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# Education for All Regional Report 2012 for Arab States

## Global Education for All Meeting

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# Introduction

Despite many commonalities, country differences within the Arab region are in some respect larger than differences between the Arab region and other regions. Some Arab countries for example have significant oil reserves and others have none. Some have abundant water resources while others have very little. In some countries, agriculture is still an important part of the economy while in others the services sector is dominant. The region's countries differ also widely in terms of population size, population growth as well as per capita incomes.

The Arab region's impressive progress in education attainment levels was characterized with the world's fastest expansion in the 1990s. This was accompanied by a progressive closing of the gender gap in formal education in many countries. This progress, while impressive, brought to light and accentuated a greater qualitative problem across the region.

The inefficiencies of the education systems in the Arab region have compounded the already great challenge of meeting the needs of modern economies. Given the massive economic and social differences between Gulf Countries and the other countries of the region, it is clear that the problems and their solutions vary greatly from country to country. However, in general terms, a growing number of youth have less and less prospects in the region. This is in part due to a significant mismatch between skills produced by the education systems and those required by the labor market in the region. The second dimension to this problem is the lack of economic growth in the region to meet the growing population. The economies are not expanding—especially in the non oil-producing countries of the region.

This situation has most recently been linked as a factor in the social upheavals on the Arab Spring. In its most visible context, ILO estimated that youth unemployment reaches 26 per cent in 2011. The youth were at the heart of the social upheavals in Tunisia and Egypt and have been mobilized across the region to express a desire for change. While the Arab Spring has not led to changes in the governance of more than 4 countries as of 2012, social upheavals have echoed in most countries in the region and the factor of youth unemployment and the deficiencies of the education system are clear factors in all cases.

In these four countries, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen, the changes are so great that the entire revision of the education systems have become a political priority. This will affect not only the curricular dimension of the schools including improved civic, religious and history education, but also the management of the education systems and the didactic approaches in the classroom. These realities changes may also be adapted to other countries in the region feeling the brunt of social tensions and calls for change.

In terms of main challenges for the region, almost all education systems suffer from shortcomings in regard to governance and teachers. Ministries of education assume important central roles, and more often than not they lack the analytical and systemic capacity to learn and adapt based on results of their systems. Teaching in the region is highly didactic, teacher-directed, and not conducive to fostering critical thinking. In addition the teacher shortage in the region is compounded by the lack of financial resources, adequate pay, and career development.

These are two major dimensions to affecting the quality education necessary for economic and social development in the region. Sustainable economic development also requires addressing basic literacy and lifelong learning needs in these countries. Skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and social responsibility are a must for the job market.

As noted above, the Arab Spring has come forth out of the youth's frustrations. The region's youth—one-third of the Arab population is under the age of fifteen—will mold the next generation of citizens. Investing in education reform today to encourage responsible citizenship will make all the difference for positive changes for the region.

# The Present State

## 1. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS EFA GOALS

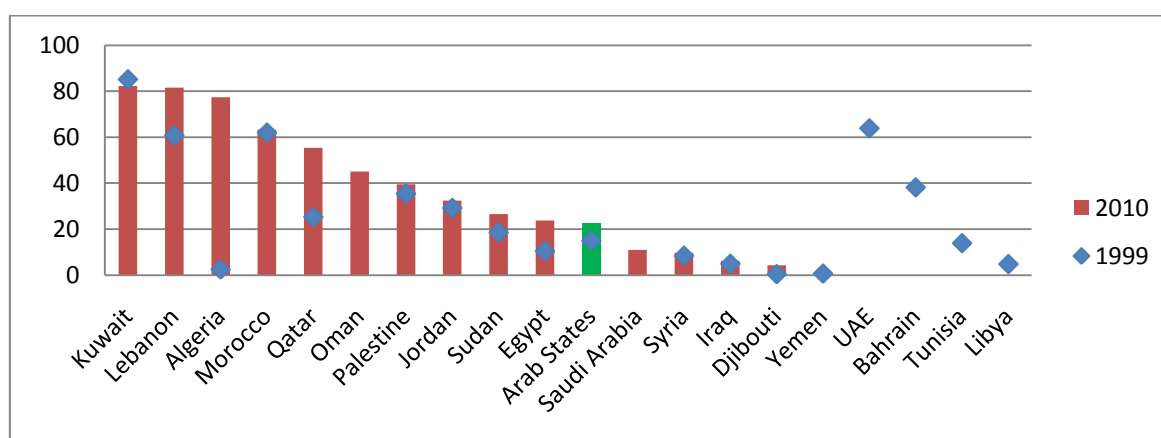
The achievement of EFA goals in the Arab region is facing various challenges. Despite the notable progress made in access to and participation in primary education since Dakar 2000, large numbers of out-of-school children and adult illiterates still have to benefit from education. Indeed, the region has made considerable progress in several areas related to the six EFA goals. Great progress has been made in expanding access to education and significant increases in enrolment ratios at all levels of education. In addition, progressive closing of the gender gap has been reported in formal education in many countries, although significant gender gaps continue to exist in adult literacy. There still remain grey areas which call for immediate action. Quality and equity remain however the primary concern of decision-makers and practitioners. The demand for education from new generations is increasing drastically.

## 2. EARLY CHILHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

*“Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children”.*

Empirical evidence points to links between participation in early childhood programmes, primary school enrolment and better results over the first years of schooling, particularly for disadvantaged children. Most Arab States do have a pre-primary education system for 3-5 year olds. In 2010, more than 3.9 million children were enrolled in pre-primary education in the Arab region, with an increase of 62% since 1999. On average, 47% of the pupils are girls. Considerable regional disparities exist in pre-primary education coverage. Among the countries with available data, Gross enrolment ratios (GERs) were above 50% in Kuwait, Lebanon, Algeria, Morocco, and Qatar, but under 10% in Syria, Iraq, Djibouti and Yemen.

**Figure 1:** Gross Enrolment ratio in Pre-Primary education (%)



Source: UIS, 2012.

Most countries in the region with available data have experienced increases in pre-primary GERs during the post-Dakar period, with rises of 10 percentage points or more in Algeria, Oman, Qatar, Lebanon and Egypt. On the other hand, participation declined in Kuwait.

The region has recorded notable progress in bridging the gender gap in pre-primary education, with the average gender parity index (GPI) rising from 0.77 in 1999 to 0.94 in 2010. The gender disparity in pre-primary education is particularly high in Morocco (0.72), despite the situation having largely improved.

As reported in 2010, all teachers in pre-primary had received some pedagogical training in Djibouti, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Palestine and the United Arab Emirates. Half of pre-primary teachers were however reported as trained in Bahrain and two out of three in Sudan.

### **3. UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION**

*“Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality”.*

Around 42 million children were enrolled in primary education in the Arab region in 2010, representing an increase of 19% since 1999, or almost 7 million additional pupils. Girls' share in the total enrolment accounted for 47% for the whole region.

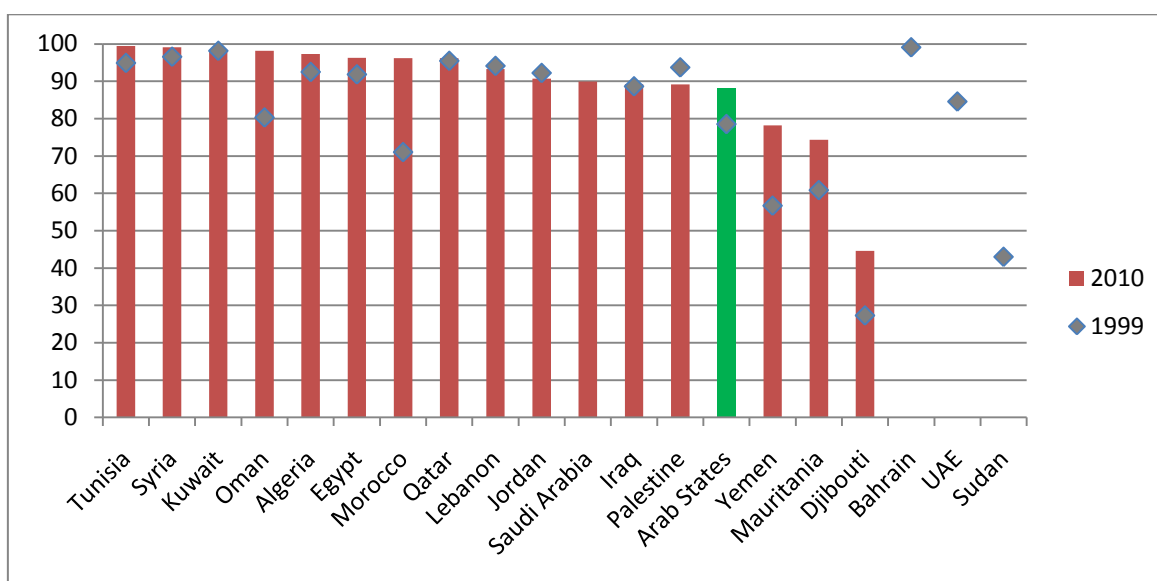
In average, 88% of the primary school age children are enrolled in school. Many countries are pushing close to universal enrolment with an adjusted Net Enrolment Rate<sup>1</sup> of 95% or above, including Algeria, Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Tunisia and Syria. On the other hand, in countries such as Djibouti, Mauritania and Yemen, the education system is facing serious challenges with enrolment rates below the regional average.

Progress has been enormous in Morocco and Oman which realized a genuine leap from low enrolment before Dakar to close to universal enrolment in 2010. Although Djibouti, Mauritania and Yemen have also gained between 14 and 21 percentage points in the net enrolment rate, they are still lagging behind the achievement of the universal primary education. The modest progress in the Middle East is mainly a result of the deterioration of enrolment rates in conflict countries. Indeed, enrolment rates have dropped by over 5 percentage points since 1999 in Palestine, due to continued Israeli occupation, and stagnating in Iraq.

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<sup>1</sup> Adjusted NER consider children of primary school age enrolled either in primary or secondary education.

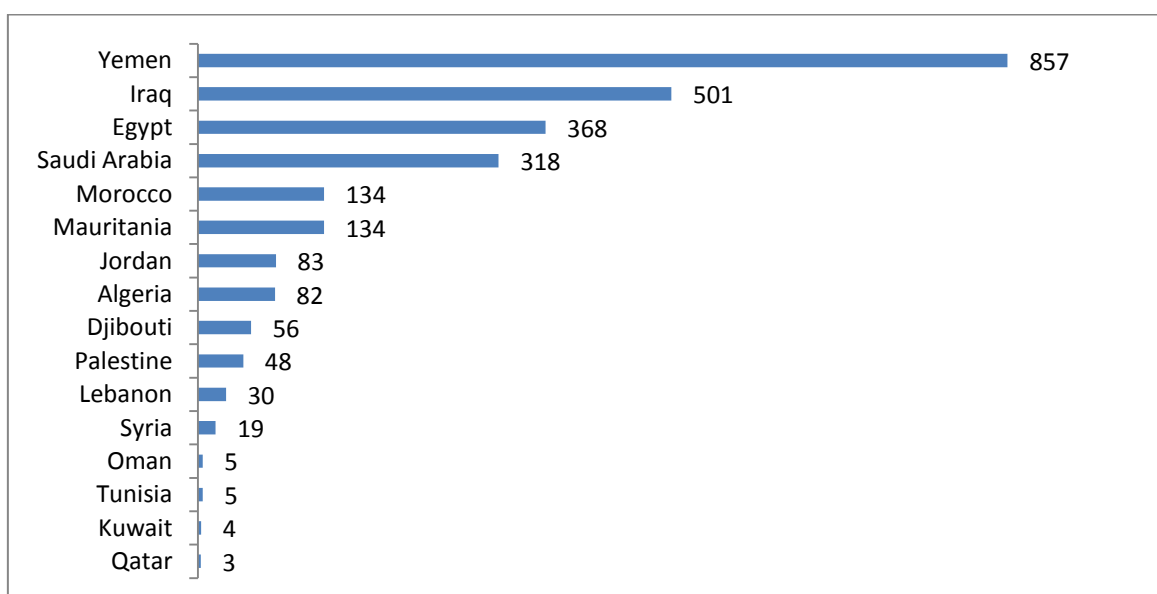
**Figure 2:** Adjusted Net Enrolment Rate in Primary education (%)



Source: UIS, 2012.

In order to achieve universal primary education, the Arab countries still have to enrol more than 5 million children of primary school age, of which 61% are girls. Even though this number has decreased by a third since 1999 (or over 3 million children), an enormous effort still has to be made by some countries to reach this objective before 2015. The available evidence suggests that half of the out-of-school children live only in five countries: Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen.

**Figure 3:** Number of out of school children, 2010 (in 000)



Source: UIS, 2012.



More than three out four of these children are girls in Iraq, Oman and Syria and around two thirds in Algeria and Yemen. Girls' non-participation is strongly influenced by religious, ethnic, geographical and security (particularly in post-conflict countries) factors. However, once girls enter school, they tend to stay longer and generally complete primary schooling. The gender parity index (GPI) of the pupils starting grade 1 and reaching the last grade of primary (survival rate to last grade) is indicating at least parity between girls and boys if not girls outnumbering for several countries.

Although school retention have been rising steadily since 1999, drop-out rates still remain high in Djibouti, Mauritania, Morocco and Sudan, with dropout rates from primary education of 36%, 29%, 9% and 9% respectively. On the other hand, other countries manage to retain a large proportion of their students until the last grade of primary education; such is the case in Algeria, Kuwait, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates.

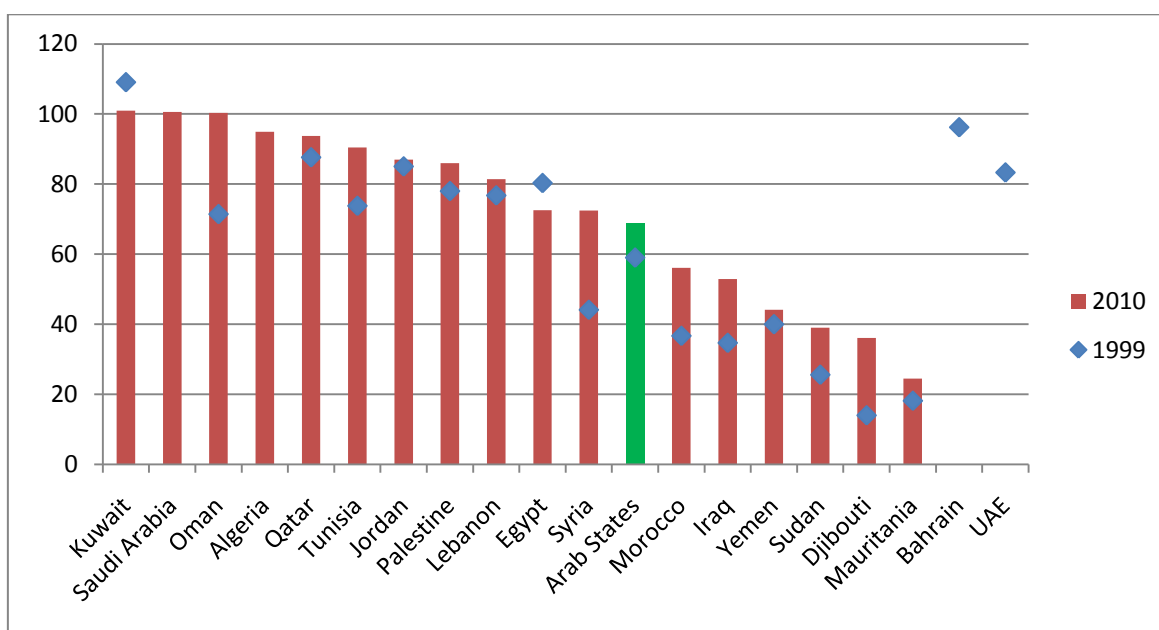
#### **4. LEARNING AND SKILLS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS**

*“Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes”.*

Monitoring the achievement of EFA Goal 3 is still facing methodological challenges, particularly in relation to limited access to information on young and adult participation to non-formal education programmes. A great variety of structured learning activities for youth are taking place in the Arab States, although the extent to which this supply corresponds to demand is unknown.

From the official data collected on formal education, participation in secondary education (lower and upper cycles) reaches in average 69% (as gross enrolment ratio). Several countries are lagging far behind this average level, including Mauritania, Djibouti, Sudan, Yemen, Iraq and Morocco where the GER ranges respectively from 24 to 56%. On the other hand, high participation rates are reported beyond 90% in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Algeria, Qatar and Tunisia. Oman and Tunisia have made a great progress since Dakar to get to this advanced achievement. It is also the case for Syria, Morocco, Iraq and Djibouti, although the current level of participation of young population is still low.

**Figure 4: Gross Enrolment Ratio in Secondary education (%)**



Source: UIS, 2012.

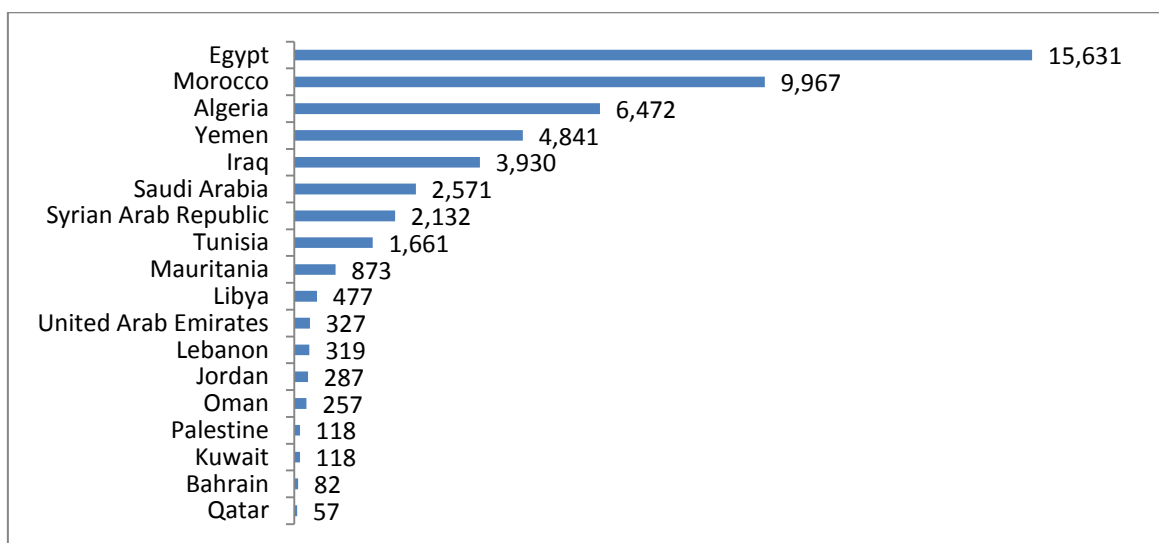
In average, only 8% of the total enrolment in secondary education are registered in technical and vocational programmes. Countries above this average range from 10% up to 19%, respectively in Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon and Egypt. Less than 2% are reported in The United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Palestine, Sudan and Kuwait.

## 5. ADULT LITERACY

*“Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults”*

Although the literacy rate for adults improved in average for the region during the last decade from 68% to 75%, the challenge of reducing the total illiterate population has been marginal. This figure went down from 51.8 million to 50.3 million, reducing the number of illiterates by 1.5 million only. If the goal of halving adult illiteracy by 2015 is to be achieved, breakthroughs must take place in key countries of the region with large populations, vast rural and remote arid and desert areas, and local ethnic diversities. Egypt and Morocco account for more than half of the regional adult illiterates. Algeria, Iraq, Sudan and Yemen are also countries where adults illiterates surpass four million each.

**Figure 5:** Number of adult illiterate population, 2005-2010 (in 000)



Source: UIS, 2012.

In the region, two out of three illiterates are women. In Libya, Palestine and Yemen they represent more than three out of four. Unless the region specifically targets rural female illiteracy, the problem will continue to challenge the move towards gender equity and rural-urban parity.

There have been considerable changes in methodology and approach, such as the regional move towards embracing functional literacy instead of the more traditional alphabetic literacy training. This has been supplemented by a regional trend to increasingly professionalise literacy service provision, in terms of quality and training but also in terms of managerial mechanisms and monitoring. In addition to that, in recent years and in particular in LIFE Arab countries the mechanisms of encouraging NGOs towards literacy work has been set up. Most countries have now well-developed national literacy plans and often a formalised unit within Ministries of Education or Social Affairs dealing with adult literacy.

## 6. GENDER DISPARITIES

*“Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.”*

Achieving equal participation for both boys and girls in primary and secondary education has been a challenge for most the countries. The 2005 gender target has been missed and most likely difficult to achieve by 2015. Indeed, only Syria and Oman met this target in 2010. Algeria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia met the target for one level and are very close to doing so for the other. Half of the countries with data met the target for primary education only. In most of them disparities in secondary education are in favour of girls. Iraq and Yemen however are lagging far behind parity in both levels. The situation is much

better in pre-primary education for all countries but Morocco with only three girls enrolled out of four boys.

All countries have made progress since 1999 in the direction of the gender parity goal in primary education, particularly for those who were far from the parity range such as Djibouti, Morocco and Yemen, bringing more girls to schools than it was in the past. No progress has been observed though in Iraq where still four girls out of five boys are enrolled in primary schools; the same level as in 1999.

The progress has been slower at the secondary level of education. Progress also occurred in Iraq and Yemen, however, they are still far from parity at this level of education. Other countries, however, such as Qatar and Tunisia, are moving away from the parity range to the disadvantage of boys.

Large disparities appear in the distribution of male and female students among the different educational programmes, such as in technical and vocational education and training (TVET). In the Arab region, the share of girls in technical and vocational education ranges from 10% in Kuwait to 43% in Egypt. Djibouti, Lebanon and Syria also have high proportion of girls participating in this type of education. On the other hand, TVET is planned exclusively for boys in Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Literacy is the area where women are the most disadvantaged. Less than eight adult women out of ten men are literate in Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan and Yemen. Moreover, for every three adult literate males, less than two adult females are literate in Morocco and Yemen. On the other hand, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates are the only countries where literacy rates are within the gender parity range.

## **7. EDUCATION QUALITY**

*“Improving every aspect of the quality of education and ensuring the excellence for all, so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all learners, especially in literacy, numeracy, and essential life-skills.”*

High level of participation of the Arab States in international assessment indicates a high level of political commitment to the gathering of quality evidence in the area of educational policy making. Ten Arab countries participated in TIMSS 2003, 15 countries in TIMSS 2007 and 14 countries in TIMSS 2011.

However, the results show low performance, on average well below the international average and below the indicated low benchmark. Results from TIMSS 2007 show that school systems in the majority of the participating Arab States were characterized by very few top-scoring students in either of the two subjects and very large numbers of students with relatively low scores. Clearly though, a system that provides a “high standard” for a small minority and a “low standard” for a large majority cannot be said to have achieved high quality for all.

Indeed, sizeable proportions of students in the Arab States eighth grade failed to master the basic knowledge and skills in mathematics after at least eight years in school. A large number of Grade 8 students in the region performed at the “intermediate” and “low” international benchmarks. Yet, a considerable percentage of eight graders scored below the low level (below 400) especially in Math. More importantly, with the exception of Lebanon, about 40% or more of Grade 8 students in all participating countries failed to reach the “low” international benchmark in Math. The proportion of students who were not likely to reach low score ranged from 26% in Lebanon to 84% in Qatar.

The performance of eighth-graders in the Arab States in sciences was slightly better than in mathematics, with somewhat more high-scoring students and fewer students with extremely low scores. Nonetheless, 40% or more of students in 9 countries failed to reach the “low” international benchmark. The proportion of students who were not likely to get the correct answer to a question more than half of the time ranged from 21% in Jordan to 71% in Qatar. Qatar with the largest proportion of low-performing students was only surpassed by Ghana (81%).

This is despite considerable resources allocated to the education systems in most countries. The share of the education expenditure in the total government budget ranges from 7.2% in Lebanon (country where the majority of schools are private) to 25.7% in Morocco. In most of the countries this indicator goes beyond 15%. Also, the pupil teacher ratio in primary education is below 30:1 in all countries but Djibouti, Mauritania, Sudan and Yemen.

## **8. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARDS EFA GOALS**

While large numbers of out-of-school children and adult illiterates still have to benefit from education, the demand for education from new generations is increasing drastically. Pre-primary education has witnessed an increase in enrolment but still suffers from a lack of investment, public understanding of its importance in a child’s early cognitive and social development and an overall lack of resources including trained staff. The way toward Universal Primary Education (UPE) has made progress over the last decade but challenges remain. National and international surveys of learning outcomes have also documented low levels of learning across the Arab Region.

Despite the progress achieved across the Arab region, the improvements in some countries will not be enough to reach all EFA targets on time. There is an urgent need for key policy actions in order to accelerate the progress and to remove the remaining barriers. To respond to the challenges—on the issues related to accessibility, affordability, cultural/social demands, curricular relevance and quality of education in the Arab States, a determined political will backed by the required resources is needed to provide the human, infrastructural, and financial resources not only to create but sustain change well after 2015.

# Accelerate Progress towards 2015

In connection with the assessment of the EFA goals achievement in the Arab countries presented in section 2, this section presents the reflections and the programs of UNESCO in the region relating to each of these objectives for the period that separates us today from the 2015 deadline.

## 1. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

The “present state” section has shown the lack of access in ECCE ranging as low as 7% in some countries, moderate (20 - 40 %) in some and high in few countries (Lebanon, Kuwait, UAE). The link of ECCE to primary education often appears to be very weak. A study conducted by UNESCO Beirut carried out in tandem with 3 field visits to 3 Arab States by international experts delineates some of the challenges facing ECCE in the Arab region, including; limited access; low political will; and a lack of systemic, coordinated, approach in the management of ECCE services.

In response to these challenges of lacking access and low quality delivery of ECCE in the region, and in follow up to Damascus and Moscow Declarations in 2011, the UNESCO Regional Office in Beirut has led the launch of the Arab Early Childhood Care and Education Working Group Platform and Website in collaboration with main regional partners (UNICEF, Save Children, AGFUND, and Arab Council for Childhood Development). The aim of this platform is to provide a place for early childhood professionals to exchange knowledge and experiences and to build bridges between those working in this field in the Arab World (see the website link <http://www.aecwg.org>).

UNESCO Beirut, in cooperation with the Arab Early Childhood Working Group, is also planning to hold a regional meeting in December 3 and 4, 2012. The Meeting will have the following key objectives and expected outcomes:

1. Sensitize stakeholders and partners on the necessity of positioning the ECCE agenda on top of the national priorities.
2. Orient participants about the ***Beyond 2015 Global Campaign*** and provide opportunities for regional input and contextualization.
3. Improve coordination mechanisms for the management of ECCE at the regional level, promoting cooperation and exchange.
4. Come up with a tangible plan for the advancement of the Arab Early Childhood Working Group.

## 2. UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

Despite improvement in net enrolment, gender parity in primary education, school completion and the important number of unreached children continue to act as an impediment to achievement of UPE in the region. Despite reduction of the number of out of school children, more than 5 million children are still deprived from schooling. Trends analysis shows that many of them will remain out of school in 2015.

UNESCO regional Office in Beirut, in collaboration with Arab Thought Foundation, is developing the Arab Community of Practices (ACOP). The aim of ACOP is to be an interactive platform for exchanging knowledge, trends and practices in education. The platform will focus on linking theory to practices at school levels and to provide the relevant knowledge to the unreached teacher and to educational stakeholders.

## 3. LEARNING AND SKILLS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

Many countries in the region are suffering from high unemployment rates, especially within graduates in both TVET and higher education programmes. Governments have expressed concern towards policies and strategies for enormous changes and development. Countries in the region are exploring mechanisms to activate education and training systems to enhance youth capabilities in the labour market. These include policy reforms, making the education system more responsive to labour market needs, and the integration of skills development in all levels of education, such as basic education, secondary and TVET, and higher education.

The integration of skills development in the education and learning system is faced with a set of challenges in relation to national and regional socio-economic development.

- *Youth employability and knowledge economy:*  
The lack of a sufficiently refined and integrated picture of labour market and skills developments impedes informing policy choices adequately and meaningfully. Bahrain and Jordan focused their educational system reforms during the recent years on *Knowledge Economy (KE)*, and how the education systems can contribute to improve the knowledge and skills of students and graduates for growth and job creation. Curriculum revision in all educational levels had been introduced in order to link education to socio-economic development. In Egypt, relevant success is in reforming the TVET system and shaping the contributions of the private sector and other possible international donors. Several countries are promoting youth role in society and economy, with focus on how to achieve better living conditions and decent work. Councils for employment and TVET were initiated in several Arab countries (i.e. Bahrain, Jordan, Sudan, and Mauritania) to coordinate government and private sector contributions to employment and TVET systems improvement.

- *The use of ICTs in education and learning:*  
In TVET there is a tendency to emphasize the “learning by doing” approach. The capacity for knowledge acquisition by greater investment in information and communication technologies (ICTs) infrastructure has been proven by different studies in the region. Students can learn “from” computers and can learn “with” computers to increase their computer knowledge and develop their thinking skills. The vision of learning through technology emphasizes the importance of all students having equitable access and use of technology (boys and girls), special-needs students, minority students, disadvantaged students, students at risk of educational failure, and rural and inner-city students. In Egypt, by enhancing ICT Infrastructure in educational institutes, there is an evidence for success, which involves the learner, the teacher, the content, and the environment in which technology is used. Another example is in Jordan, with the economic-based education ICT policy launched in 2004 by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.
- *School-to-work transition:*  
Currently, shortages of “decent” jobs, low wages, mismatching of skills, and inadequate curriculum for market needs, saturated fields, labour market pressures, weak entrepreneurial spirit, and the socio-economic exclusion hinder successful transitions from school to work across the region. The transition from school-to-work among youth is very weak in most countries of the region. UNESCO, ILO, and the World Bank promote effective linkages between education, training, and the workplace to ensure quality of skills related to the world of work. The objective is to translate high educational attainment into productive jobs for a stronger economy.

#### **Box 1: Iraq UNESCO Office’s TVET program**

The project Improving Quality of TVET in the Kurdistan Region (KRG) operational since the second half of 2010, addresses current and future needs in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Sector (TVET), with the aim to deliver quality education. The project has been supporting TVET in KRG by developing and strengthening the institutional capacity of the three main TVET providers in Kurdistan, namely: the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research – Foundation of Technical Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs – Vocational Training Centers, and the Ministry of Education – Vocational Training Preparatory Schools. Activities focus on strengthening collaboration and partnership with the private sector to increase students’ employability and to make the system more market driven; increasing employability and entrepreneurship competences, training teachers on modern teaching methodology, to improve the quality of the education; and raising community awareness on the role and importance of TVET.

Additionally, the Fighting Youth Unemployment through Education project, launched in May 2012, has been designed to tackle youth unemployment, fostering entrepreneurship skills for unemployed TVET graduates in the Kurdistan Region. The



current project is part of an ongoing effort of UNESCO Iraq Office to improve the condition of youth, equipping them with adequate skills to build their future. Thanks to the support provided by the Government of Japan, UNESCO Iraq has been able to develop this new project aimed at reducing poverty by increasing employment opportunities for youth and the number of small enterprises, thus further supporting the economic development in the Kurdistan Region. UNESCO will work to have: 20 teachers certified as entrepreneurship trainers; 300 unemployed graduates of TVET Institutes with technical entrepreneurial competences and skills for starting up their own businesses; 200 new small businesses opened by young graduates of TVET Institutes.

#### 4. ADULT LITERACY

The average adult literacy rate has been rising too slowly to counteract the effects of population growth. Most of the countries in the region are off track in achieving literacy goal. In particular, two third of the illiterates are women. Given this status of low progress and in the context of Arab Spring, UNESCO-Beirut is working with Arab LIFE countries in launching National Literacy Campaign. The work has started with Egypt in collaboration with UNESCO Cairo Office with the ultimate objective of achieving 50% reduction in adult illiteracy in Egypt. UNESCO Beirut is also in consultation with Yemen for piloting national literacy campaign modalities. UNESCO-Beirut is also leading a regional initiative called "Literacy Enhancing Arab Program (LEAP), in collaboration with ALESCO, IESCO and the Arab League. The main goal of the initiative is to achieve a well-coordinated Literacy program starting 2013 with focus on quality literacy delivery.

##### Box 2: National Campaign for Literacy and the Renaissance of Egypt

The UNESCO Regional Offices in Cairo and Beirut launched in September 2011 the **National Campaign for Literacy and the Renaissance of Egypt 2011 - 2020** under the slogan "Together We Can" under the patronage of the Prime Minister of Egypt and in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Adult Education Authority. The Campaign was launched as an umbrella for all projects, initiatives and activities in literacy and adult education in Egypt.

The campaign activities are scheduled to be implemented over two phases: 2011-2015 and 2015-2020 with the ultimate objective of achieving a 50% decrease in the rates of illiteracy by the year 2015 (EFA goal) and reaching an internationally acceptable literacy rate less than 10% by 2020.

The campaign's philosophy is built around partnership with government bodies, civil society, private sector, youth groups, and all concerned stakeholders to achieve the Campaign's ambitious goals.

To date, the Campaign has achieved the following:

- Successful launch of the Campaign in September 2011
- Production of a comprehensive information kit for the Campaign
- Second national conference for the Campaign held in May 2012 to discuss and present their possible contribution to the Campaign. The conference was preceded by an expert meeting to agree on the Campaign's workplan and partners' roles.
- Ministerial approval for formation of a Board of Trustees for the Campaign.
- Formation of five committees to carry on the core activities of the Campaign: Training, NGO's, Media/ Communication, Database, and Electronic Portal.
- Discussions with Egypt's Prime Minister are currently underway to secure his patronage and endorsement of the Campaign.

### **Box 3: Iraq UNESCO office literacy programs**

UNESCO Iraq Office launched the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment for Iraq in 2010 in partnership with the Office of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, responding to the main challenge faced in Iraq to Increase adult literacy by 50 per cent as well as to promote women access to education and life skills training.

The project with 6.4 USD million in funding seeks to ensure the formulation of a nationwide, coordinated response to meet the learning needs of illiterates in Iraq particularly focusing on women and vulnerable youth. The Iraq Office has provided capacity building and technical assistance for the approval of the National Literacy Law and the completion of the National Literacy Strategy in 2011 targeting 2.5 million illiterates by 2015. With the technical support provided in the project a National Literacy Campaign was launched by the Council of Ministries in the occasion of the celebration of International Literacy Day in September 12, 2012 targeting 500,000 illiterates for the coming school year 2012 with more than 20 million USD in Government funding.

UNESCO Iraq Office is also supporting the Government of Iraq in the implementation of the national literacy campaign in particular through providing technical support to the established National Literacy Agency with 3000 new employees enabling the effective implementation of the literacy programs for all in Iraq. Key achievements included the development of new curricula, the training of literacy facilitators and the establishment of 125 Community Learning Centers targeting 7000 vulnerable illiterates with literacy and life skills training each year (21,000 until 2015.)

## 5. GENDER DISPARITIES

Fighting the gender disparities and inequalities eventually needs specific programs. Nevertheless most of the programs concerning education take into account the gender goals in particular through the broader objective of reaching UPE and dramatically reducing illiteracy. The vast majority of unemployed young people are girls and with primary levels of education. Being female and young in the Middle East represents a double burden. The extremely high female youth unemployment rates were 30.8% in the Middle East and 30.3% in North Africa in 2009, according to ILO. TVET can be one of the best investments a country can make, especially when it is considering gender needs.

## 6. EDUCATION QUALITY

### **Strengthening assessment capacities**

As part of the Doha Declaration following the ministerial meeting in September 2010, the Ministers of Education in the Arab States recognized the crucial importance of monitoring education quality and the lack of national capacity in running assessment surveys and analyzing data for evidence based policy advice and committed to enhance regular monitoring of learning achievement. The Ministers stressed the need to develop a regional initiative in order to create regional mechanisms for continuous and sustainable technical assistance to develop or strengthen high-quality national systems in analyzing assessment data and offering contextual benchmarking for all aspects of education quality.

The Arab Regional Agenda on Improving Education Quality (ARAIEQ) has been conceived by ALECSO and the World Bank with the general goal of enhancing learning outcomes for all by improving the quality and relevance of education services. More specifically, enhancing learning outcomes entails shifting education policy making in the Region from a focus on inputs to a focus on results.

Five programs are proposed as pillars of the Regional Agenda:

- The Arab Program for Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis (APEEPA)
- The Arab Program on Teacher Policies and Teacher Professional Development (AFTP)
- The Arab Program of Early Childhood Development (APECD)
- The Arab Program of Curriculum Innovation, ICTs in Education, and Qualifications (APIQIT)
- The Arab Program on Entrepreneurship Education and Innovation (APEEI)

The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States - Beirut has been designated as the home to APEEPA. UNESCO Beirut is organizing support for countries to promote and enhance high-quality national mechanisms for assessing educational quality focusing on capacity building to provide sustainable technical assistance to develop or strengthen high-quality national systems in analyzing assessment data.

The overall goal of APEEPA is to strengthen national capacity in analyzing assessment data and offering contextual benchmarking for all aspects of education quality. The focus will be on analyzing, interpreting and exploring existing results. Arab States are heavily engaged in national and international assessments, but little work is done on translation of data into information, policy and practice. For example, to describe the educational outcomes, it is possible to use the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2011. Participation of 14 Arab countries in TIMSS 2011 provides a strong basis for monitoring the quality of education in these countries.

**APEEPA will consist of 4 main activities:**

- *Mapping of national evaluation system and learning standards*  
This activity will build on the outcomes of the Assessment Arab Network initiated by the World Bank with 7 Arab countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, Qatar, UAE). The mapping exercise will use the World Bank's SABER (System Assessment and Benchmarking for Education Results) diagnostic tools on learning assessment systems and learning standards. These tools will aim at assisting users to know to what extent the existing assessment system is part of the impediments to reaching the desired and / or stated goals of education quality.
- *Technical assistance to individual countries*  
Countries currently vary in terms of their capacity to develop and execute national and international assessment. It is intended to develop and offer a targeted technical assistance program aimed at the development of a comprehensive national capacity in the area of assessment.
- *Training workshops*  
One of the major objectives of an educational improvement initiative is to augment the capacity of the local policy makers, assessment and evaluation experts within each country. One way to do this is to organise a series of workshops which provide the training required to address previously identified training needs (identification of national educational issues, strengthening of analytical skills, measurement methodology, national reporting).
- *Policy seminars*  
Considerable data exists which can assist in addressing critical policy issues in the region and each of its members. A series of seminars will be organized with focus on key regional and national policy issues which have been identified as part of the training workshop activities. The seminar process could be used to identify areas at a national or regional level that could be addressed through policy intervention. It is expected that the educational policy makers will be able to describe the individual situations in their own countries, but also to place the issues in a regional context.

#### Box 4: Cairo office program on education quality: Supporting Quality Education through INEE Minimum Standards in Transitional Egypt and Libya

In both Egypt and Libya, the education system was disrupted for several months due to the turbulent political situation, creating major challenges for educational local authorities and stakeholders. In response, the overall objective of this project is to support the governments of Egypt and Libya to improve quality education in the aftermath of the Arab spring based on the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards, in addition to other UNESCO relevant normative tools. The project duration is eight months, and is funded by the government of Japan.

The specific objectives of the project are to:

- Reinforce national strategies and develop the capacity of educational institutions and personnel during and after emergencies through imparting knowledge and skills of the INEE Minimum Standards
- Strengthen the capacity of the education system to prepare for, prevent and mitigate the impact of disaster, through the development of disaster risk reduction and prevention (DRR) strategies.
- Ensure that education in emergency activities meet the challenge of ensuring quality education for all, through the creation of national communities of practice that are well versed in the principles and application of the INEE Minimum Standards.

To date, the project has achieved the following:

- Held a workshop in Egypt entitled ***“Quality Education Standards in Transitional Egypt and Libya”*** in June 2012. The objective of the workshop was to exchange experiences between Egyptian and Libyan experts and senior education officials in order to agree on priorities for quality education and devise scientific criteria for the creation of a national team of trainers to support quality education in the current transitional phase.
- Held a **Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop in Egypt on Managing Educational Crises**. The workshop targeted 28 technical officials from the Egyptian Ministry of Education (MoE). The objective of the workshop was to introduce participants to the INEE standards, train them on adult learning techniques, and enable them to develop a full set of tools required to implement a **Managing Education in Crisis Situations** package that can be tailored to the specific needs of their respective governorates.
- Held **six roll-out training workshops** for 170 MoE technical officials from eight Egyptian governorates during September 2012. The roll-out training workshops introduced participants to INEE standards and how they can be contextualized to benefit the quality of education in Egypt. Similar roll-out workshops will take place in Libya in October 2012.

### Box 5: Iraq office program on education quality

- As part of UNESCO's efforts to improve the quality of Education in Iraq, a comprehensive Needs Assessment of the education sector is underway to assess the main causes that are hindering access to, and quality of, education, and to support the reconstruction and modernization of the education sector. The project already provided relevant stakeholders with the essential skills to undertake in-depth education assessments, surveys, and future analysis. The final outcome of the assessment will offer the indispensable information for education planners and decision makers. This Joint Programme involving UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO and UN-Habitat, aims at initiating a vital modernisation process which will entail reform, decentralization of services and enhanced citizen participation. With national partners and UNICEF, UNESCO produced a draft joint road map for Education sector reform, which was presented to the Iraqi authorities.
- UNESCO, in partnership with UNICEF and the World Bank, provided technical assistance to review some items of Iraq's National Education Strategy document and to incorporate a Monitoring and Evaluation component.
- The Teacher Training Program for Basic and Secondary Education and the Developing New Iraqi Curricula Office project, both implemented in partnership with Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, also have a direct positive impact on the quality of education in Iraq.
- UNESCO has also been working to build the institutional capacity of relevant stakeholders in planning, managing and monitoring in-service teacher training. UNESCO has been working to strengthen the institutional support structures at the central and regional levels, while providing technical assistance to develop the capacity of curriculum developers, textbook authors, teachers, school supervisors, and headmasters to develop and implement new curricula, as well as syllabi, and learning materials.

### Improving curriculum and teacher training

As in the case of other components of education systems, the situation in the Arab States with regard to curriculum and teachers, as main factors influencing education quality, is quite diverse. Attempts were made in several countries to revise the curriculum comprehensively, based on a new education/curriculum vision (i.e. Iraq, Kuwait) and in some other countries intentions towards such reforms were expressed recently (i.e. Libya, Sudan). Nevertheless many countries in the Region still need to develop such coherent visions that should drive curriculum renewal/improvement efforts. It is also worth mentioning that, owing to the Arab Spring events, several efforts to comprehensively revise the curriculum in countries like Syria and Egypt have now been put on hold.

Some of the Maghreb countries (i.e. Tunisia, Morocco), that adopted "competency-based curricula" some years ago, are still facing the need of aligning curricula, teacher training and assessment. Because the implementation of such

competency-driven curricula was insufficiently prepared there were confusions and rejection of the curriculum by the teachers, especially in rural and poor areas. In other countries (i.e. Qatar, Jordan, Palestine), attempts are made to align curricula and teacher training based on national standards, in line with international “effective/promising” practices, which requires substantive efforts in balancing tradition and innovation and/or what is considered “local” and what is considered “international/world – class”.

Despite the Region efforts to modernize curricula and teacher training, several major challenges ought to be considered, among which are the following:

- **Comprehensive vision and systematic approaches.** There is a need of grounding curriculum changes on sound and comprehensive education/curriculum visions that should be spelled out in curriculum policy documents, such as curriculum frameworks. Doing this, excessive piecemeal reform could be avoided, as well as an excessive emphasis on textbooks and rote learning, which is still the case in many Arab countries.
- **Time allocation.** While the school year’s length is being weighted differently by analysts, as well as its impact on education quality, it is obvious that countries in the Arab Region have in average a much shorter school year than countries in other parts of the world. If in Europe, for instance the length of the school year varies from 175 working days to 200 or even 220, which in average counts for 37-39/40 weeks, in some Arab States, the school year stands around 34 weeks or less.
- **Curriculum balance.** Arab countries tend to privilege certain curriculum areas, such as Religious Education, Math and Science, and Languages, while Social studies, Arts, Physical Education and Technology are benefitting usually of much less time. This leads to certain imbalances in the curriculum, while it also makes difficult for schools and teachers to introduce new emerging issues, such as ESD, HIV-AIDS and citizenship education. It is relevant, in this respect, that, while the participation of Arab countries in the TIMSS studies is quite notable, no Arab State was part of the IEA-led CIVED studies on the presence of citizenship education within national curricula and the development of citizenship skills among students.
- **Curriculum implementation: translating the vision into practice.** As stated in numerous studies and reports, the (mainly) top-down approaches within centralized curriculum systems in the Arab States makes it difficult for schools and teachers to apply the curriculum flexibly in order to make it more relevant for learners and their environments/communities. It would be recommended that teachers and other stakeholders be involved in curriculum decisions more effectively, including with regard to ways of quality curriculum implementation at school level through more effective school-community cooperation.
- **Cross-cutting and emerging issues.** In recent years, many Arab countries have been involved in international and regional projects promoting intercultural dialogue and peace education, which, among other, had a positive impact on textbook revision from the perspective of learning to live together. There is less emphasis on gender issues, such as promoting gender equality and fighting against gender-based violence (GBV) and discrimination. Only in very few countries (Lebanon) textbook analysis from gender perspective was carried out with a view

to inform education policies aiming at future textbook revision and the revision of teacher training strategies.

- **Interactive pedagogy and skills development (including higher-order intellectual skills, social, emotional, and motor skills).** Since teaching and learning strategies are mainly teacher-, subject-, and -assessment-driven, there is a need to train teachers in the usage of interactive, learner-friendly approaches that privilege the development of skills, as the operational dimension of knowledge (i.e. how to use knowledge in the context of real-life situations, problem-solving, project work, community service). Teacher training (as well as the training of headmasters) needs to include new concepts and approaches, such as the “whole-school” and “whole-child” approaches by highlighting their added value to quality education and the enhancement of quality learning processes and outcomes.
- **ICTs in education and e-learning.** Whereas Arab countries are usually highly interested in promoting ICTs in education and e-learning, only some (i.e. Jordan, Gulf States) have done systematic efforts in this regard. However, there is less emphasis on using the new social media in education and learning, as well as on critically analyzing their advantages and risks for personal and societal development.

Over the next years, international organizations, such as UNESCO, ALECSO and the World Bank, will further support the efforts of the Arab countries in aligning their curricula, teacher training and assessment more effectively based on future-oriented and forward-thinking education/curriculum visions. Such visions should help enhance the curriculum quality and relevance by also avoiding fragmentation, unnecessary repetitions and gaps that currently engender student overload and lack of motivation. Special efforts need also to be made on infusing the curricula with the values, principles and practices of learning to live together (LTLT) and of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), with an emphasis on gender equality and intercultural understanding.



# Preparation for Beyond 2015

Less than three years remain until the 2015 target date, and although the Arab region has witnessed impressive progress in some countries, the prospects for achieving the EFA goals are not promising. Advances made in access have often hidden persistent and significant challenges in other areas, notably the quality and relevance of education. Many countries are not on track to meeting the international goals for education. As we approach the critical 2015 juncture, the timing has never been better to give stronger impetus to the global movement for education. Urgent and strategic actions are needed to meet the six EFA goals, in particular mobilizing stronger political and financial commitment at the country, regional and global levels.

At the Regional Consultation on EFA held in Sharjah (UAE) from 10 to 12 July 2010, the EFA coordinators from Arab countries shared and exchanged on EFA achievements and challenges in view of the 2015 target. The participants agreed on the idea of organizing a Regional Forum in mid 2012 taking stock of progress and a critical review of achievements, challenges and priorities. UNESCO Beirut Office organised this EFA regional forum on 15-16 October 2012. This meeting also builds on the outcomes of the first meeting of the EFA Steering Committee (Paris, 11-12 June 2012). The overall objective of the meeting was to encourage countries to plan and implement the 2015 EFA assessment and contribute to setting the post-2015 agenda.

Specific objectives of the meeting aimed at:

- Tacking stock of the country EFA monitoring in terms of coordination mechanisms and reporting: country papers stating status vis-à-vis the EFA goals and what is being done to accelerate progress to 2015;
- Review of the reformed EFA Coordination architecture and sharing the outcomes of the first meeting of the new EFA Steering Committee: Implications for EFA coordination in the Arab region
- Setting the EFA regional road map towards 2015: launch of the national EFA achievement in-depth assessment since 2000 (building on the regional EFA mid-term review in 2008), regional meetings and workshops, technical assistance, etc.
- Brainstorming for the EFA post-2015 agenda: identification of main EFA challenges.

The outcomes of the EFA regional forum are the following:

- ***Strengthening linkages between national, regional and global levels***  
During the upcoming years, UNESCO envisages facilitating policy dialogue and knowledge sharing; mobilizing financial support; and undertaking advocacy. In order to achieve this, UNESCO has critically reviewed the EFA coordination mechanism in collaboration with its EFA partners. This review process of the global EFA coordination mechanism took place as a response to the Addis Ababa

Declaration adopted at the Ninth Meeting of the HLG on EFA (Ethiopia, 23-25 February 2010) requesting UNESCO to propose concrete measures to improve EFA coordination.

The new coordination mechanism is designed to offer a strategic platform to revitalize the EFA movement by increasing support to EFA and to enable UNESCO to fulfil its mandate as the global EFA coordinator. A participatory process for selecting Member States' representatives to the GEM (Global Education Meeting) has been introduced to increase country ownership. For the Arab region, the representative countries are Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan. Saudi Arabia is also representing the region in the EFA Steering Committee. UNESCO's role will be to support countries in their efforts to meet the EFA goals and to scale up successful initiatives; prepare a framework and guidelines for the national EFA assessments and assist countries to undertake them; organize regional and global EFA review meetings; and coordinate the process for defining the post-2015 education and development agendas.

- ***Regional overview on EFA monitoring mechanisms***

The regional overview is based on the information collected from 19 Arab countries using the EFA Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms questionnaire specifically designed for this purpose. The questionnaire collected information on EFA national plans (general characteristics, involvement of stakeholders, and implementation requirements), monitoring and evaluation systems and mechanisms (technical characteristics, operational requirements, institutional structures, plan indicators and purposes, monitoring methods, dissemination of monitoring results, challenges, weaknesses, and gaps in monitoring systems).

The review revealed that in the majority of Arab states there is no separation between the bodies involved in the implementation of the EFA plan and those concerned with follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation. In addition to that, there is no institutional structure responsible for the plan's implementation, follow-up, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Overall, Arab states reported that monitoring and evaluation is part of their plans, however, it was noted that drawing up monitoring components and activities came at a later stage subsequent to the development of the EFA plans. Arab States differ in their national EFA plans and monitoring with some being confined to the Dakar Framework of Action goals, while others being part of more comprehensive plans for educational reform.

The survey showed that monitoring plans take into account technical considerations such as clarity of goals and identifying data and indicators, but they mostly fail to fulfil elements associated with effective communication, coordination, and dissemination of monitoring and evaluation findings. Monitoring plans benefit from political support but suffer obvious shortcomings related to the efficiency of human resources, information systems, communication channels, coordination among all parties, and ongoing capacity building programs.

Quantitative indicators seem predominant in the monitoring plans and reflect to a large extent the global indicators framework. However, plans clearly lack indicators related to the impact of the programs included in the national EFA plans. The objectives of the monitoring systems are not very focused. Monitoring methodologies are predominantly self-implemented internal activities by the Ministries of Education. Monitoring activities rely on databases and available information and the analysis of reports and quantitative surveys. Qualitative methods are not as clearly prevalent.

The majority of Arab countries reported that they had made use of monitoring results in a wide range of purposes, particularly in developing policies and reviewing programs and time schedules, but to a lesser extent in strengthening national structures concerned with coordinating EFA format and the level of technical expertise to implement the plans.

The review also showed weak and scattered institutional structures responsible for monitoring activities and poor coordination between national agencies and parties responsible for monitoring. Monitoring and evaluation systems face clear challenges in terms of adequate human resources, funding, and weak institutional structures responsible for monitoring activities. Countries reported specific shortcomings in their monitoring plans such as poor capacity-building programs and inadequate institutional regulatory bodies to promote monitoring measures and activities, in addition to sustaining policies and support and partnerships.

Two thirds of Arab countries reported that the sustainability of financial allocations for EFA plans is a major challenge. More than half the Arab states reported that ensuring accessibility to and retention of all students from all social strata in the educational system is also a major challenge. In general, it appears that the most pressing challenges are those related to meet the demand for pre-school education, physical educational environments, low demand for vocational education, and building technical capabilities related to EFA. It seems clear that problems in the quality of education constitute the biggest challenges to achieving EFA goals by 2015 in all Arab countries.

- ***Prospects for post-2015 agenda***

Arab states do not stand at a same distance from achieving EFA goals by 2015. It appears that eliminating gender disparity in access to basic and secondary education is the most likely goal to be achieved, followed by universal access to primary education. As for goals associated with quality, early childhood, illiteracy, and life skills they are not likely to be achieved. The roadmap to 2015 should focus on supporting Arab states in conducting rapid assessments of major difficulties and challenges and adopting quick solutions and strategies.

While the most urgent priority is to scale up our efforts to achieve the EFA goals by 2015, we must recognize that challenges that we face today will persist in some countries beyond 2015. With a combined concern for equity and quality of

education, interest has gradually shifted to a focus on the results of the educational processes in terms of learning outcomes and their social distribution. A focus on learning, on what is actually learned (knowledge, values and skills), rather than on mere participation in educational processes, is being recognized as a first priority.

The issues of quality and equality in education should be the top priorities beyond 2015. Moreover, the six EFA goals are still valid as a basis for a framework for action beyond 2015, with special focus on early childhood development and the marginalized and disadvantaged groups. The world after 2015 differs from that of Jomtien and Dakar in terms of nature and content of learning, methods, and labor market structure and needs. There is a need to shift from Education for All to Learning for All

- ***Road map towards 2015***

With less than three years remaining until the 2015 target date, the national EFA 2015 review process is considered at the center of the roadmap towards 2015. The key objective of this review is to provide input to define the national and international education agendas beyond 2015. This collective evidence-based review by national stakeholders aims at assessing the progress achieved towards the six EFA goals (what) and the implementation strategies employed in achieving EFA (how) in addition to analyse the relevance of the EFA framework for the future (relevance of EFA within the MDG, ESD, and regional education development frameworks).

A national assessment exercise will be launched in early 2013 to guide this review process. UNESCO will provide member States with clear guidelines regarding the preparation of the national reports. A series of national dialogues will be carried out to contribute to the preparation of national reports. What is clear from now, however, is that national reviews should include disaggregated data to map out who has been left out from the progress on EFA.

The review process should include a full participation of all EFA stakeholders. As the lead EFA agency, UNESCO will play an advocacy role in mobilizing political commitments to carry out national EFA 2015 reviews. A regional conference will be organized in late 2014 to discuss the outcomes of the national assessments and set up a regional agenda for post-2015.

# CONCLUSION

A regional report must in principle aim at highlighting mean values rather than fragmented numbers. Arab countries performance in education and especially in progress towards EFA goals achievement is rarely captured by an average-based study of the evolution of the indicators associated with these goals. Indeed, the Arab States encompass countries with a long-standing tradition of wide access to education, some of which have witnessed weak progress in enrolment ratios during the past decade, and countries that have long lagged behind, but have lately shown a strong improvement in enrolment ratios. However, this improvement has not allowed such countries to be on the right track towards 2015.

In fact, some of the EFA goals are far from being reached by 2015 (ECCE, Literacy) while others have made remarkable progress (UPE, reducing gender and geographic inequalities that are widely correlated) and thus bring into perspective the interpretation of negative results.

Such differences can be attributed to wide disparities in wealth among Arab states; however, this does not constitute the only reason behind these special circumstances. Unfortunately, what seems to be the common denominator in the various Arab states is important shortcomings in quality education (learning levels, curricula relevance) and especially external efficiency (relevance of training to the labor market needs).

UNESCO, directly or through its prominent role as the global EFA coordinator, is at the heart of activity planning to critically improving the outcome of education systems in the Arab world and is fully engaged in helping countries of the region to reach their ultimate objectives. UNESCO is also directly involved in the debate that is currently sharpening the focus on the importance of achieving the six EFA goals. This perspective is primarily the product of collective thinking about EFA goals. Over time, we noted that the path itself was highly important especially for the countries that were still in 2000 lagging far behind in achieving EFA goals. Moreover, it is the fruit of a more in-depth thinking in terms of the objectives hierarchy. By highlighting progress made in enrolment ratios, the learning quality and relevance were neglected; we have also risked widening the gap- already substantial between most Arab countries - between education systems output and economic and social needs.

At the regional level, UNESCO's focus on EFA goals guides the future steps towards strengthening the link between education and social and economic needs. It will also identify shortcomings in the assessment and management of EFA plans and more generally, the development of education systems. In fact, many of the Regional Office's actions are pointed towards an in-depth analysis of these shortcomings and of the effective support of programs aimed at reducing such shortcomings.

This review will continue, with the main concern of making the best of the remaining period until 2015 in order to better adapt the objectives to the needs, following the most accurate inventory of the progress towards EFA goals since 2000. This should lead to a new roadmap for post-2015 that will clearly focus on education quality and relevance.

Seeking learning quality by developing new curricula, renewed pedagogy, and improving teacher training are a step in the right direction. Learning relevance, economically and socially, must and should be mainly improved as well as enhancing equity in education systems. This requirement emerges from problems facing youth access to employment, especially young graduates. It answers a very strong social demand. The Arab Spring has brought about a new agenda and ambition for schools - not only in countries directly impacted - which strongly intersect with EFA objectives.

## Pre-Primary education

Country	Enrolment			Gross enrolment ratio				Trained teachers (%)	
	MF		%F	MF		GPI			
	1999	2010	2010	1999	2010	1999	2010	1999	2010
Arab States	2,407,449	3,904,211 **	47 **	15.0	22.5 **	0.77	0.94 **	...	...
Algeria	35,701	500,165	48	2.5	77.4	1.01	0.96	...	...
Bahrain	14,064	26,107	49	38.2	...	0.96	...	18	49
Djibouti	171	1,857 <sup>+1</sup>	49 <sup>+1</sup>	0.4	4.3 <sup>+1</sup>	1.50	0.97 <sup>+1</sup>	...	100 <sup>-1</sup>
Egypt	328,140	813,934 <sup>-1</sup>	48 <sup>-1</sup>	10.4	23.7 <sup>-1</sup>	0.95	0.95 <sup>-1</sup>	86 <sup>**,+2</sup>	...
Iraq	68,169	108,929 <sup>-3</sup>	49 <sup>-3</sup>	4.9	6.2 <sup>-3</sup>	1.00	1.00 <sup>-3</sup>	100 <sup>+1</sup>	...
Jordan	74,380	99,168	47	29.2	32.4	0.91	0.94	...	100
Kuwait	57,365	73,632	49	85.2	82.2 <sup>-2</sup>	1.03	1.02 <sup>-2</sup>	100	100 <sup>-1</sup>
Lebanon	143,152 **	154,159	48	60.8 **	81.5	0.97 **	0.98	...	...
Libya	10,429	...	...	4.8	...	0.98 **	...	...	...
Mauritania	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Morocco	805,231	740,196 <sup>+1</sup>	41 <sup>+1</sup>	62.0	63.3 <sup>+1</sup>	0.53	0.72 <sup>+1</sup>	...	100 <sup>+1</sup>
Palestine	77,173	90,918	48	35.5	39.5	0.96	0.98	...	100
Oman	...	45,768	49	...	45.0	...	0.99	...	100
Qatar	7,961	25,384 <sup>-1</sup>	47 <sup>-1</sup>	25.3	55.4 <sup>-1</sup>	0.96	0.96 <sup>-1</sup>	...	...
Saudi Arabia	...	190,462	...	...	11.0	...	...	...	...
Sudan (pre-secession)	365,723	632,235 <sup>-1</sup>	50 <sup>-1</sup>	18.6	26.5 <sup>-1</sup>	...	1.04 <sup>-1</sup>	45 <sup>+2</sup>	71 <sup>-1</sup>
Syria	108,319	149,110	47	8.5	9.7	0.90	0.97	87	...
Tunisia	78,012	...	...	13.9	...	0.93	...	...	...
Unites Arab Emirates	64,423	124,699	49	63.9	...	0.99	...	59	100
Yemen	12,482	25,781	46	0.7	1.2	0.86	0.90	...	...

Note: the regional total/averages for 1999 and 2010 include Sudan (pre-secession).

### Qualifier symbols legend :

\* = National estimation

\*\*= UIS estimation

... =data not available

-+=number of years from the reference year

## Primary Education

Country	Enrolment			New Entrants Grade 1		Net enrolment rate adjusted		Gross enrolment ratio				Survival rate to last grade of primary		Survival rate GPI	
	MF		%F					MF		GPI					
	1999	2010	2010	1999	2010	1999	2010	1999	2010	1999	2010	1999	2009	1999	2009
<b>Arab States</b>	35,024,024	41,741,080	47	6,243,051	7,760,116	79	88 **	89	98	0.87	0.93	...	...	...	...
Algeria	4,778,870	3,312,440	47	744,942	662,419	92	97	106	110	0.91	0.94	91	95	1.04	1.04
Bahrain	76,302	90,993	49	13,130	15,002 <sup>-1</sup>	99	...	107	...	1.00	...	90	...	1.02	...
Djibouti	38,194	60,992 <sup>+1</sup>	47 <sup>+1</sup>	5,837	12,621 <sup>+1</sup>	27 **	45 <sup>**,-1</sup>	33	59 <sup>+1</sup>	0.71	0.90 <sup>+1</sup>	...	64 <sup>**,-1</sup>	...	1.01 <sup>**,-1</sup>
Egypt	8,086,230 **	10,003,649	48 **	1,451,098 **	1,758,002	92 **	96 **	98 **	101	0.91 **	0.96 **	...	...	...	...
Iraq	3,603,864	4,864,350 <sup>-3</sup>	44 <sup>-3</sup>	708,881 **	875,125 <sup>**,-3</sup>	89	89 <sup>**,-3</sup>	97	105 <sup>-3</sup>	0.83	0.84 <sup>-3</sup>	49 **	...	0.92 **	...
Jordan	706,198	819,601	49	125,601	146,287	92 **	91	96	92	1.01	1.00	96	93 <sup>**,-3</sup>	1.00	1.01 <sup>**,-3</sup>
Kuwait	139,691	213,750	49	34,922	44,811	98	98 <sup>-2</sup>	106	106 <sup>-2</sup>	1.02	1.03 <sup>-2</sup>	94	96	1.02	1.00
Lebanon	413,753 **	461,719	48	74,762 **	71,503	94 **	93	112 **	105	0.96 **	0.97	...	92 <sup>-1</sup>	...	1.03 <sup>-1</sup>
Libya	821,775	...	...	...	...	...	...	122	...	0.99	...	...	...	...	...
Mauritania	346,222	531,383	50	73,139 <sup>+2</sup>	97,019	61 **	74 **	84	102	0.97	1.05	40 <sup>+2</sup>	71	1.06 <sup>+2</sup>	0.99
Morocco	3,461,940	4,001,313 <sup>+1</sup>	47 <sup>+1</sup>	731,073	636,474 <sup>+1</sup>	71 **	96 <sup>+1</sup>	87	114 <sup>+1</sup>	0.82	0.94 <sup>+1</sup>	75	91	1.01	1.00
Palestine	368,321	402,866	48	95,245	102,953	94	89	100	91	1.00	0.98	99	99 <sup>-3</sup>	0.99	1.00 <sup>-3</sup>
Oman	315,557	302,037 <sup>-1</sup>	48 <sup>-1</sup>	51,698	51,068 <sup>-1</sup>	80	98 <sup>-1</sup>	89	105 <sup>-1</sup>	0.99	0.97 <sup>-1</sup>	92	...	1.00	...
Qatar	60,989	88,723	49	11,113 **	16,461	95	96	104	103	1.05	1.00	...	94 <sup>-2</sup>	...	1.07 <sup>-2</sup>
Saudi Arabia	...	3,321,066	49	...	577,719	...	90 <sup>-1</sup>	...	106	...	0.99	...	93 <sup>*, -2</sup>	...	0.93 <sup>*, -2</sup>
Sudan (pre-secession)	2,512,824 **	4,744,468 <sup>-1</sup>	46 <sup>-1</sup>	446,801 <sup>+1</sup>	915,324 <sup>-1</sup>	43 **	...	48 **	73 <sup>-1</sup>	0.85 **	0.90 <sup>-1</sup>	77 **	91 <sup>-2</sup>	1.11 **	1.14 <sup>-2</sup>
Syria	2,738,083	2,429,450	48	465,885	604,195	97	99 <sup>-1</sup>	108	118	0.92	0.98	87	95	1.00	1.01
Tunisia	1,442,904	1,025,044 <sup>-1</sup>	48 <sup>-1</sup>	203,850	163,172 <sup>-1</sup>	95 **	99 <sup>-1</sup>	115	109 <sup>-1</sup>	0.93	0.96 <sup>-1</sup>	87	95 <sup>-1</sup>	1.03	1.02 <sup>-1</sup>
United Arab Emirates	270,486	326,588	49	46,871	72,197	85	...	93	...	0.99	...	89	97 <sup>-3</sup>	0.99	1.00 <sup>-3</sup>
Yemen	2,302,787	3,426,991	44	439,573	713,867	57	78	72	87	0.56	0.82	69 <sup>**,-2</sup>	...	0.89 <sup>**,-2</sup>	...

Note: the regional total/averages for 1999 and 2010 include Sudan (pre-secession).

### Qualifier symbols legend :

\* = National estimation

\*\*= UIS estimation

... =data not available

+ =number of years from the reference year



## Primary continued

Country	Gross intake ratio to last grade		Percentage of repeaters		Sum of out-of-school children				Pupil/Teacher ratio		Trained teachers (%)								
					MF	%F	MF	%F											
	1999	2010	1999	2010	1999		2010		1999	2010	1999	2010							
<b>Arab States</b>	75	84	9.2	6.8	8,423,297	59	5,036,215	**	61	**	23	21	...	...					
Algeria	85	96	11.9	7.5	340,287	61	81,638	65	28	23	94	...	...						
Bahrain	96	...	3.8	1.9 <sup>-1</sup>	661	9	...	...	18	**,+1	...	...	...						
Djibouti	24	36 <sup>**,-1</sup>	16.6	9.6 <sup>+1</sup>	83,825	**	53	**	40	35 <sup>+1</sup>	...	100	<sup>+1</sup>						
Egypt	96	**	101	6.0	**	3.7	673,543	**	70	**	368,074	**	...	23	**	26	100	**,+2	...
Iraq	57	**	65	**,-3	10.0	16.8	**,-3	423,338	76	501,445	**,-3	74	**,-3	25	17 <sup>-3</sup>	100	<sup>+1</sup>	...	
Jordan	92	90	0.7	0.5	57,469	**	45	**	82,699	49	...	...	...	...					
Kuwait	104	112 <sup>-3</sup>	3.3	0.7	2,462	30	3,535	<sup>-2</sup>	1	<sup>-2</sup>	13	8	100	100 <sup>-1</sup>					
Lebanon	102	**	87	9.1	**	8.1	21,768	**	60	**	29,847	51	14	**	14	...	...		
Libya	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...					
Mauritania	46	<sup>+2</sup>	75	15.2	**,+1	3.5	161,174	**	50	**	133,538	**	46	**	47	37	...	100	
Morocco	55	85	12.4	10.7	1,157,256	**	58	**	133,632	<sup>+1</sup>	56	<sup>+1</sup>	28	26 <sup>+1</sup>	...	100	<sup>+1</sup>		
Palestine	100	95	2.1	-	23,223	48	48,067	52	38	28	100	100							
Oman	80	101 <sup>-1</sup>	8.0	1.4 <sup>-1</sup>	70,056	45	5,240	<sup>-1</sup>	87	<sup>-1</sup>	25	...	100	100 <sup>**,-1</sup>					
Qatar	93	**	100 <sup>-1</sup>	2.7	**	0.5 <sup>-1</sup>	2,664	2	3,311	43	13	12	...	43	**				
Saudi Arabia	...	93	...	3.3	<sup>-2</sup>	...	...	318,434	<sup>-1</sup>	52	<sup>-1</sup>	...	11	...	91	<sup>,-3</sup>			
Sudan (pre-secession)	37	**	58 <sup>-1</sup>	11.3	**	3.7 <sup>-1</sup>	2,988,736	**	53	**	...	...	24	**,+2	38	**,-1	...	60	**,-1
Syria	94	104	6.5	7.6	87,261	...	18,848	<sup>-1</sup>	87	<sup>-1</sup>	25	...	81	...					
Tunisia	89	91 <sup>-1</sup>	18.3	6.8 <sup>-1</sup>	63,941	**	68	**	5,222	<sup>-1</sup>	...	24	17 <sup>-1</sup>	...	...				
Unites Arab Emirates	89	...	3.5	2.0	44,666	47	...	...	16	17	...	100							
Yemen	54	63	10.6	6.5	1,386,381	66	857,302	66	22	**	31	...	...						

Note: the regional total/averages for 1999 and 2010 include Sudan (pre-secession).

### Qualifier symbols legend :

\* = National estimation

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... =data not available

-+=number of years from the reference year

## Secondary Education

Country	Gross enrolment ratio				Enrolment in technical and vocational education as % of total enrolment in secondary programmes		Female enrolment as % of total enrolment in technical and vocational programmes		Percentage of repeaters in general programmes	
	MF		GPI		1999	2010	1999	2010	1999	2010
	1999	2010	1999	2010						
Arab States	59	69 **	0.88	0.94 **	14.3	8.1 **	43 **	40 **	12 **	10 **
Algeria	...	95 <sup>-1</sup>	...	1.02 <sup>-1</sup>	...	9.7 <sup>-1</sup>	...	35 <sup>-1</sup>	23 **	16 <sup>-1</sup>
Bahrain	96 ...		1.10 ...		15.2	8.0	35	13	8 <sup>+1</sup>	4 <sup>-1</sup>
Djibouti	14	36 <sup>+1</sup>	0.72	0.80 <sup>+1</sup>	14.2	3.7 <sup>+1</sup>	58	41 <sup>+1</sup>	10	6 <sup>+1</sup>
Egypt	80 **	72	0.91 **	0.96	...	18.5 **	...	43 **	7 **,+2	8 **
Iraq	35	53 <sup>-3</sup>	0.64	0.75 <sup>-3</sup>	6.0	3.5 <sup>-3</sup>	13	12 <sup>-3</sup>	28	21 **, -3
Jordan	85	87	1.04	1.06	7.2	4.0 <sup>-2</sup>	36	38 <sup>-2</sup>	1	1
Kuwait	109 **	101 <sup>-2</sup>	1.03 **	1.07 <sup>-2</sup>	1.7 **	1.7 <sup>-1</sup>	21 **	10 <sup>-1</sup>	10	6
Lebanon	77 **	81	1.09 **	1.12	9.8 **	14.8	40	42	8 **	10
Libya	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mauritania	18 **	24 **	0.75 **	0.85 **	2.6 **	...	32	...	14 <sup>+2</sup>	11 <sup>-1</sup>
Morocco	37	56 <sup>-3</sup>	0.78	0.86 **, -3	7.0	5.6 <sup>-3</sup>	44	...	19	16 <sup>+1</sup>
Palestine	78	86	1.02	1.08	0.5	1.3	23	35	3	2
Oman	71	100 <sup>-1</sup>	1.01	0.99 <sup>-1</sup>	.	. <sup>-1</sup>	.	.	10	...
Qatar	88	94	1.11	1.21	1.7	0.9	.	.	...	3 <sup>-1</sup>
Saudi Arabia	...	101	...	0.95	...	.	...	.	...	4 **, -1
Sudan (pre-secession)	26 **	39 <sup>-1</sup>	...	0.88 <sup>-1</sup>	2.7 **	1.5 <sup>-1</sup>	36	24 <sup>-1</sup>	...	3 <sup>-2</sup>
Syria	44	72	0.92	1.01	10.1	3.9	52	40	11	7
Tunisia	74	90 <sup>-1</sup>	0.99	1.06 **, -1	...	11.9 <sup>-1</sup>	...	35 **, -1	22	17 <sup>-1</sup>
Unites Arab Emirates	83 ...		1.09 ...		0.9	0.5 **, -3	.	. **, -3	7	3
Yemen	40	44 **	0.37	0.62 **	0.9	...	17	...	9	7

Note: the regional averages for 1999 and 2010 include Sudan (pre-secession).

### Qualifier symbols legend :

\* = National estimation

\*\*= UIS estimation

. =data not applicable

... =data not available

+ =number of years from the reference year

## ADULT AND YOUTH LITERACY / 1995-2004

Country or territory	Reference Year 1995-2004	Adults (15 years and older)					Youth (15 to 24 years)				
		Literacy rate			Illiterate population		Literacy rate			Illiterate population	
		MF	M	F	MF	% F	MF	M	F	MF	% F
<b>Arab States</b>		<b>68</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>51,826,536</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>8,615,381</b>	<b>66</b>
Algeria	2002	70	80	60	6,435,795	66	90	94	86	708,710	69
Bahrain	2001	87	89	84	62,453	49	97	97	97	3,276	43
Djibouti	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Egypt	1996	56	67	44	17,422,246	63	73	79	67	3,339,988	60
Iraq	2000	74	84	64	3,520,214	70	85	89	80	751,984	63
Jordan	2003	90	95	85	312,019	74	99	99	99	9,707	60
Kuwait	1995	78	81	74	250,443	46	92	94	90	20,180	60
Lebanon	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Libya	2004	86 **	94 **	78 **	543,848 **	77 **	100 **	100 **	99 **	4,717 **	78 **
Mauritania	2000	51	60	43	736,558	59	61	68	55	206,419	57
Morocco	2004	52	66	40	9,920,761	65	70	81	60	1,864,150	68
Oman	2003	81	87	74	291,580	60	97	98	97	14,215	60
Palestine	2004	92	97	88	144,507	77	99	99	99	7,211	53
Qatar	2004	89	89	89	61,735	31	96	95	98	4,229	23
Saudi Arabia	2004	83	88	76	2,607,448	57	96	97	95	179,493	62
Sudan (Pre-secession)	2000	61	72	52	...	...	78	86	72	...	...
Syrian Arab Republic	2004	81	88	74	2,106,292	68	92	95	90	303,075	64
Tunisia	2004	74	83	65	1,852,150	68	94	96	92	115,849	68
United Arab Emirates	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yemen	2004	55 **	74 **	35 **	4,820,365 **	72 **	77 **	93 **	60 **	1,015,102 **	84 **

Note: Regional averages include Sudan (pre-secession).

Qualifier symbols legend :

\* = National estimation

\*\*= UIS estimation

... =data not available

## ADULT AND YOUTH LITERACY / 2005-2010

Country or territory	Reference Year 2005-2010	Adults (15 years and older)					Youth (15 to 24 years)						
		Literacy rate			Illiterate population		Literacy rate			Illiterate population			
		MF	M	F	MF	% F	MF	M	F	MF	% F		
<b>Arab States</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>50,285,976</b>	<b>66</b>			<b>89</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>6,498,902</b>	<b>65</b>
Algeria	2006	73	81	64	6,471,923	66			92	94	89	610,876	65
Bahrain	2010	92 **	93 **	90 **	81,502 **	42 **			100 **	100 **	100 **	48 **	44 **
Djibouti	...	...	...	...	...	...			...	...	...	...	...
Egypt	2010	72	80	64	15,630,732	65			88	91	84	2,003,772	62
Iraq	2010	78 **	86 **	71 **	3,930,044 **	68 **			83 **	85 **	81 **	1,081,470 **	54 **
Jordan	2010	93	96	89	286,602	71			99	99	99	16,484	48
Kuwait	2008	94	95	92	117,502	50			99	99	99	5,722	41
Lebanon	2007	90	93	86	318,663	70			99	98	99	9,588	36
Libya	2010	89 **	96 **	83 **	477,151 **	80 **			100 **	100 **	100 **	1,380 **	72 **
Mauritania	2010	58 **	65 **	51 **	873,238 **	58 **			68 **	71 **	65 **	219,005 **	54 **
Morocco	2009	56	69	44	9,966,640	66			79	87	72	1,296,289	68
Oman	2008	87	90	81	257,254	56			98	98	98	14,830	43
Palestine	2010	95	98	92	117,811	76			99	99	99	6,502	47
Qatar	2010	96	97	95	56,539	25			97	96	98	8,138	14
Saudi Arabia	2010	87 **	90 **	81 **	2,571,267 **	59 **			98 **	99 **	97 **	107,746 **	73 **
Sudan (Pre-secession)	...	71	80	62	...	...			87	90	84	...	...
Syrian Arab Republic	2010	83 **	90 **	77 **	2,132,037 **	70 **			95 **	96 **	94 **	210,818 **	60 **
Tunisia	2008	78	86	71	1,661,471	68			97	98	96	61,822	69
United Arab Emirates	2005	90	89	91	326,586	24			95	94	97	34,210	24
Yemen	2010	64 **	81 **	47 **	4,841,069 **	74 **			85 **	96 **	74 **	787,129 **	86 **

Note: Regional averages include Sudan (pre-secession).

Qualifier symbols legend :

\* = National estimation

\*\*= UIS estimation

... =data not available