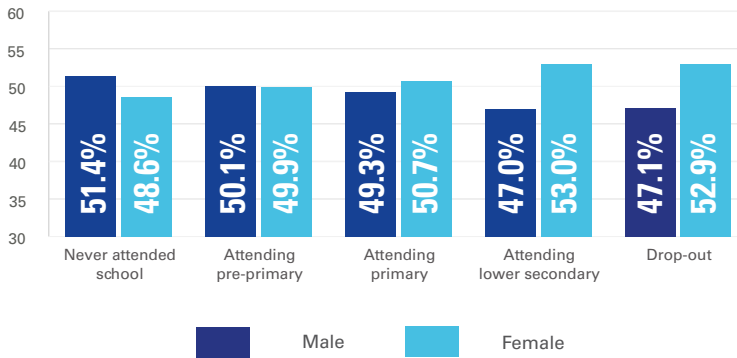
FIGURE 4.5.2

ALMOST 2 IN 3 OF THOSE IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL ARE ACTUALLY OVER-AGED. IT IS THE HIGHEST INCIDENCE COMPARED TO THE OTHER LEVELS OF EDUCATION
Education mismatch by ages of children attending school (%)
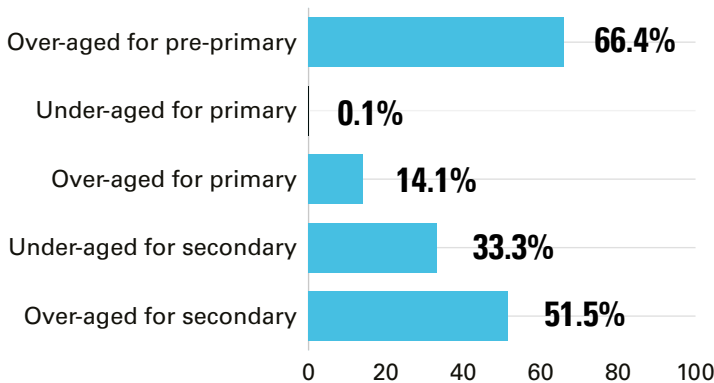
4.6 NATIONALITY

The drop-out rate in ALCs is registered at 2.2%. The highest percentage of dropouts is among Malaysian citizens (7.1%) (Figure 4.6.1). A possible explanation for the high drop-out rate among the local undocumented population is that they managed to secure legal documentation, thus being able to access mainstream education.

FIGURE 4.6.1
MALAYSIAN CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO DROP OUT FOLLOWED BY FILIPINO AND INDONESIAN CHILDREN
Drop-out rates by nationality (%)
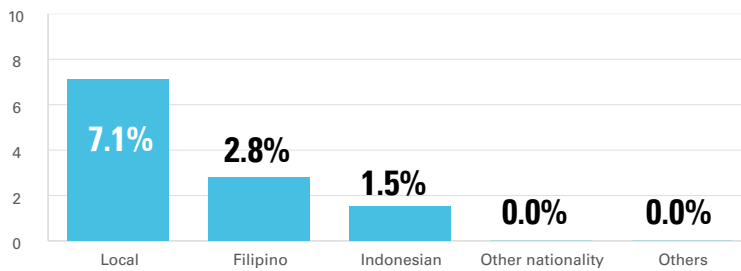
4.7 THE WORKING CHILD

3 in 10 children in the sample are working to support their family. Out of that, 3 in 5 (61%) are employed in plantations (Figure 4.7.1). 1 in 5 children who are attending school are working in the plantation sector.

FIGURE 4.7.1
THE MAJORITY OF WORKING CHILDREN ARE INVOLVED IN THE PLANTATION INDUSTRY
Types of jobs that children are involved in, by school attendance status (%)
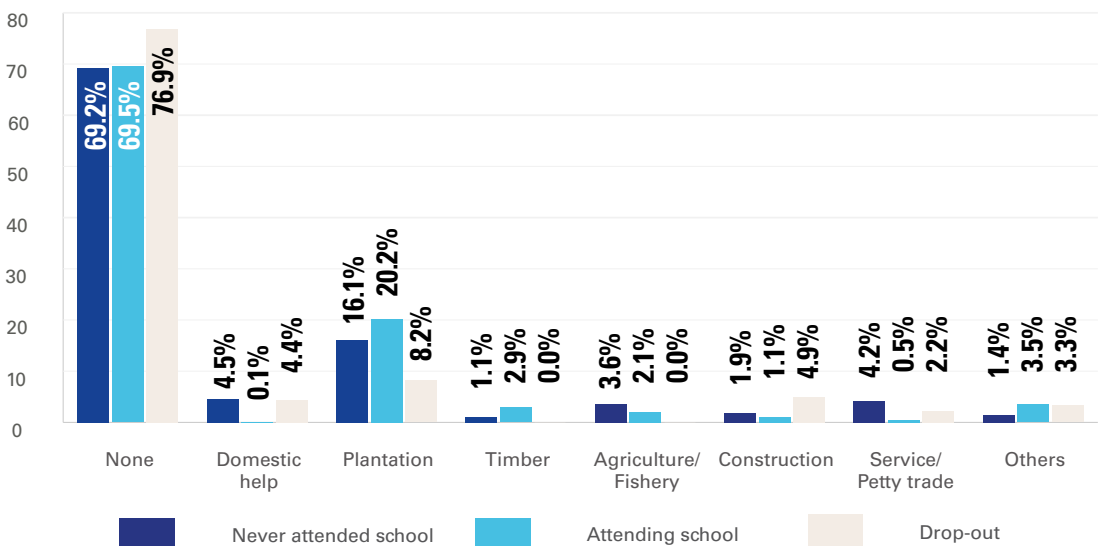
4.8 HOUSEHOLD INCOME, OCCUPATION AND EDUCATION BACKGROUND

Almost 2 in 3 households have a combined income between RM801-1200 per month (Figure 4.8.1). Given that the Poverty Line Income (PLI) in Sabah is at RM1,180 which is near to RM1,200, it can be seen that 94% of the households in the sample live in poverty compared to 2.9% and 0.4% at state and national level, respectively. Most of the parents are working in the plantation industry followed by construction and agriculture (Figure 4.8.2). Parents with no formal education are more likely to have children out of school (Figure 4.8.3).

FIGURE 4.8.1
THE MAJORITY OF HOUSEHOLDS IN THE STUDY WERE EARNING BETWEEN RM801-RM1,200 MONTHLY
Household income range (total population) (%)
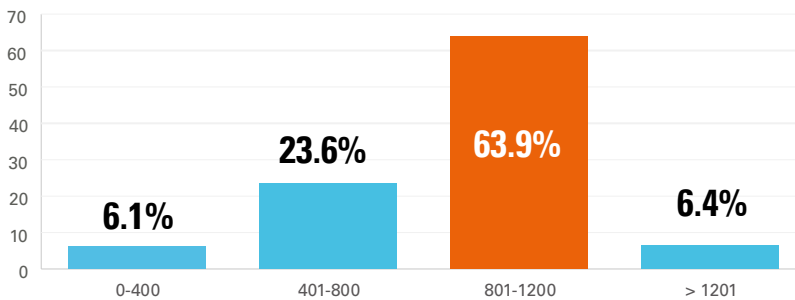
FIGURE 4.8.2
AT LEAST HALF OF THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLDS WERE WORKING IN THE PLANTATION INDUSTRY FOLLOWED BY AGRICULTURE AND CONSTRUCTION
Head of household employment status by sector (%)
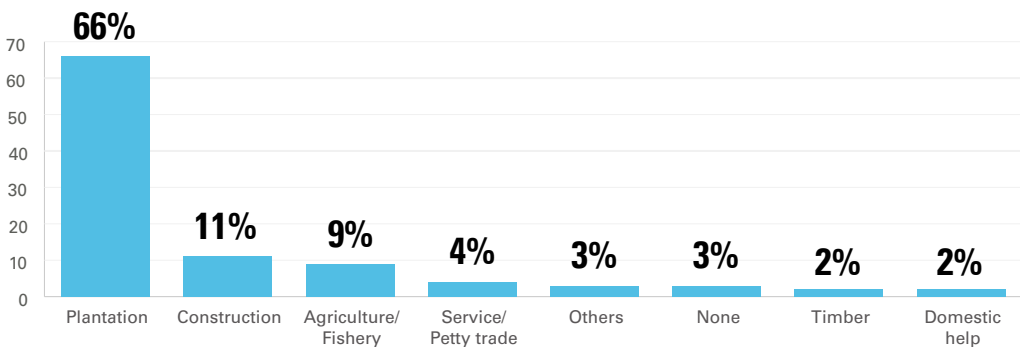
PARENTS WITH NO FORMAL SCHOOLING ARE MOST LIKELY TO HAVE NON-ATTENDING CHILDREN
Highest education of parent (father or mother) (%)
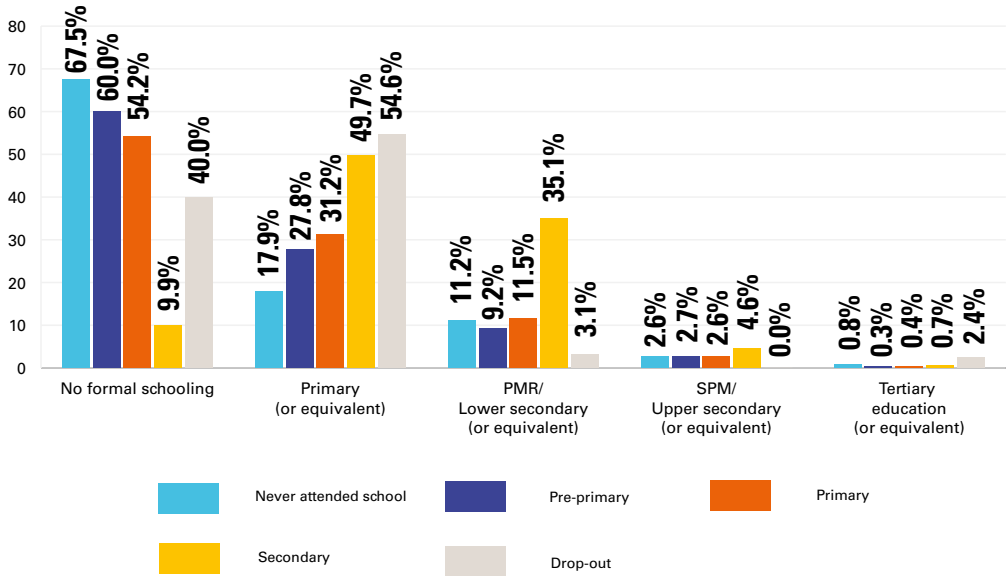
4.9 REASONS FOR NON-ENROLMENT IN ALCS

Figure 4.9.1 shows that the most cited reason for not attending school is financial (41.2%). Table 4.9.1 in page 52 shows a breakdown of reasons for non-enrolment. There are some slight differences in reasons for non- enrolment between males and females (Figure 4.9.2). Among boys, the most cited reason is inability to pay fees, while for girls, they are required to help with housework.

FIGURE 4.9.1
FINANCIAL REASONS GREATLY DISCOURAGE ENROLMENT
Percentage of out-of-school children according to reason for not attending school (%)
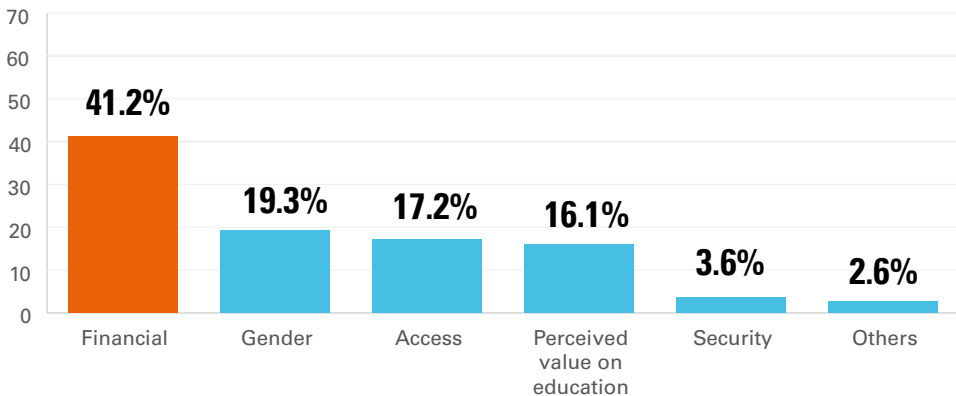
TABLE 4.9.1

FINANCIAL ISSUES ARE THE MOST CITED REASON WHY CHILDREN ARE NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL

Reasons for non-enrolment in primary level education

Reason	Description
Financial (41.2%)	Inability to pay fees
	Inability to afford school-related expenses (e.g. textbooks, uniforms)
	Need to work for income
Gender (19.3%)	Need to help with housework (e.g. cleaning, cooking, baby-sitting)
	Marriage
Access (17.2%)	Unable to register (e.g. existing CLC has reached its full capacity)
	Inconvenience (e.g. far from house)
Perceived value on education (16.1%)	Perceived mismatch of needs and provision (e.g. the education provided by CLC is not relevant to their needs)
	Parents do not value education
Security (3.6%)	N/A
Others (2.6%)	N/A

FIGURE 4.9.2

FINANCIAL REASONS REMAIN THE TOP FACTOR OF NON-ENROLMENT

Reasons for non-enrolment in primary level education in ALCs by gender (%)
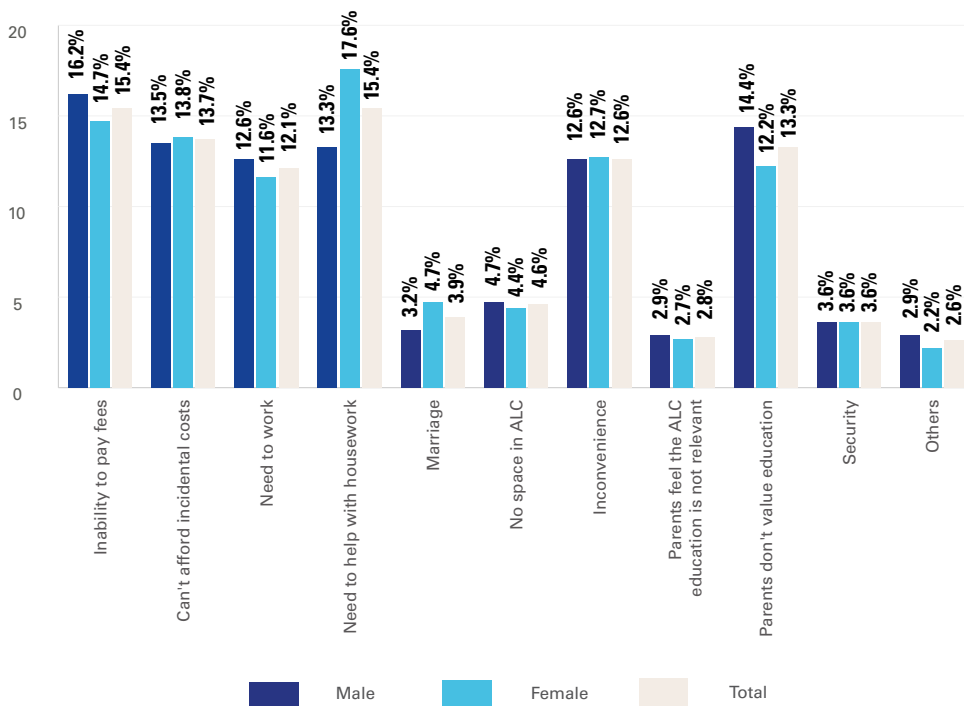
4.10 REASONS FOR DROP-OUTS IN ALCS

Similar to non-attendance, financial reasons greatly influence the decision to stay or drop out (Figure 4.10.1). However, there are two additional factors that influence dropping out (Figure 4.10.2): (1) no motivation to go to school, and (2) parents moving out of the ALC area.

A feature of ALC schooling is that the teaching-learning content is context-specific and the curriculum is not standardised. This makes the education more relevant to the target group. However, the non-standardisation does not make it easy for a student to move from one ALC to another. When families move to a new location, they might not continue schooling even if the new area has an ALC.

FIGURE 4.10.1

MORE THAN 1 IN 3 CHILDREN DROP OUT OF SCHOOL BECAUSE OF FINANCIAL REASONS
Percentage of drop-outs according to reason for dropping out (%)
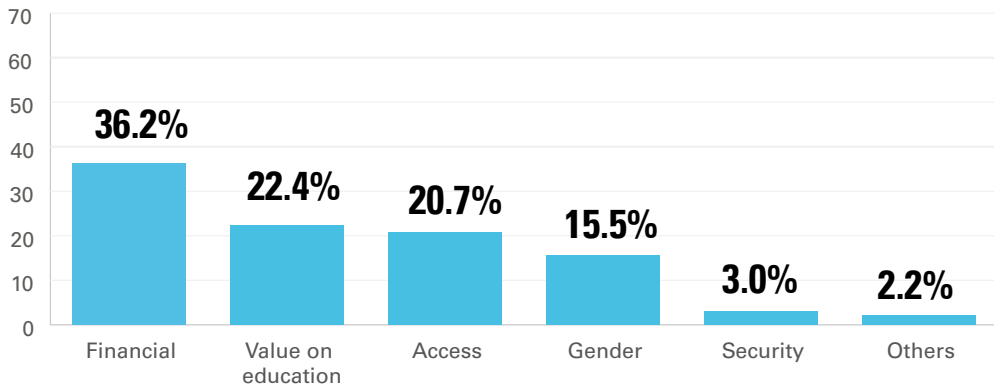
■ **FIGURE 4.10.2**

SIMILAR TO CHILDREN NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL, THE MOST COMMON REASON FOR GIRLS DROPPING OUT FROM SCHOOL IS DUE TO HOUSEWORK. HOWEVER, FOR BOYS, INABILITY TO PAY FEES IS THE MOST COMMON REASON FOR THEM TO DROP OUT

Reasons for dropping out in primary level education in ALCs by gender
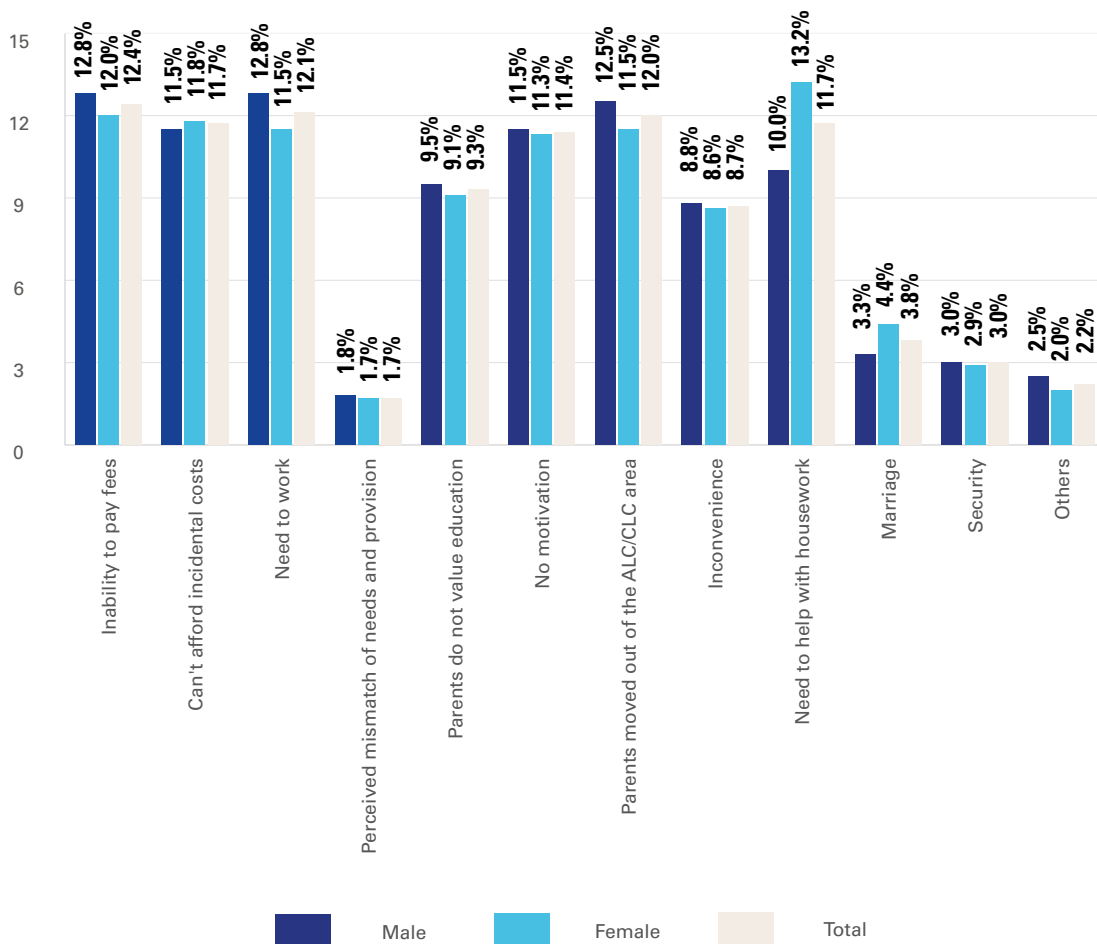
4.11 BARRIERS AND POLICIES

Table 4.11.1 recommends short-term and long-term policies for children who will only be able to access ALCs in the foreseeable future.

TABLE 4.11.1
Issues, barriers and recommendations both short term and long term

| Barriers | Recommendations | | | |
| | Short Term | | Long Term | |
	Policy/Action	Agency	Policy/Action	Agency
Poorly resourced ALCs	Establishment of a support group (e.g. NGO) to advocate support for ALCs	UNICEF	Establishment and implementation of capacity building programmes in ALCs	Ministry of Home Affairs
	Teacher training	UNICEF, development partners and the Ministry of Education	Establishment of education fund for children of plantation workers	Plantation owners
	Provision of Teaching Resource kits	Ministry of Education and corporate organisations		
Inaccessible education	Extension of education to secondary level	ALC providers		
	Standardised/common curriculum based on MoE guidelines, monitoring and quality control.	Ministry of Education and ALC providers		

■ **TABLE 4.11.1 (CONTINUED)**
Issues, barriers and recommendations both short term and long term

Barriers	Recommendations			
	Short Term		Long Term	
	Policy/Action	Agency	Policy/Action	Agency
Societal apathy	Promotion of awareness to plantation owners on the importance of education for workers' children	UNICEF	Alignment of ALC curriculum to workplace needs according to the context of the children.	ALC providers
	Integration of vocational skills element in ALC curriculum	ALC providers	Policy on compulsory schooling for plantation children.	Plantation owners
Lack of awareness on the consequences of exclusion and education for invisible children	Promotion of awareness among law makers, policy makers and implementers on the importance of education for invisible children.	UNICEF	Establishment and maintenance of an invisible children database.	Ministry of Home Affairs
	Consider the inclusion of education for invisible children in the next review of PPPM implementation.	Ministry of Education	Establishment of a consortium of governmental agencies, religious bodies and NGOs to identify causes and solutions related to invisible children and their education.	Prime Minister's Office
	Review of existing policies on invisible children and the provision of their education to identify gaps and establish actions.	UNICEF	Establishment of regional partnerships or network as a platform for the sharing of good practices, innovative approaches and trained manpower in the areas of flexible learning strategies for children at risk of educational exclusion.	Ministry of Education

Appendices

Sitting at her desk in her classroom, a young girl attends her lessons at CLC Nusra, Tenom District in Interior Region, Sabah. The school premises used to be a lumber factory. Yoseph Katen, teacher and principal, used scavenged wood and plywood to construct basic classrooms that now house 43 students from grade 1 to grade 5. The school currently only has 2 teachers.

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Appendix 1: Methodology

A.1 DATA SOURCES FOR PART 1

Data was extracted from the Ministry of Education's annual school statistics from 2012 to 2015 and the national Labour Force Survey (LFS). In the instance where no reliable data was available, the information was extracted from research studies and other surveys.

The decision to use the 2015 Labour Force Survey (LFS) data as a main information source is based on the following considerations:

(1) The data should be used with caution with all parties to avoid arriving at any "conclusive decision" based solely on LFS data (there is a need for triangulation with other sources or data providers).

(2) LFS does not cover Institutional Living Quarters such as hotels, hostels, hospitals, prisons, boarding houses, and construction worksites where there might be pockets of non-citizen school-age population in these areas.

(3) LFS does not include areas under the surveillance or monitoring of the Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM) where many non-citizens are located.

Additionally, the limitations of the EMIS data used to ascertain Dimensions 4 and 5 in this report are two-pronged, where there was an (i) Absence of data on private schools or other non-governmental learning establishments; and (ii) the exclusion of information on individual or household characteristics of students.

The data was arranged according to the Five Dimensions of Exclusion as shown in Figure A.1.1, page 51. The structure and scope of the study is shown in Figure A.1.2.

A.2 DATA SOURCES FOR PART 2

The actual known number of ALCs in Sabah is 170. Data on out-of-school invisible children is obtained via records from 138 ALCs (Table A.1.1, page 62).

Each ALC provider is specific to their location and target group. Many of the 138 ALCs are located on the East Coast of Sabah.

The questionnaire was designed and developed by the Research Team from January to March 2016. The form consisted of two main parts: Part 1 contained items about data of the ALC (set up, management, number of students and classes, teaching personnel, sources of funding, etc.) while Part 2 was more focused on the number of children according to demographic factors likely to contribute towards the incidence of non-enrolment, drop-out, or at risk of dropping out. Responses were conveyed via telephone conversations, emails and the occasional meeting directly with each ALC heads except for the Humana Lahad Datu office that was conducted by a middle point contact. After a period of data consolidation and analysis, the OOSC profiles were then presented during a technical workshop conducted in February 2017 and subsequently a roundtable discussion in April 2017 in Kota Kinabalu.

■ **FIGURE A.1.1**
THE FIVE DIMENSIONS OF EXCLUSION MODEL FOR MALAYSIA

Out of school

Dimension 1 — Not in pre-primary school — **Ages under 5**

Dimension 2 — Not in primary school, because have attended but dropped out, will enter later, or will never enter — **Ages 6 to 11**

Dimension 3 — Not in lower secondary school, because have attended but dropped out, will enter later, or will never enter — **Ages 12 to 14**

In school

Dimension 4 — At risk of dropping out from primary school — **Ages 6 to 11**

Dimension 5 — At risk of dropping out from lower secondary level — **Ages 12 to 14**

■ **FIGURE A.1.2**
THE SIDE STUDY IS MEANT TO CAPTURE THE STATUS OF 'INVISIBLE CHILDREN' IN SABAH
Structure and scope of the whole study

The Out of School Children Initiative in Sabah

Side study

Out of School Children Initiative Sabah Main Study

The Sabah OOSC Side Study (SOS)

Visible Children (Documented)

Invisible Children (Refugee, Stateless, Undocumented)

Profiles

Barriers

Policies

Profiles

Barriers

Policies
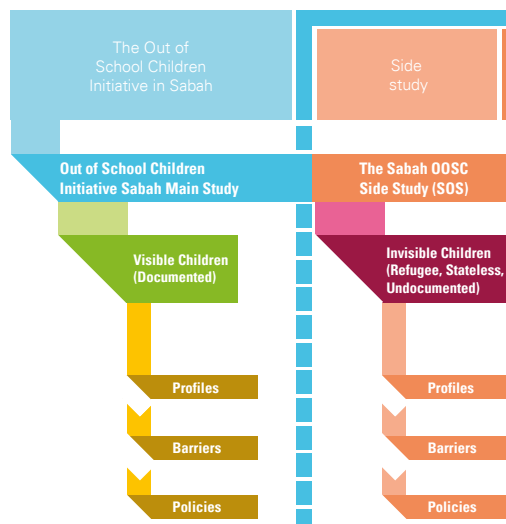
■ **TABLE A.1.1: ALCS SURVEYED IN PART 2**

ALC managed by	Total	Returned and usable forms	%	Remarks
HUMANA	137	122	89.1	Revised from 138 (UNICEF, 2015a) to 137 (MOE, 2016)
National Security Council	12	10	83.3	
CLCs supported by the Philippines Embassy	6	2	33.3	Several ALCs were raided by the Sabah Immigration authorities and ordered shut down in late 2015
Faith-based or NGOs	6	4	66.7	
Bajau Laut /Palau	8	0	0.0	Difficulty in getting access (Communicated with but no response)
Projek Jiwa Murni 3M Class	1	0	0.0	
TOTAL	170	138	81.2	

Appendix 2: Reasons for Lack of Documentation

■ TABLE A.2.1
REASONS FOR LACK OF DOCUMENTATION FOR BOTH MALAYSIANS AND NON-CITIZENS

Factor	Description
1. Mixed marriages	Couples in mixed marriages (marriages between citizens and non-citizens) where one spouse is a foreigner without legal status often do not register their children's births due to fear of the law, even though children of any status is allowed to register. However, the children are not automatically accorded Malaysian citizenship unless if the mother is Malaysian.
2. Traditional or customary marriages	Traditional or customary marriages are usually unions solemnised according to traditional rites or Native Law, which has no documentation. It is likely that the parents would also not register their children's birth with the NRD.
3. Children born out of wedlock	Children born less than six months after Muslim marriages are considered illegitimate or conceived prior to marriage. The infant will not be allowed to use the father's name in the birth registration. The social stigma associated with this ruling often leads to the parents deciding not to register their child's birth altogether.
4. Children born to single mothers	Some single mothers do not register the birth of their child due to fear of stigmatisation by society.
5. Children from rural indigenous communities	Some parents from rural indigenous communities choose not to register their children's birth due to inconvenience, lack of transportation and high costs of travelling to the NRD. A real scenario could also be that the parents were simply unaware of the need to register their child's birth.
6. Children born to undocumented foreign parents	Similar to the first factor, children born to undocumented foreign parents are more likely to be unregistered due to the parents' fear of the law.

Appendix 3: List of ALCs in Sabah

TABLE A.3.1
THERE ARE CURRENTLY EIGHT TYPES OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING CENTRES IN SABAH
Types of ALCs established in Sabah

Type of ALC	Description
National Security Council (NSC) ALCs	These ALCs were established in collaboration between the NSC, UNICEF and other parties. As of June 2015, there were 12 centres running. Only 10% of refugee and undocumented children are enrolled in these centres. NSC-run centres are expected to "serve as a benchmark for alternative education provided by a government body for non-Malaysians"[42].
ALCs supported by the Philippines government	The Philippines government provides support to these ALCs in the form of teacher training, resources and fundraising activities. This collaboration was only very recently formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in August 2014 between the Embassy and six CLCs in Sabah. There are a total of 2,200 children enrolled in these centres. They are allowed to operate as long as the centres function only three times a week and no uniforms are given to the students since the Malaysian government does not legally recognise them.
ALCs supported by the Indonesian government	In 2006, Malaysia signed a Government to Government (G2G) Agreement with Indonesia to ensure children of Indonesian migrant workers, legal or otherwise, are provided access to education[43]. Qualified Indonesian teachers are brought in to work in ALCs in plantations. All students receive annual financial support of RM125 (primary level) and RM220 (secondary level). An average of 300 students complete their studies every year with a total of 4,000 secondary school graduates to date. In addition, the Consulate awards scholarships to excellent students to continue their tertiary education in Indonesia.
HUMANA ALCs	Humana is an independent non-profit NGO in Sabah that aims to provide education opportunities for children living in plantations and other remote areas[44]. The early Humana, established in the early 1990s, catered to 70 undocumented children[45]. It is heavily reliant on foreign funding with donors such as the European Union (EU). A total of 9,615 children study in 116 Humana centres, although estimates vary from one source to another[46]. These children are mainly from Indonesian and Filipino families working in oil palm plantations.

42   UNICEF, 2015a. Mapping alternative learning approaches, programmes and stakeholders in Malaysia .Kuala Lumpur: UNICEF.
43   Ibid.
44   UNICEF, 2012. Education for children in plantations: An assessment of HCAS education programme in Sabah. UPSI.
45   Motlagh, Jason, 2013. Borneo: An expat teacher on a mission: Education for the youth of Borneo's palm plantations. 13 January 2013. Pulitzer Centre. Retrieved from http://www.pulitzercentre.org/reporting/borneo-malaysia-sabah-humana-child-aid-plantation-education-mission
46   UNICEF, 2012.

Type of ALC	Description
Employer ALCs	Sawit Kinabalu Group, a Sabah-state owned palm oil company, has in the past eight years managed 25 Learning Centres in 30 estates under its jurisdiction. The company provides education to equip their employees' children with soft skills to enable them to be later employed as supervisors. The children range between 5 to 18 years old and are taught subjects similar to the Malaysian mainstream curriculum. Education in the centres is provided up to Primary 6 level and students pay between RM2-RM50 monthly, not inclusive of textbooks.
Faith-based ALCs	Several individuals have started centres in rented buildings and private homes[47]. They usually only provide education up to primary level. The students, comprising both legal and undocumented Filipino refugees, Indonesians and a small number of Pakistanis, have teachers from Malaysia and the Philippines, as well as church volunteers. Undocumented Malaysian children are also found in the enrolment. The upkeep of these centres is sponsored by churches with a nominal enrolment fee usually imposed on the students.
Persatuan Kebajikan Pendidikan Kanak-Kanak (PKPKM) ALCs	PKPKM is a Sabah-based NGO that provides education mainly for refugees and undocumented people in Semporna and Lahad Datu such as the Bajau Laut, Filipino, Suluk, Visaya, and Bajau[48]. Malaysians (with valid documentation) who initially enrol in this ALC would usually go on to government schools. PKPKM currently operates six Learning Centres in rented premises and a mobile teaching unit that services islands close to Bajau Laut communities.
Project Jiwa Murni ALC	Project Jiwa Murni is located in Pulau Berhala in Sandakan, a Prisoner-of-War (POW) station during the Second World War. Although the official army census estimates there to be 978 children living in the locality, less than 10% are enrolled in the ALC[49]. UNICEF reported this programme as being "well received by the local community and … becoming a model that can be adapted into a pilot project for the basic education of stateless children in other areas"[50].

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47   UNICEF, 2015a.
48   Ibid.
49   Ibid.
50   Ibid, pp.73.

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