

Fact Sheet

October 2012

Education in Nigeria

Progress towards the six Education for All goals in Nigeria, Sub-Saharan Africa and the World

Indicator	Nigeria		Sub-Saharan Africa	World
	1999	2010	2010	2010
Goal 1 Pre-primary gross enrolment ratio (%)	8	14	17	48
Goal 2 Primary net enrolment ratio (%)	61	58	76	89
Out of school children (million)	7.4	10.5	30.6	60.7
Goal 3 Lower secondary gross enrolment ratio (%)	25	47	47	82
Out of school adolescents (million)	21.7	70.6
Goal 4 Adult literacy rate* (%)	55	61	63	84
Youth literacy rate* (%)	71	72	72	90
Goal 5 Primary gender parity index	0.81	0.91	0.93	0.97
Secondary gender parity index	0.91	0.88	0.82	0.97
Goal 6 Primary pupil-teacher ratio	41	36	43	24

* Progress in adult literacy is reported for the periods 1985/94 (left column) and 2005/10 (right column).

Source: UIS Database

Nigeria has some of the worst education indicators globally:

- Since 1999, the **number of out of school children in Nigeria has increased** from 7.4 to 10.5 million. The country is now home to the largest number of out-of-school children in the world, and represents **one in six out-of-school children globally**.
- **The primary net enrolment ratio has fallen** in Nigeria, from 61% of children of primary-school age in school in 1999 to 58% in 2010. Over the same period, the regional average increased from 58% to 76%.
- There are **24 million more illiterate adults** according to latest data than there were in 1985-94.

Many children do not even enter school in Nigeria and, of those that do, many do not learn the basics:

- Of those who start school, **80% survive until the last grade**. While this is better than the regional average of 62%, many children from the poorest households in Nigeria do not even enter school.
- Out of a cohort of **100 children, only 30 of those from the poorest households were expected to start school** compared to 93 of those from the richest households. This is one of the highest rates of inequality in access to school in the world. Of the 30 who do start school from poorest households, 28 are expected to complete.
- Late entry has an effect on the probability of children dropping out of school. About 27% of children in the first grade in Nigeria are at least two years older than the official starting age.

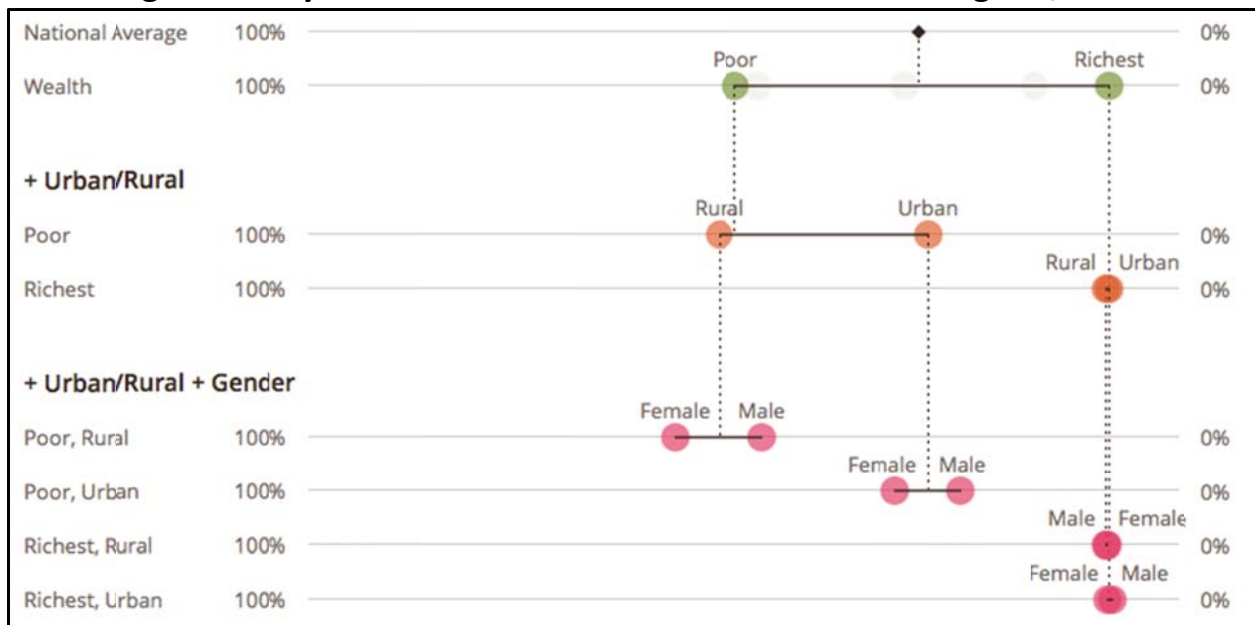
Amongst children from poor households, 42% start school two years or more late compared with 14% of children from the richest households.

- Another major obstacle towards universal primary education for poor households is the cost of education. **Average primary education spending per child by the richest 20% of households in Nigeria is more than ten times higher than by the poorest 20% of households.** This is mainly because richer households send their children to fee-charging private schools. Even low-fee private schooling is out of reach for the poorest households. Sending three children to a school in a Lagos slum costs the equivalent of 46% of the minimum wage.
- Primary education is **not of sufficient quality** to ensure that all children can learn the basics. Among young men aged 15-29 years in 2008 who had left school after six years of schooling, 28% were illiterate and 39% were semi-literate. The figures are even worse for young women, with 32% illiterate and 52% semi-literate after being in school for six years,

Intersecting inequalities by poverty, gender and where a child lives leave many children without the chance to go to school:

- There are wide disparities depending on wealth, gender and where a child lives in the country. While almost all boys and girls from rich households in both rural and urban areas have been to school, **58% of girls from poor rural households have not had the chance to go to school.**
- There are also wide disparities by region: **84% of poorest girls aged 7-16 years in the North West region** have never been to school, compared to only 18% of children in the South East.

Percentage of 7-16 year olds who have never been to school Nigeria, 2008



World Inequality Database on Education: www.education-inequalities.org

The long term effect of neglecting children's education leaves a huge skills deficit among young people:

There is a huge skills deficit among young people in Nigeria now facing the world of work:

- **Almost a quarter of young people** in the country have not completed primary school and, as a result, do not have the basic skills they need for work.
- This is equivalent to **over seven million 15-24 year olds**. Almost double the number of young women are affected by this crisis as young men.

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are least likely to have skills for decent work

- Almost all the urban rich reach lower secondary, compared with less than half of the urban poor.
- Young women are the worst affected of all. **Over half of rural women have less than a secondary schooling** compared to around a quarter of young women in urban areas. Only 15% of young men in urban areas suffer the same disadvantage.

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