

ALL CHILDREN IN SCHOOL BY 2015

Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children



TAJIKISTAN COUNTRY STUDY

December 2013



UNESCO
INSTITUTE
for
STATISTICS

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children Tajikistan Country Study

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December 2013
United Nations Children's Fund
37/1, Bokhtar st., Dushanbe
Tajikistan, 734025

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Acknowledgements

UNICEF Tajikistan Country Office would like to thank International Consultant, Professor Rupert Maclean, the Hong Kong Institute of Education, who was the focal point for the preparation of this study, and those who assisted him, namely William Douglas, Karina Veal, Jenny Xie and Linnie Wong.

Significant writing contributions were also provided by Assistant Professor Christopher Whitsel, North Dakota State University, Sara McGinty, UNICEF Tajikistan, and Takaho Fukami, UNICEF Tajikistan, who also supervised the study.

Important contributions to the study were also made by the UNICEF Tajikistan Country Team, including Laylee Moshiri, Arthur van Diesen, Siyma Barkin Kuzmin, Salohiddin Shamsiddinov, Nargis Karimova, Barno Mukhamadieva, Parviz Abduvahobov, Kazumi Homma, Jamshed Hasanov, and Farhod Khamidov.

We express our special gratitude to Erin Tanner and International Consultant Frank van Cappelle, UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, who guided and supported the Country Team. We are also thankful for the support from the UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, including Kirsi Madi, Philippe Testot-Ferry, Deepa Grover, Anne-Claire Luzot, Elena Gaia and Paula Hunt, as well as Dina Craissati of UNICEF Headquarters.

We are also grateful for the technical assistance provided by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), particularly on the statistical analysis, including Albert Motivans, Friedrich Huebler and Sheena Bell, UIS Montreal, and Simon Ellis, NyiNyi Thaung and Aurélie Acoca, UIS Bangkok. We also appreciate Understanding Children's Work for their support in carrying out the data analysis on working children. Statistical data tables were prepared by UNICEF Tajikistan local consultant Mansur Mirzoev with support from UIS, Understanding Children's Work, Frank van Cappelle and Christopher Whitsel. Statistical analysis was led by Christopher Whitsel, with assistance from UIS.

Special thanks further go to the Tajikistan Ministry of Education and representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations for sharing their expertise and experience on out-of-school children in Tajikistan.

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List of acronyms

5DE	Five Dimensions of Exclusion from Education
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
ANAR	Adjusted Net Attendance Rate
ANER	Adjusted Net Enrolment Rate
CEECIS	Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States
CMF	Conceptual and Methodological Framework
CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCC	Development Coordination Council
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
DRD	Direct Rule Districts
EA	Enumeration Area
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EU	European Union
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GBAO	Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HDI	United Nations Human Development Index
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
IT	Information Technology
JJAP	Juvenile Justice Alternatives Project
JJSRF	Juvenile Justice System Reform Framework
LSIS	Living Standards Improvement Strategy of Tajikistan for 2013 - 2015
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
MTEF	Mid-Term Expenditure Framework
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSC	National School Census
NSED	National Strategy for Education Development
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PCF	Per Capita Financing
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking Survey
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA	Parent Teacher Association

SNA	System of National Accounts
SPC	School Pedagogical Council
TLSS	Tajikistan Living Standards Measurement Survey
TransMonEE	Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNPD	United Nations Population Division
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	The World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive summary

Background

This report presents the background, methodology, findings, recommendations and conclusions of a study on out-of-school children in Tajikistan. The project was undertaken by UNICEF Tajikistan, between March and December 2011. The study is based on a comprehensive review of the literature, completed through consultations with key stakeholders on the education system in Tajikistan. The potential barriers to school attendance were examined such as poverty, child labour, and gender issues.

This country study is one of 26 jointly undertaken by UNICEF and UIS as part of the joint Global Initiative on out-of-school children (Global Initiative) of UNICEF and UIS, which was launched in 2010 in partnership with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Understanding Children's Work. The Global Initiative aims to achieve a breakthrough in reducing the number of out-of-school children.

Country context

The population of Tajikistan as of 2010 was 7,595,000 with 74 per cent living in rural areas, as per the 2010 census. Approximately 3,081,000 people, or 40.8 per cent, were under the age of 18. The literacy rate is quoted by official government sources as being 100 per cent and UIS reports it as slightly lower: 99.7 per cent in 2009. The country is the poorest among the CIS countries, where 46.7 per cent of the population in Tajikistan is living below the poverty line. Equivalent to half of the gross domestic product (GDP) comes from remittances by migrants from Tajikistan, residing mainly in Russia. According to the Living Standards Improvement Strategy of Tajikistan for 2013, in 2011 4.5 per cent of the GDP was allocated to the education sector, and with population growth it is estimated that 5.5 per cent of the GDP is needed to maintain and develop the sector by 2015.

There is free, compulsory education for nine years in Tajikistan for children aged 7 to 15, and include primary education (Grades 1 – 4) and basic education (Grades 5 – 9). After completion of compulsory education children can choose either to attend an academic track at the secondary level (Grades 10 – 11) or vocational training, at a specialised school. The whole education system from Grades 1 – 11 is called General Secondary. Pre-primary education is not compulsory, and access is extremely limited, particularly in rural areas. The Tajikistan Ministry of Education (MoE) is planning a change to 12 years of education starting from 2020, adding a year of primary schooling so that the age for starting school will be lowered to 6.

The administration of education in Tajikistan is shared across various levels of government. At the national (Republican) level, the government takes responsibility for overall planning for educational development and for exercising various executive administrative powers. The MoE has responsibility for setting, implementing, and monitoring state policies and standards, and the development of curricula. Local government authorities implement state policies concerning education and develop regional educational programmes. Local government bodies supervise schools. Despite many improvements in recent years, in general, the state of the education system has declined since independence. There are numerous challenges facing the education system, as described more in detail below. Tajikistan is one of the few countries in the world where men and women between the ages of 20 and 30 have a much lower level of education attainment in comparison with the population over 40 years old.

Conceptual framework and methodology

The methodology adopted for the study follows guidance provided by the Conceptual and Methodological Framework (CMF) document of the Global Initiative.

This study was limited to the use of existing information sources, and no major additional research was conducted, although key stakeholders were interviewed to complement available information. This study relied mainly on resources provided by the MoE, UNICEF, UIS, and the Statistical Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. The main sources of statistical data used in this study are: The Statistical Yearbook for the Education Sector for 2010-2011 (MoE), supported by further analysis using: the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2005, which is a household survey programme developed and executed by the Agency on Statistics under the President of Tajikistan and UNICEF to collect data from 6,684 households; the Tajikistan Living Standards Measurement Survey (TLSS) 2007, a survey of 4,860 households designed and undertaken by the Republican Statistical Agency to provide a reliable estimate of poverty and to collect a variety of socioeconomic and other living standard indicators at the national and sub-national levels; and the TLSS 2009, which involved revisiting 1,500 of the same households surveyed in 2007. Other data used in this study come from various surveys and national reports, as noted specifically in the main text of this report.

This study considers Five Dimensions of Exclusion from Education (5DE); the structural framework under in the Global Initiative. Under this analytical framework, the Dimensions refer to the following:

- Dimension 1:** Children of pre-primary school age who are not in pre-primary or primary school (defined as children one year below the age of compulsory education - age 6 for Tajikistan);
- Dimension 2:** Children of primary school age who are not in primary or secondary school;
- Dimension 3:** Children of lower-secondary school age who are not in primary or secondary school;
- Dimension 4:** Children who are in primary school but at risk of dropping out; and
- Dimension 5:** Children who are in lower-secondary school but are at risk of dropping out.

The study commenced with a comprehensive statistical analysis identifying different groups of out-of-school children, that is, the profiles of excluded children. This was followed by an analysis of barriers and bottlenecks from the different perspectives of supply and demand, as well as with regard to political, governance, capacity and finance considerations. Policies and strategies were further examined in order to establish whether and how they were designed and implemented to address the barriers and bottlenecks identified.

Findings

As an overview, census data from 2010 show that there were 167,196 6-year-old children in Tajikistan, who are of pre-primary age as per this study. UIS estimates for 2010 indicate that 92.1 per cent of pre-primary-aged children were out of school. The same census data show that there were 674,955 primary-aged children aged 7 to 10 years old, and UIS estimated 15,013 of them

were out of school (2.2 per cent). In addition, there were 864,896 lower-secondary-school-aged children between the ages of 11 and 15, and UIS estimates that 31,386 of them were out of school (3.7 per cent).

Categorizing specific populations commonly considered as out-of-school children in many low-income countries is difficult in Tajikistan because of the high enrolment rates in compulsory education, especially primary school. Nonetheless, children who have never attended school, have attended but dropped out, and those who are attending but are at risk of dropping out are particularly vulnerable. Vulnerable groups of out-of-school children who have never enrolled in school include children with disabilities and children living and working on the streets.

Most out-of-school children are girls, who begin dropping out of school at the primary level, and the number of girls who dropout increases with age. Similarly, children from poor households, working children, children from single-parent households, children in institutions and children in rural and remote areas are at risk of dropping out or have dropped out, and a minority have never attended school. Most children in conflict with the law are institutionalized and receive minimal education, and are at high risk of dropping out of school.

Dimension 1

Coverage at the pre-primary level in Tajikistan is very low, at close to 9 per cent. The most common reason given for not sending children to pre-primary school (52 per cent) is lack of available pre-school facilities. This indicates a demand for more pre-primary places. The number of permanent, government operated, pre-primary school institutions fell from 944 in 1991 to 488 in 2010, with a continuing downward trend, indicating a supply-side failure. Data show a bias favouring boys attending pre-primary school, over their female counterparts. Data also show a clear bias in favour of children from the wealthiest quintile: of the total enrolment of children in pre-primary 57.6 per cent were from the richest quintile and 10.7 per cent from the poorest quintile. There is also a bias in favour of pre-primary education in the capital and other cities compared with rural areas.

Dimensions 2 and 3

Out-of-school children in dimensions 2 and 3 fall into three general categories: those at risk of dropping out; those who have dropped out; and those who are at risk of never enrolling in school.

Analysis of MoE data, along with that from the MICS 2005 and TLSS 2009, shows that school enrolment is highest between the ages of 10 and 11, (the intended ages for Grades 4 and 5), and then starts to decrease from the age of 12 onwards. A relatively high percentage of out-of-school children are 7 years old (approximately 5 per cent), but this is most likely attributed to late enrolment in primary school. The gender gap begins to widen at age 12 (corresponding with Grade 6 in lower-secondary school); when more girls are dropping out of school.

There are differences among the population of out-of-school children based on key social indicators, including sex, rural/urban residence, and wealth. Girls consist of a large percentage of out-of-school children at the primary and lower-secondary levels, according to MoE data, due to higher dropout rates. Analysis of MICS and TLSS data demonstrates that, in all but the wealthiest quintile, 2.5 per cent of girls drop out at age 9. There are also differences in girls' enrolment by urban and rural residence. Analysis of TLSS 2007 data shows that differences according to sex exist at the primary and lower-secondary age levels, as more girls than boys are out of school in most regions. The differences, however, are much greater for children of lower-secondary age.

The data indicates that most children are receiving primary education, and that those who remain out of school at the primary level are among the most marginalized populations. Data sources indicate that only 20 per cent of children with disabilities are enrolled in the education system, comprising of the largest population of children never accessing school. In addition, children living and working on the streets often fail to enrol in school.

The low coverage of education for children with disabilities indicates that they make up a substantial population of out-of-school children who are at risk of never enrolling in the education system. As of December 2012, approximately 26,000 children with disabilities under the age of 16 were registered for social protection.

The reasons why children live and work on the streets are varied, and there is little research or other information on this issue in Tajikistan. Some children have been abandoned by their parents or relatives, or their parents have died. Others have themselves abandoned their parents or do not want to live in state institutions. A report from the Centre of Strategic Research under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan indicates that in Dushanbe, Khujand, Kurgan-Tube and Kulyab, practically all children living and working on the streets are of “school age”, though fails to define school age. It also indicates that 52.4 per cent of children living and working on the streets are not enrolled in school, the majority being boys (86.2 per cent).

The patterns emerging for Dimensions 2 and 3 are clear. Dimension 2 has low out of school percentages and a low dropout rate. For Dimension 3, dropouts from the age of 12 onward are a key concern, particularly for girls. There are clear links between poverty, location in rural areas, and sex in terms of the numbers of out-of-school children, with notably larger percentages of girls in urban areas out of school, compared with girls in rural areas.

Dimensions 4 and 5

For girls, dropout rates increase with age and are 0.9 per cent, 6.7 per cent and 13.8 per cent, respectively, at Grades 7, 8 and 9. The dropout rate for boys in lower-secondary school Grades 5 to 8 is 0 per cent, and increases to 3.7 per cent from Grade 9 onwards. More girls are out of school than boys in Tajikistan and this holds across all regions, wealth quintiles and in urban and rural areas.

There are also other significant groups to consider. The groups most at risk of dropping out of school include: working children; children with migrant parents; children in conflict with the law; children in institutions; and children in remote areas.

In a sample of 2,488 children aged 5 to 14, the MICS 2005 estimates that 23.4 per cent of boys and 26.4 per cent of girls in Tajikistan were out of school. Of these, 3.7 per cent of boys and 5.1 per cent girls were also involved in child labour.

Data indicate that children’s enrolment in school for ages 7 to 16 is slightly higher for migrant than for non-migrant households. However households abandoned by a migrant worker are likely to be poorer, and hence the percentage of out-of-school children is higher.

The Tajikistan Criminal Code defines the age of criminal responsibility as 16 years old, but that limit can be reduced to 14 when a child commits a serious offence. Depending on the offence and age, children who leave institutions may drop out of school if reintegration services are not provided. There is little information available on the quality or type of education provided for children in conflict with the law.

Children in institutions include orphans; children with disabilities; children in boarding schools; children with learning difficulties; children from households whose parents cannot look after them;

and children in correctional facilities. In Tajikistan, there are specialized facilities for these different groups of children.

In 2005, a reported 10,500 orphaned or abandoned children were in 84 orphanages and boarding schools. However, many children in institutions have one or both parents living. Data for 2008-2009 that pertain to Dushanbe indicate no orphans registered as students at secondary schools that teach the full 11 years of schooling to complete upper-secondary education. It is not known whether orphans in Dushanbe leave school or move to other educational institutions after Grade 9. This may indicate a lack of access to upper-secondary education for orphans in the capital.

In remote areas of Tajikistan, the walk to school can be insecure, particularly in winter and in wet weather, as roads become covered in snow or mud. Girls in particular often lack suitable clothing for these conditions. There is also a cultural dimension to girls' travel to school, where after reaching puberty, they are not supposed to walk alone. In rural areas, most girls will stop attending school at the level provided in their village, rather than walk to the next village to a school providing education to a higher level. School closures also sometimes occur in rural areas, leaving villages without a school and exacerbating barriers to education in these areas.

Bottlenecks and barriers

Demand-side barriers

Demand-side barriers are broken down into two categories: socio-cultural and economic. The socio-cultural barriers that are hindering children's access to continuous education include the following:

- Gender norms;
- Discrimination against children with disabilities;
- Demand for early childhood education
- Lack of parents' education; and
- Remote access.

Economic, demand-side barriers in Tajikistan include the following:

- Poverty;
- Affordability of school (both formal and informal costs);
- Children engaged in labour;
- Migration, specifically for families abandoned by a migrant worker; and
- Quality of education.

Supply-side barriers

Within Tajikistan, three general supply-side barriers were identified as preventing access to continuous education:

- Condition of school facilities;
- Quality of education; and
- Political, governance, capacity, and financial bottlenecks.

The lack of school facilities and the general poor condition of school facilities is a supply-side barrier acknowledged within Tajikistan. Many schools operate on two or three shifts. The physical conditions of schools are poor, and many students are educated in unsafe premises or where major repairs are required. Classrooms are often very cold and dark in winter, sometimes resulting

in school closures. There is a lack of suitable infrastructure and suitable accessibility for students with disabilities.

Shortages of textbooks, particularly in ethnic minority languages, and equipment result in poor education quality that provides little incentive for students to value and attend school as a means to improve prospects for a good future livelihood. There is also a shortage of well-qualified teachers because low salaries deter many people from entering the profession. Many trained teachers migrate or have left the profession. Many factors, including the lack of adequately trained teachers in suitable numbers; an outdated curriculum; and teaching methods and the low relevance of learning content, result in poor quality of education.

In terms of political bottlenecks, the distinction between political and administrative roles is not clear. The distinction is important for maintaining the long-term stability within the MoE, which is needed to implement strategies and policies to improve education, and hence, reduce the number of out-of-school children. The education sector is dependent on external funding. In 2008, the percentage of public expenditure on education was 4.5 per cent of GDP, or 15.8 per cent of the public budget. But, it is estimated that 5.5 per cent of GDP is needed to adequately fund the education system.

All supply-side issues are cross-dimensional and potentially cover all profiles.

Key policies and strategies

Although the policy framework supporting education for out-of-school children is generally strong, implementation remains weak.

Compulsory education (primary and lower-secondary) is guaranteed for all children, free of charge, under Article 41 of Tajikistan's Constitution. However, pre-primary education is not compulsory, resulting in the majority of pre-primary children without adequate opportunities.

The government has made progress in formulating policies and strategies aimed at tackling socio-cultural barriers to school attendance. The recently passed "Law on Parents' Responsibilities Concerning the Upbringing of Children" addresses many socio-cultural issues. The policy also places much of the responsibility for education on parents. While the intent of the law is to increase access to education, it changes the focus of responsibility from the government to the parents and has been difficult to enforce nationally.

Increasing girls' enrolment in school is another focus of policy and strategy. The National Strategy for Education Development (NSED) 2015 contains basic strategies to have media campaigns promoting girls' education and establishes the Centre for Gender Pedagogics. The NSED 2020 has more strategies, but these specifically target girls of post-compulsory school age.

The system of compensation and support for families with children living below the poverty line remains limited, underfunded, inefficient, and it lacks adequate data to monitor effectiveness in reducing poverty and other vulnerabilities. Little has been done to increase the affordability of education.

Amid these opportunities and challenges, there has been steady improvement in the supply of education. Supported by grants from the GPE (formerly the Fast Track Initiative, or FTI, Catalytic Fund), the number of classrooms and school buildings has increased, and quality and coverage of in-service teacher training has improved. The NSED 2020 addresses the need to improve the quality of schooling through curriculum improvement and teacher training.

Initial steps have been taken to address issues of children living and working on the streets and those of children with disabilities. However, there are still significant barriers to overcome in order to realize related goals and objectives. The recent adoption of the Concept of Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities indicates positive changes for children with disabilities.

Although there have been multiple improvements in the management and financing of education, there is room for further improvement, which is laid out in the NSED 2020 and supported by funds from the third round of FTI known as FTI-3. The development of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and the introduction of per capita financing (PCF) are two significant changes that may prove effective in reducing the number of out-of-school children. The implementation of EMIS at the national level allows for tracking children who have dropped out of school. However, there are no tracking measures in place within the country to measure attendance rates. PCF increases the incentive for a school to have many students, thereby encouraging enrolment.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

The complex situation regarding out-of-school children in Tajikistan necessitates the implementation of interwoven, child-centred solutions. Amid the current economic and social realities of Tajikistan this appears to be very challenging. Both policy-level initiatives and work from the bottom up are required to respond comprehensively to demand- and supply-side issues.

Recommendations

Recommendation I: Improve EMIS for strengthened data collection, to identify and monitor out-of-school children

EMIS is the current model for data collection on key indicators in the education sector. EMIS has the potential to measure attendance and completion rates of children in schools. This data would serve to highlight irregular attendance and those at risk of dropping out of the education system. The capacity of EMIS should be further enhanced to seek out those excluded from the education system. Modules are recommended to be developed and included at the pre-primary, vocational, and higher education levels. In doing so, a more comprehensive overview of the Tajikistan education system would be provided. Furthermore, the capacity of the government and stakeholders needs strengthening in analyzing and utilizing data to promote a pro-equity approach in their interventions.

Recommendation II: Revision of PCF to address inequities

Consideration should be given to the revision of the per capita financing formula with an aim to increase the number of children who are accessing quality education. It is recommended that the government provide per-capita financing for pre-school education, which would decrease the financial burden on families and communities while increasing access.

The present PCF formula exacerbates discrepancies between urban and rural education settings. It is recommended that the PCF formula be revised to include coefficients for rural and / or mountainous regions where there are fewer children.

To address the concern of children with disabilities, which in terms of percentage amount to the largest group of children out-of-school, the PCF should be revised. Teachers who integrate chil-

dren with disabilities in mainstream schools should also be offered additional compensation to encourage inclusive education.

Recommendation III: Improve access to general secondary education

Access to education remains an issue within Tajikistan. New structures need to be constructed in locations where schools are operating in insufficient and dangerous conditions as well as in rural areas to ensure that all children have access to education in a reasonable distance. Further attention and resources should be given to upgrading or rehabilitation the general infrastructure in the education sector to ensure that all children have access to education.

Recommendation IV: Improve quality of the general secondary education

The quality of education should also be addressed. Teachers should have an opportunity to develop and practice new teaching techniques that develop higher level, critical thinking skills amongst their pupils and become facilitators of learning rather imparters of knowledge.

The standards and curriculum of general secondary education should continue to be revised and updated to meet with international standards and address emerging trends in pedagogy. And, in conjunction, textbooks, teaching, and learning materials should be developed to support the new curriculum, ensuring gender sensitive and gender equity within the materials. Special consideration should be given to the development, production, and distribution of learning and teaching materials for languages for ethnic minorities.

Existing vocational training programmes should be strengthened both in terms of infrastructure as well as in terms of quality of programming offered to meet the needs of the labour market and ensure that future generations are offered viable education that will translate into work force productivity.

Recommendation V: Address the problem of out-of-school children through specific programming

Analysing the different populations of out-of-school children, it is recommended to develop and implement programming that addresses the specific needs of these marginalised children. These programmes should aim to bridge out-of-school children back into the mainstream education system and / or provide sufficient basic education that permits the children to enter into the workforce. Options need to be mapped and analysed prior to the development and implementation of programming, ideally in conjunction with the views of children to ensure long-term success.

In addition, programming needs to be implemented throughout the nation to increase general attendance rates at the general secondary level as well as mitigate the dropout rate. Special consideration should be given to girls; children working and living on the street; and, children in conflict with the law, as these populations have been identified as the most at-risk of dropping out of school. Increasing opportunities for pre-school aged children to participate in early learning development activities will assist in mitigating the drop-out rates at later stages.

Vocational training is a viable programming option to addressing the needs of out-of-school children. With appropriate input and design of programmes that addresses labour market needs and coupled with general education, vocational training opportunities would make significant strides in addressing the needs of out-of-school children.

Recommendation VI: Promote inclusive education

Improvements should be made to data collection on children with disabilities. Responsibilities for children with disabilities are currently split across multiple ministries, and it is difficult to track their progress through the education system, although this is mandated by law. Government capacity should be enhanced at all levels to provide and advance inclusive environments in and around schools, allowing for the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. This includes both physical (i.e. infrastructure, school supplies and equipment), as well as human resources (i.e. training for teachers and specialists). The adoption of the Concept of Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities by the MoE is an encouraging start to achieving this goal, and its effective implementation needs to be carefully developed and monitored in order to realise its objectives.

Recommendation VII: Increase government funding to the education sector

As per the LSIS, to cover the current costs of education by 2015, the government needs to allocate 5.5 per cent of the GDP. As of 2011, the percentage of the GDP allocated to the education sector was only 4.5 per cent. It is recommended that the government increase its funding to the education sector. In doing so, formal and informal costs to households would decrease and, in turn, increase the participation of children in schooling, particularly those from poorer households. School costs to families should be further analysed to present a real picture of family expenditures, including informal payments.

It is also recommended that the government increase the salaries of teachers. In 2013, the government aims to increase salaries by 60 per cent. Such measures will increase teacher retention, encourage new teachers to enter the profession, and lessen migration of teachers to other countries in search for better paying positions. In this vein, students will have a better cadre of qualified teachers and more continuous education in that teachers are not migrating periodically throughout the year.

Recommendation VIII: Build support and commitment

Specialized advocacy efforts should be made to mobilize the government and key stakeholders to create a platform to work together to address out-of-school children. The government, with support from UNICEF, should hold a series of high-level cross-ministerial/sectoral meetings, involving relevant line ministries and other national, local and international partners. The purpose of the meetings is to build a common understanding on the out-of-school children issue and reconfirm the commitment of the government and other partners together.

1) Introduction

1.1) Overview of the global initiative on out-of-school children

UNICEF and the UIS launched the Global Initiative at the beginning of 2010 in order to realize the rights of all children to education. The UIS estimates that, globally, in 2009, 67 million children of primary school age and 71 million children of lower-secondary school age were out of school. Data from the 2010 UNESCO Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report on global and regional trends regarding out-of-school children show that, whilst the situation has improved over the past decade, much remains to be done. Based on current trends, an estimated 56 million children of primary school age worldwide will not be in school in 2015. Participation in pre-primary education remains very low.

Out-of-school children face issues linked to poverty, exposure to child labour, conflict, natural disasters, location (urban or rural area, geographic sub-national regions), gender, health, disability, ethnicity, language, religion and caste. These represent major barriers to schooling and put even those countries that are able to improve access to, and completion of, education at risk of not achieving Universal Primary Education. The Global Initiative is working with 26 countries: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Turkey, South Sudan, Sudan, and Zambia.

The objective of the initiative is to improve statistical information and analysis on out-of-school children and to scrutinize factors of exclusion from schooling and existing policies related to enhancing participation. This is the country study for Tajikistan.

This study is designed to acquire a better understanding of existing data, utilize the data collected and make more effective use of data sources. Profiling children out-of-school is needed for identifying and addressing the multiple and overlapping forms of exclusion and disparities that affect them. The multi-dimensionality of disparities makes it extremely difficult for countries to formulate and finance multi-sectoral policies for addressing the issues. The most disadvantaged out-of-school children need additional targeted measures and investments, some of which are beyond the field of education and many that are also costly and difficult to manage.

The goal is to introduce a more systematic approach to addressing out-of-school children, particularly groups that are the hardest to reach, and guide concrete education sector reforms in this regard. Activities include national studies based on the work of national teams (consisting of government partners and key decision-makers), as well as national capacity strengthening related to the collection and management of education statistics, and to policy analysis and strategy development. The country studies will feed into regional overviews, a global study and a global conference to leverage resources for equity.

1.2) Country context

1.2.1) Overview

Tajikistan has been an independent nation for over 20 years. It is the only country in Central Asia to have experienced a civil war, which began in 1992. The intense violence was short lived and confined to a few regions. A peace agreement brokered by the United Nations was signed in 1997, but the government did not have full control of all regions until the year 2000. The civil war resulted in the deaths of approximately 50,000 people and the migration, both internal and exter-

nal, of many others. The war severely affected the economy, already weakened by the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and caused a sharp decline in industrial and agricultural production.

The economic situation has continuously improved since then. Tajikistan has registered positive economic growth for the last 14 years, and for half that time, economic growth exceeded 8 per cent annually. This growth resulted in an improved quality of life for a large part of the Tajik population, and poverty decreased from approximately 75 per cent in 1999 to approximately 50 per cent in 2009. The growth has occurred due to restoration of businesses after the disruption of the civil war, and to remittances from migrant workers. More than 25 per cent of households in Tajikistan have at least one migrant working abroad.

Progress in achieving improved development outcomes, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been mixed. On one hand, Tajikistan has the advantage of many years of development under the Soviet Union, on another, the devastation of the early years of transition means that it still needs important political, economic and social reforms to ensure sustained growth and improved human development.

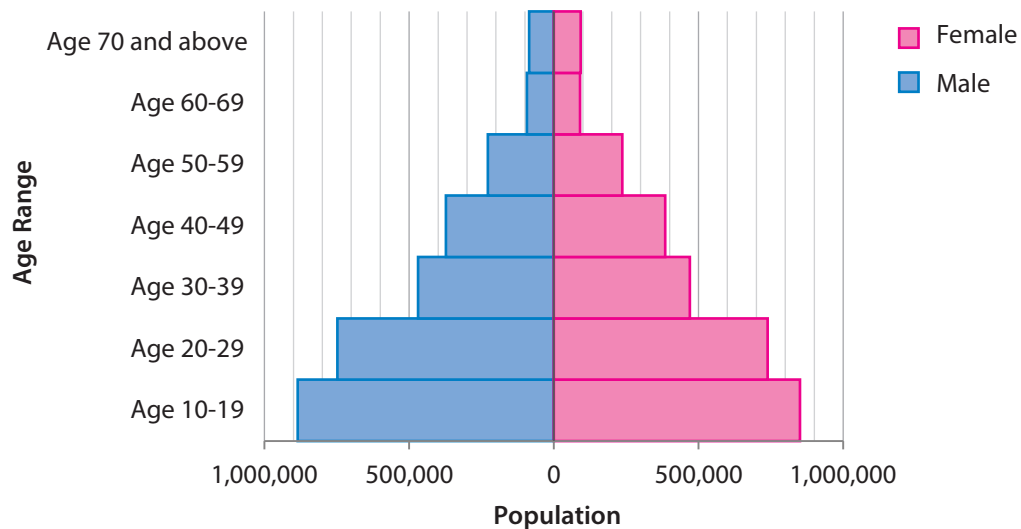
1.2.2) Demographics

The Statistical Agency under the Republic of Tajikistan indicates, accordingly to the 2010 census, that the population at the beginning of July 2010 was estimated as 7,595,000 with around 70 per cent living in rural areas. Population density varies greatly across the country. For example, administrative area of Khatlon has a high population density, and the large eastern (mountainous) areas have a very low population density. This profile has implications for educational planning. According to UNESCO statistics, 3,049,991 people, or 44 per cent, are under 18, based on 2010 population data. The adult literacy rate (ages 15 and above) for 2009 is quoted as 99.7 per cent, and life expectancy at birth is 67; women have an 8 per cent longer life expectancy than men.

A mix of cultural and economic factors continues to drive high birth rates. The 1989 census recorded that the average family size was 6.1 persons, which was the largest in the Soviet Union. The average Tajik woman gave birth to between seven and nine children, with higher birth rates in rural areas. The 2000 census records a slight decrease in family size, down to an average of 5.8 persons. The MICS 2005 data indicate that 59.4 per cent of households have between four and seven members. One-member households remain extremely rare at 3 per cent. At the other extreme, 10.9 per cent of households have more than 10 members.

The Tajikistan 2010 census data indicate that the major ethnic groups are: Tajik (84.3 per cent), Uzbek (12.2 per cent), Russian (0.5 per cent), Kyrgyz (0.8 per cent) and others (2.2 per cent). Around 85 per cent of the population are Hanafi Sunni Muslims, and a small number (5 per cent) are Ismaili Shiite Muslims. The remaining 10 per cent are "other religions" (mostly various Christian denominations).

Figure 1.1 Population pyramid, Tajikistan 2010



(Source: Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2012 *Перепись населения и жилищного фонда, Республики Таджикистан 2010 года, Том IV, Census of Population and Housing, the Republic of Tajikistan, 2010, Volume IV*)

1.2.3) Economy

Tajikistan remains one of the world's poorest countries despite strong economic growth in recent years. The World Bank (WB) reports that poverty rates fell dramatically between 1999 and 2009, but overall gains are fragile since economic growth remains largely dependent on the external environment, particularly the pace of recovery in Russia and the country's ability to overcome chronic energy deficits in winter. The global financial crisis and a series of energy and food crises have hit the country hard. The International Monetary Fund estimates Tajikistan's share of world total GDP (adjusted for purchasing power parity, or PPP) as 0.02 per cent and the 2009 per capita GDP (adjusted for PPP) as US\$2,103.

The 2012 United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) ranks Tajikistan in 125th place out of 187 countries and territories, and notes that Tajikistan's 2012 HDI of 0.622 is below the average of 0.64 for countries in the medium human development group and below the average of 0.771 for countries in Europe and Central Asia. The country's geography is characterized by densely populated river valleys, separated by high mountain chains. The only railway, (built in the 1960s and 1970s), runs through Uzbekistan, which is problematic given difficulties in the relations between the two countries. Roads within the country are being reconstructed at a quick pace, and connections are being made to China and Afghanistan.

Tajikistan's economy is largely dependent on cotton and aluminium production, which together make up about 75 per cent of overall exports, and on remittances from migrants. Only 7 per cent of the country's surface area is arable land, and almost 40 per cent of this is used for cotton cultivation. This means that Tajikistan relies on other countries to supply necessary staples such as flour. Industrial production is concentrated in a few regional centres, with weak output linkages to the rest of the economy and weak infrastructure for import and export. The Tajik economy exploits only about one quarter of its rich mineral resources and none on a large industrial scale, largely due to poor transportation links and infrastructure. The lack of economic diversification hinders economic development and job creation, thus contributing to widespread poverty and significant labour migration.

In 2002, the Government of Tajikistan started implementing a programme of structural reforms aimed at promoting economic development and pro-poor growth, which seems to have been at least partly successful. In subsequent years, Tajikistan experienced some economic stabilization and significant annual GDP growth, at high rates of 8–10 per cent. This economic growth was largely driven by increased consumption based on remittances and the return to normal trade relations after the civil war. In 2008, Tajikistan was the world's top recipient of remittances as a proportion of GDP (44.5 per cent). This was despite a slowdown in the flow of remittances that started in the fourth quarter of 2008 as a result of the world economic crisis. In 2009, a 30 per cent decline in inward remittances, coupled with a substantial decline in exports and foreign direct investment, resulted in a sharp slowdown in economic activity and a decline in disposable income. Despite these challenges, Tajikistan managed to maintain positive economic growth of 3 per cent in 2009, and by the first half of 2010, remittances increased again by 25 per cent, and real GDP growth reached 7 per cent. This also reflected stronger power production, construction and manufacturing.

1.2.4) *Geography*

The geography of Tajikistan also raises country-specific issues in relation to education and development. About 94 per cent of the country is mountainous, and more than 50 per cent of the country is at least 3,000 metres above sea level. Tajikistan is prone to earthquakes, landslides, floods, mudflows, avalanches and stone falls. Due to insufficient arable land, a large number of the rural population live in areas prone to disasters. These issues affect the ability of children to maintain access to schools in isolated areas.

Regional differences manifest amongst the various districts in Tajikistan. The major administrative units of Tajikistan include Khatlon, Sughd, Direct Rule Districts (DRD), Mountainous Autonomous Region of Badakhshan (GBAO) and Dushanbe (see map below). Khatlon is located in the south and is a region of agricultural plains, heavily planted with cotton. Sughd is located in the north and has many industrial plants and easy access to neighbouring Uzbekistan (when relations between the countries are favourable). The DRD are districts in the Hissor and Rasht Valleys surrounding the capital city of Dushanbe. The capital city is considered its own administrative region. GBAO is a mountainous region located in the southeast of the country and contains almost 50 per cent of the landmass of Tajikistan, but less than 5 per cent of the population. It is important to identify regional differences in order to locate areas of high prevalence of out-of-school children and prioritize action in these areas.

Regional differences have arisen due to historical, political and social reasons. Sughd and the southern regions were ruled by different khanates/emirates before Russian colonization. Sughd was favoured for economic development during the Soviet period. Khatlon experienced large agricultural expansion of cotton, and consequently, many mountain people were resettled on the plains. The majority of the population of GBAO follow the Ismaili sect of Islam, which is more liberal in terms of gender norms and emphasizes education for girls as well as boys. Regional differences drive variations in the education situations by region and district.

Figure 1.2 Map of Tajikistan



1.2.5) History of education in Tajikistan

Modern educational institutions did not exist in Tajikistan prior to Russian colonization in the late nineteenth century. Little information is available on education prior to the Soviet era. By the time Soviet rule began in the 1920s, few Tajiks had formal education. According to the first Soviet census of 1926, the literacy rate was 4 per cent for Tajik men and 0.1 per cent for Tajik women across the territory of present-day Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. During the late 1930s, the Soviet government passed laws on compulsory education and began to expand the network of state-run schools at a rapid pace. Soviet reports indicate that in a period of just 10 years, between 1929 and 1939, more than 2,000 schools were built. Literacy rates increased to an estimated 71-82 per cent in 1939, depending on the source.

The Soviet education system was divided into primary, lower-secondary (also referred to as incomplete secondary), upper-secondary schools and higher education. Upper-secondary schools were differentiated as either general (academic track leading to university) or specialized (vocational track). For the period between 1985 and 1990, an annual average of 86,800 students attended general-education secondary schools and an average of 41,500 students attended specialized secondary schools. In the last year of Soviet rule (1990-1991), Tajikistan reported 68,800 students in institutions of higher education.

During the Soviet era, Tajikistan was never a high performer in terms of education. Of the population over the age of 25 in 1989, 16 per cent had only primary schooling, 21 per cent had incomplete secondary schooling, and 55 per cent had completed secondary education. These statistics place Tajikistan ninth among the 15 Soviet republics. The languages of instruction in the Soviet

system were Tajik, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Russian. When Tajik became the official language of the Republic of Tajikistan in 1989, schools using Russian and other languages as the primary language of instruction began teaching Tajik as a second language from the first through to the eleventh grades. However, few textbooks were available in Tajik; by the end of the 1980s, only 10 to 25 per cent of students attending Tajik-language schools had textbooks or other teaching materials in their own language.

1.2.6) Current education in Tajikistan

Article 41 of the Constitution of Tajikistan, adopted in 1994, states that:

Each person has the right to education. General basic education (which equates with primary and lower-secondary education) is obligatory. The government guarantees free secondary school, trade school, and, in accordance with ability and on a competitive basis, specialized high school and university education. Other forms of education to be provided are determined by law.

The basic structure of the education system has changed little since the Soviet era. It is under the supervision of the MoE. Primary and secondary schools are supervised by local government bodies. The primary, secondary and higher professional (vocational) institutions are managed by line ministries and their agencies. Legislation provides for the rights of children to a full-time education, or through correspondence, distant and external learning if they are in remote areas. The current educational system (2011) is depicted in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Current Tajikistan education system

Levels of Education	ISCED Level	Duration of studies (years)	Theoretical age (years)	Educational institutions
Pre-school	Level 0	1-6	1-6 (7)	Kindergarten/Nursery
<i>Compulsory Education:</i>				
Primary	Level 1	4	7-10	General education schools, gymnasiums, lyceums
Lower-secondary	Level 2	5	11-15	
<i>Non-Compulsory:</i>				
Upper-secondary	Level 3	2	16-17	General education schools, gymnasiums, lyceums
Primary Professional	Level 3/4	1-4	From age 16	Vocational schools, centres, technical colleges, colleges, special secondary schools, universities, academies, institutes
Secondary Professional	Level 4	2-4	From age 16 *	
Higher Professional	Level 5	4-6	From 17 (18)	

* is conducted on the basis of general secondary, primary and secondary professional education

(Source: The Republic of Tajikistan, 2007, *National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the Period to 2015*)

Pre-primary education is not compulsory, and access is limited due to its incomplete availability. There is free, compulsory education for nine years in Tajikistan for children aged 7 to 15, and include primary education (Grades 1 – 4) and basic education (Grades 5 – 9). After completion of compulsory education children can choose either to attend an academic track at the secondary level (Grades 10 – 11) or vocational training, at a specialised school. Whole education system from Grades 1 – 11 is called General Secondary. The MoE has announced plans to change the structure of the education system starting from 2020 by adding an additional year of primary

school for 6-year-old children, meaning that 10 years of schooling will be compulsory and that the system will consist of 12 years of education.

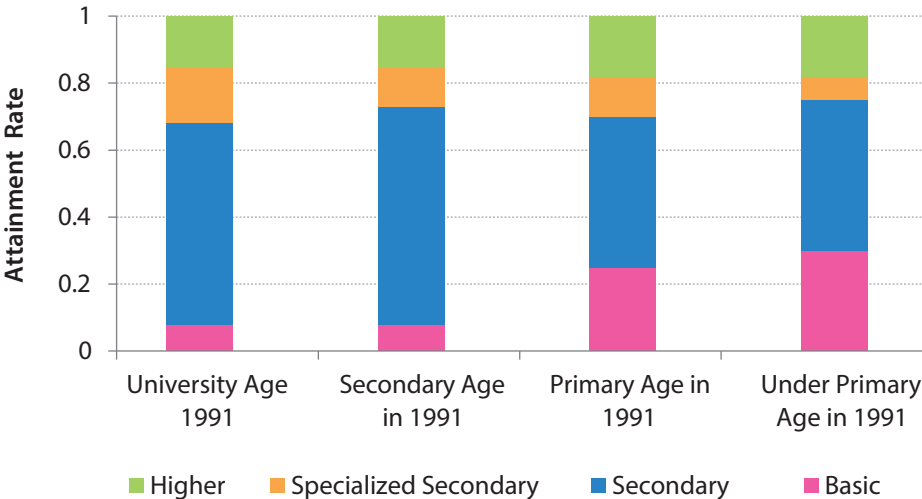
The framework for education in Tajikistan is set out in a suite of legislation, and arrangements are largely described in the NSED. Planning seems detailed and comprehensive, but it is far from clear how it is turning into reality. Education in Tajikistan is covered by sector-based legislation:

- The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “*On Education*” (adopted on 27 December 1993, partially amended in 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997 and 2003, 2004, and a new version adopted in 2013);
- The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “*On Primary Vocational Education*” (2003);
- The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “*On Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education*” (2003); and
- The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on “*Responsibility of Parents for Child Education and Upbringing*” (2011).

There are numerous challenges facing the education system. Although there have been many improvements in recent years, in general, the state of the education system has declined since independence. Tajikistan is one of the few countries in the world where men and women between the ages of 20 and 30 years old have a much lower level of education compared to the older generation of those over 40 years old.

The chart below illustrates multiple trends related to the decrease in educational attainment levels. First, there is a decrease in overall enrolment, as fewer adults in the younger cohorts have finished any education compared to those in older cohorts. Second, a smaller number of younger adults have finished upper-secondary and higher education compared to those in older cohorts. Finally, a larger portion of adults have finished only primary or lower-secondary education.

Figure 1.3 Educational attainment for cohorts educated during the post-socialist transition



(Source: Chris Whitsel, 2011 with data estimates from the Republican Statistical Agency, 2007, *Tajikistan Living Standards Measurement Survey (TLSS) 2007*)

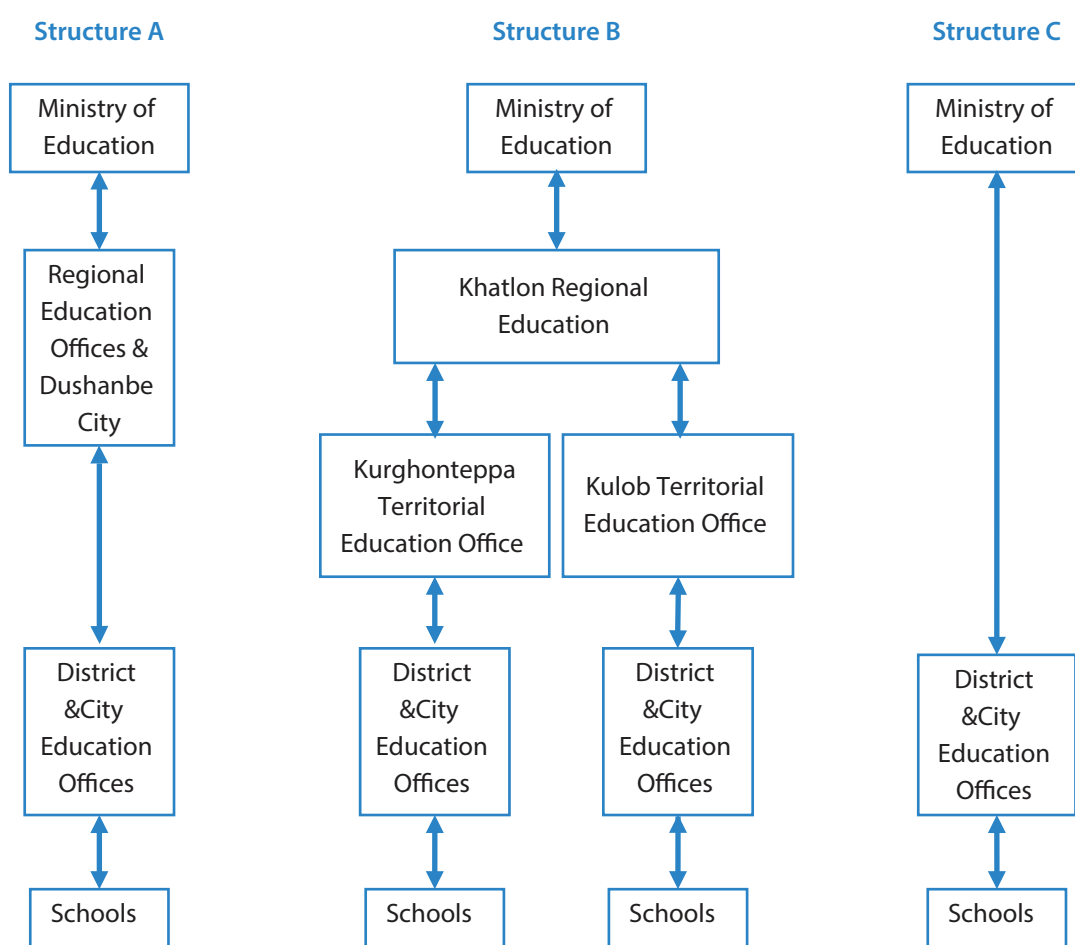
Education in Tajikistan also suffered from infrastructure problems. School buildings were impacted by the civil war and further buildings are in poor condition due to lack of resources allocated for repair. The construction industry, an area of particular weakness in the republic’s economy,

produced only a small fraction of the new schools and pre-school facilities it was assigned to complete each year. As a result, schools sometimes have to operate in triple shifts.

1.2.7) Administration of education

As occurs in many countries with a federalist structure, the administration of education in Tajikistan is shared across the various levels of government. At the national (republican) level, the government takes responsibility for overall planning for educational development and various executive administrative powers. The MoE has main responsibility for setting, implementing, and monitoring state policies and standards, and the development of curricula. The Ministry is also in charge of the coordination of activities of all state bodies with responsibility for education in Tajikistan. Local government authorities implement state policies on education and develop regional educational programmes.

Figure 1.4 Educational structures in Tajikistan



(Source: Cassidy, T, 2009, *Rethinking the Structure of the Central Board and the Distribution of Functions in the Ministry of Education in the Republic of Tajikistan*)

A recent OECD Review of National Education Policies in Tajikistan and neighbouring countries found that Tajikistan’s legislative framework was, “rather open as to where responsibilities at the different levels start and stop” and that the competence (role) of the MoE was, “therefore in reality very difficult to exercise, and is – in most cases – not being exercised on a regular basis”. The lack of clarity described by the OECD in their review must be taken seriously and will clearly impact upon capacity to implement recommendations from this study.

Cassidy (2009) provides details on the different ways education is structured across the country. Structure A is found in the Sughd region, GBAO and in Dushanbe City. Structure B occurs in Khatlon region, and Structure C is for the 13 districts (rayons) that are under direct subordination to the Central Board of the MoE.

At the school level, overall management of schools is the responsibility of the School Pedagogical Council (SPC) and the school principal. The SPC is the decision-making body at the school level. It meets at least once per month, with additional meetings called as required.

The principal is responsible to the state, society, parents and school founders for the quality of teaching and supervision of students, for the well-being of students, for maintenance of facilities and for student knowledge outcomes. The role of school principals is largely one of an administrator of policy and of decisions handed down by higher authorities. A salary structure based on the number of teaching hours is an anomaly of the Tajikistan education system. Under this system, teachers are usually better paid than principals.

Cassidy (2009) notes that decentralization of management to districts and schools and efforts to encourage more school-based management of school improvement efforts are among the stated objectives of current reform initiatives. At this stage, it is not possible to determine how far decentralization has progressed since 2009 due to lack of recent documentation on this issue.

Per capita financing (PCF) development and piloting began in 2005 and continued to be implemented in stages throughout the country until 2010. Its aims are to support a more transparent, effective, and equitable distribution of budget resources to schools and to allow schools more autonomy in setting their budget and managing their resources.

1.2.8) Key partners in the education sector

Tajikistan has a well-established cross-sectoral donor coordination mechanism called the Development Coordination Council (DCC), which aims to ensure development partners work collectively with, and advocate for, the government in a harmonized manner. The DCC is composed of different sector working groups, including education. A total of eight donors currently participate in the education group, which is co-lead by UNICEF and the WB, and involves the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the European Union (EU), the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

Among the different DCC sector groups, the education group has been one of the most active and has been successful in collectively influencing the government (particularly the MoE) in key policy and strategic dialogue. This includes in the development of the NSED 2020 and the Development Forum Action Plan 2011-2020, both of which stipulate the country's way forward within the ongoing education reform process.

Tajikistan is also a recipient of funds from the GPE. Within the DCC mechanism, the WB serves as the supervising entity whilst UNICEF takes responsibility as Coordination Agency for Tajikistan GPE.

UNICEF also leads the education sub-group of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), where different United Nations agencies collectively work to enhance their collaboration towards one United Nations. They include the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), WFP, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Labour Organization (ILO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and UNESCO.

International and national NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) also take an important role, particularly at the local and community levels. Though the scale of their implementation is, in general, small, NGOs/CSOs have different innovative approaches and good practices that directly contribute to the improved access and quality of education for children in the country. However, collaboration between the above-mentioned bilateral and multilateral major development partners and the existing NGOs/CSOs is still relatively weak, and this is an area that should be further expanded and strengthened.

1.2.9) Key challenges for education in Tajikistan

The provision of quality education in Tajikistan is significantly affected by a number of factors including:

- High rates of economic migration, with 25 per cent of families having at least one family member working abroad (usually in Russia);
- High rate of population growth and a high and increasing ‘youth bulge’;
- Low levels of public investment in education coupled with inefficiencies in financial allocation and management;
- Insufficient schools, overcrowding and poor learning conditions;
- Insufficient numbers of qualified teachers, teacher shortages and textbook shortages; and
- Weak educational management and planning at all levels.

The government puts a high priority on education and has implemented a number of reforms in recent years. In 2004, the law on education was revised (with a subsequent new law on education in 2013). In 2005, the MoE began planning the NSED 2020 to guide reforms in the period of 2006-2015. And, the NSED 2020, which was developed to guide the sector from 2012 – 2020, emphasizes access to education and greater management capacity.

The NSED 2020 indicates a change of strategic direction, reinforcing education as a means of achieving national economic growth. It stresses the importance of modernizing education, as well as strengthening the relevance of its contents, particularly through the introduction of vocational education and training within compulsory education.

The NSED 2020 notes that Tajikistan needs to increase expenditure on education considerably in the future so that it can:

- Improve its control systems in education;
- Increase of system effectiveness of use of available resources;
- Improve methodical and personnel provision of education system; and
- Improve access to education for both girls and boys, as well as for children from socially vulnerable groups within the population.

1.3) Methodology

The methodology of the study follows the guidance provided by the Conceptual and Methodological Framework (CMF) of the Global Initiative. The study starts with a comprehensive statistical analysis to identify different groups of out-of-school children (profiles of excluded children), followed by an analysis of barriers and bottlenecks from different perspectives of supply and demand, as well as political, governance, capacity and finance. Policies and strategies are examined in order to establish whether and how they are designed and implemented to address the

barriers and bottlenecks identified. A conclusions chapter summarizes the overall analysis and makes recommendations on the way forward for the country.

This study is limited to the use of existing information sources, and no additional research was conducted. Interviews with key stakeholders were carried out to complement the information from existing sources. This study relies mainly on resources provided by UNICEF, UIS and the Statistical Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan.

1.3.1) Data Sources

The main sources of statistical data used in this study are:

The Statistical Yearbook for the Education Sector for 2010-2011 (MoE)

This is a statistical publication from the MoE. It is gathered using the newly established EMIS. Each year in the fall, school directors complete the census form and submit it to the district level education offices. The district offices compile the school data and forward it to education offices at the oblast level, which then compile district data and provide it to the republican Ministry. This is a new process related to the per capita financing initiative and is facilitated through specially designed computer programs provided at the district and oblast levels.

The weakness of this data source is that it only reports on the number of children enrolled in school. Calculations of out-of-school children were completed with 2010 census data from the state statistical agency.

The MoE report provides tables disaggregated by oblast and sex, as well as a few tables on rural and urban differences. However, no further breakdown by wealth or other important social categories is provided. Thus, household surveys outlined below were used to support the MoE data and for more sophisticated calculations based on sex, rural/urban and wealth differences. Household surveys used the MICS 2005, TLSS 2007 and TLSS 2009 described below.

MICS 2005

The MICS is a household survey programme developed by UNICEF to assist countries in filling data gaps for monitoring human development in general and the situation of children and women in particular. In 2005, 6,968 households were selected for the survey out of which 6,684 households responded. The data collected on current school attendance can be disaggregated according to age, sex, region, rural/urban location, household wealth quintile and education level of parents.

Data for Tajikistan were collected by the Agency on Statistics under the President of Tajikistan and UNICEF between September and October 2005. MICS defines an out of school child as one who did not attend school at any time during the school year 2004-2005. MICS data were collected in the first and second months of the 2005-2006 school year.

TLSS 2007

These data were collected by the Agency on Statistics under the President of Tajikistan between September and November 2007. The TLSS 2007 sample was designed to provide a reliable estimate of poverty and to collect a variety of socioeconomic and other living standard indicators at national and sub-national (oblast) levels (as with the MICS, regions with low populations were over-sampled). Data were collected from 4,860 households across the whole country.

As with the MICS 2005 survey, the TLSS 2007 defines an out of school child as one who was not enrolled in school in the previous year (school year 2006-2007). The data can be disaggregated by age, sex, area (regions only), poverty status (poor/non-poor), quintiles of consumption and education level. There are some limitations. The TLSS considers 6-year-olds as eligible for entrance to school, but not pre-school; thus, estimates of coverage of pre-primary education based on definitions for this study can not be made.

TLSS 2009

These data were collected in November 2009, and involved revisiting 1,500 of the same households surveyed in 2007. Data collection methods and limitations were the same as for the 2007 survey. Other data used in this study come from various surveys and national reports that have been produced and are referenced accordingly.

TransMonEE 2012

The TransMonEE (Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity) database captures a vast range of data regarding social and economic issues relevant to the situation and wellbeing of children, young people and women in countries of Central Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (CEECIS), including Tajikistan. The 2012 version of the database contains 180 economic and social indicators divided into ten topics (Population, Natality, Child and Maternal Mortality, Life Expectancy and Adult Mortality, Family Formation, Health, Education, Child Protection, Crime and Juvenile Justice, and Economy). Data generally cover the period of 1989-2010/11; however, data on education are presented for the period from 2000/01 to 2010/11.

1.3.2) Defining Frameworks

Child Labour

The international legal standards that define child labour are the frame of reference for child labour statistics. The three principal international conventions relating to child labour are: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ILO Convention No. 138 on the minimum age for admission to employment and work, (ILO 138), and ILO Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labour, 1999 (ILO 182). Child labour is considered to represent exploitation and loss of rights, whereas the term 'child work' is considered to represent work done that does not interfere with the survival, development, and well-being of a child. For the purpose of this section, the terms 'work' or 'labour' are used as they appear in the literature sources.

Studies indicate that 90 per cent of children aged 5 to 14 who are involved in labour are enrolled in school. The child labour measure used in this study comprises three groups of children following ILO norms:

- i) 5- to 11-year-old children in economic activity, i.e. those engaged in any activity falling within the System of National Accounts (SNA) production boundary for at least one hour during the reference week. Economic activity covers children in all market production and in certain types of non-market production, including production of goods for own use. It includes forms of work in both the formal and informal sectors, as well as forms of work both inside and outside family settings;
- ii) 12- to 14-year-old children in non-light (or 'regular') economic activity, i.e. those engaged in any activity falling within the SNA production boundary for at least 14 hours during the reference week; and

-
- iii) 5- to 14-year-old children in hazardous unpaid household services, i.e. those engaged in the production of domestic and personal services for consumption within their own household, commonly called ‘household chores’, for at least 28 hours during the reference week.

Children with Disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities stipulates in Article 1 that “persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

Hence, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, together with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, further strengthens the rights of children with disabilities, imposing additional obligations on Governments to take action to eliminate the barriers keeping children with disabilities from realising their rights.

1.4) Five dimensions of exclusion from education

1.4.1) Overview of the five dimensions of exclusion

Based on the CMF, the study applies the Five Dimensions of Exclusion from Education (5DE) model. The 5DE model represents an innovative approach that provides a broader, more complex and equity-oriented view of exclusion from education than is addressed by the MDGs, with key implications concerning barriers and policy development.

The 5DE model presents **5 target groups of children** for the data and policy analysis that span three levels of education: pre-primary, primary and lower-secondary; and two different population groups: children who are out of school, and those who are in school but at risk of dropping out. Each group represents a distinct Dimension of Exclusion that requires specific statistical and policy analysis. The term ‘exclusion’ has a slightly different meaning depending on the population concerned: children who are out of school are excluded *from* education, whilst children who are at risk of dropping out may be excluded *within* education, for example, because they face discriminatory practices or attitudes within the school.

Based on the definition of out-of-school children, the 5DE includes two dimensions that capture the out of school population of primary school age (Dimension 2) and lower-secondary school age (Dimension 3). Dimensions 2 and 3 are divided into three mutually exclusive categories based on previous or future school exposure:

- i) children who attended in the past and dropped out;
- ii) children who are at risk of never attending school; and
- iii) children who will enter school in the future.

Some out-of-school children of primary and lower-secondary age may be in pre-primary or non-formal education, and these children should be identified separately within the out of school Dimensions 2 and 3, if data are available. Furthermore, out-of-school children of primary or lower-secondary age who completed primary education are different from children who did not complete the full primary cycle before leaving school. These groups of children should also be identified separately within the out of school Dimensions 2 and 3.

Pre-primary education is represented by Dimension 1, which highlights children of pre-primary school age who are not in pre-primary or primary education. For this study, children one year

younger than the official primary school entrance age are considered pre-primary-school-aged children.

Dimensions 4 and 5 focus on children who are in school, but are at risk of dropping out. These are identified by the level of education they attend, regardless of their age: primary (Dimension 4) or lower-secondary (Dimension 5). Dimension 4 covers children in primary school who are considered at risk of dropping out, and Dimension 5 covers children in lower-secondary school who are considered at risk. Dimensions 4 and 5 are different from Dimensions 2 and 3, which group out-of-school children by their age.

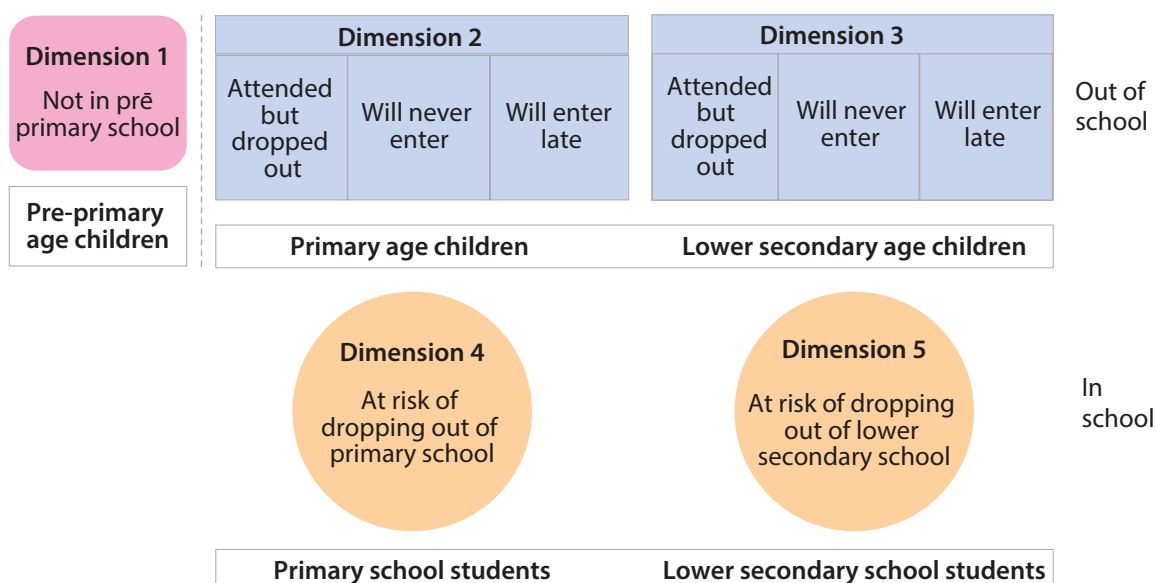
The framework thus covers two different types of populations: 1) the population of out-of-school children of school-going age, and 2) the population of at-risk pupils of any age in primary or lower-secondary school (ISCED 1 and 2). Understanding more about children at risk is key to preventing them from becoming the out-of-school children of tomorrow.

In summary, the 5DE, through both the out of school and at-risk dimensions set out specific groups of children who are not participating in the intended level of education for the intended duration and at the intended age. The 5DE are listed below and displayed in Figure 1.8.

The Five Dimensions of Exclusion from Education (5DE)

- Dimension 1:** Children of pre-primary school age who are not in pre-primary or primary school
- Dimension 2:** Children of primary school age who are not in primary or secondary school
- Dimension 3:** Children of lower-secondary school age who are not in primary or secondary school
- Dimension 4:** Children who are in primary school but at risk of dropping out
- Dimension 5:** Children who are in lower-secondary school but at risk of dropping out

Figure 1.5 Five dimensions of exclusion from education



(Source: UNICEF and UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2010, 'Conceptual and Methodological Framework (CMF): All Children in School by 2015-Global Initiative on Out-of-school children.)

1.4.2) *Five dimensions of exclusion from education in Tajikistan context*

The key research questions as defined in the CMF are to understand the underlying problem of out-of-school children through identification of key data, analysis and policy gaps. There is a lack of adequate tools and methodologies to:

- Identify out-of-school children;
- Measure the scope and describe the complexity of exclusion and disparities;
- Assess the reasons for exclusion, and to inform policy and planning; and
- Acquire a better overview of existing data.

The CMF identified that policies and programmes to address the problems of out-of-school children are inadequate and small-scale in many countries, and no systematic analysis of the barriers and bottlenecks has been undertaken.

Tajikistan has very high enrolment rates in compulsory education compared with other countries of similar wealth. Coverage of pre-school education remains very low; however, with only approximately 8 per cent of children of pre-school age attending any type of institution. Close to 100 per cent of children of primary school age are enrolled in school. Exact estimates from differing sources vary between coverage of 96.4 per cent and 97.2 per cent. Children, especially girls, begin leaving school after completion of primary school, and the trend accelerates through to the end of the compulsory Grade 9. The largest drop in educational participation occurs after compulsory schooling, in Grade 9, although this is outside of the scope of this study.

As an overview, data from UNPD indicate that there were 166,082 6-year-old children, which is the definition of a pre-primary school child for this study in Tajikistan. UIS data for 2010 indicate 92.1 per cent of children of pre-primary school age were out of school. There were 665,682 children of primary school age (7-10 years old), with 98 per cent of them in school. There were a total of 844,716 children of lower-secondary school age (11-15 years old), with 96.3 per cent of them in school.

The high enrolment rates within the compulsory education levels of primary and lower-secondary changes the discussion of the 5DE in some ways. The high enrolment rates in Tajikistan at the compulsory level indicate that only a small portion of out-of-school children have never attended school, which is covered under Dimensions 2 and 3. For Tajikistan, this likely includes children with disabilities and children living and working on the streets at both the primary and lower-secondary age levels. Girls make up the largest total of out-of-school children and are included in this category at the lower-secondary age level because they begin dropping out of school at the primary level, and the number of dropouts increases with age.

Most of the out-of-school children in Tajikistan have attended primary school and at least some lower-secondary school, meaning that they fall into the category of having attended but dropped out under Dimensions 2 and 3; as well as at risk of dropping out which are Dimensions 4 and 5.

Exacerbating the problem of calculating gross numbers of out-of-school children in Tajikistan, is the lack of data on attendance rates. Anecdotal evidence, as provided in the UNICEF Girls' Rapid Assessment report, and a study conducted in 2004 by Falkingham and Baschieri indicate that up to 50 per cent of girls and 30 per cent of boys have irregular attendance.

2) Profiles of excluded children

This chapter provides information on each of the main groups of excluded children in order to facilitate a deeper understanding of their numbers and situations. The main data sources are official sources: MoE and UIS, supported with information from the TLSS 2007, TLSS 2009 and MICS 2005 surveys described in the previous chapter.

This study focuses on out-of-school children at three different age levels:

- Dimension 1: Children of pre-primary school age who are not in pre-primary or primary school (age 6) ;
- Dimension 2: Children of primary school age who are not in primary or secondary school (ages 7 to 10);
- Dimension 3: Children of lower-secondary school age who are not in primary or secondary school (ages 11 to 15).

And, this study focuses on children at risk of dropping out of school at two different educational levels:

- Dimension 4: Primary school (Grades 1 to 4, ISCED 1);
- Dimension 5: Lower-secondary school (Grades 5 to 9, ISCED 2).

Children aged 16 years and older (upper-secondary age) are not the focus of this study.

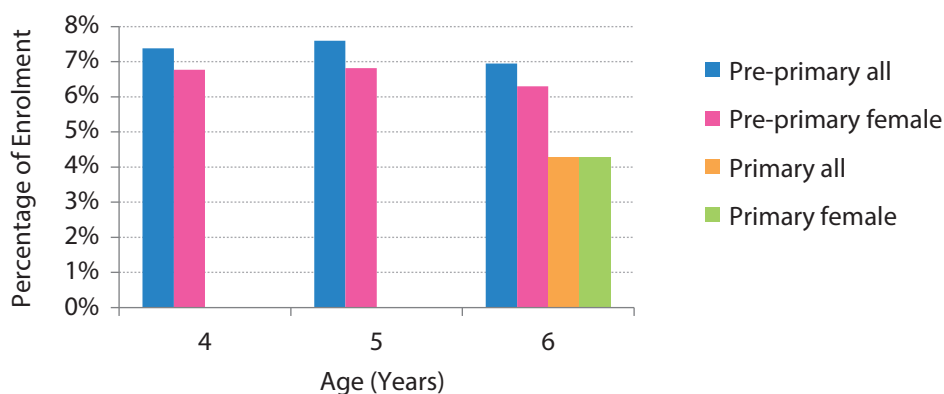
2.1) Dimension 1

Dimension 1: Children of pre-primary school age who are not in pre-primary or primary school

2.1.1) General overview of Dimension 1

In this study, pre-primary age is considered as 'one year before enrolment to primary'. For Tajikistan, the typical pre-primary age for children is 6.

Figure 2.1 Pre-primary and primary school enrolment rate by age



(Source: Enrolment data: the Ministry of Education, 2011, *Statistical Yearbook for the Education Sector for 2010-2011*; population data: UNPD (2010 revision))

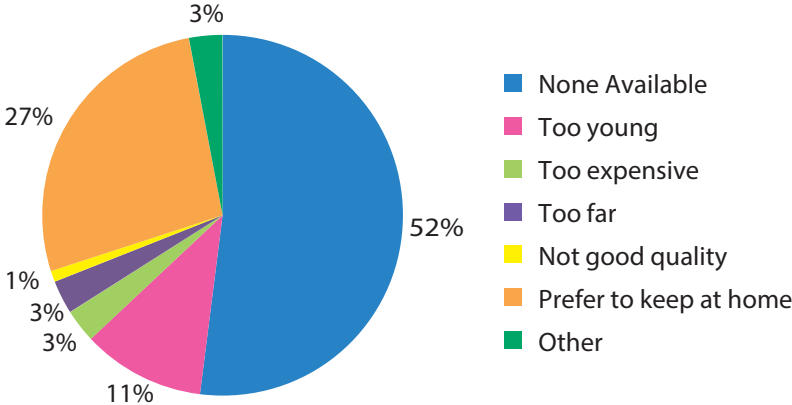
Coverage at the pre-primary level in Tajikistan is very low, approximately 8 per cent, according to UIS data. The Statistical Yearbook for the Education Sector 2010-2011 reports that 11,619 (7 per cent) 6-year-olds are enrolled in pre-primary school and 7,160 (4 per cent) 6-year-olds are enrolled in general education (refer to Figure 2.1). The percentages of girls enrolled at either level are lower than those of boys. The numbers presented by the MoE for 6-year-olds are slightly higher than the calculations of the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, which reports that only 5.5 per cent of children aged 1 to 6 are in pre-primary institutions, indicating that the coverage for younger children is much lower.

In terms of facilities, the number of permanent, state-run, pre-primary school institutions has fallen from 944 in 1991 to 488 in 2010. The most drastic loss of institutions was during the civil war and the initial post-Soviet period, as the number of institutions dropped from 944 in 1991 to 555 in 1995. Since 1995, the numbers of registered pre-primary institutions has hovered around 500. In terms of geographical location, Dushanbe has 108 government pre-primary schools, Sughd – 197, Khatlon – 105, DRD – 59, and GBAO – 19.

UNICEF, with the support of the Ministry of Education and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been developing and promoting an alternative form of early childhood education that is more cost-effective and sustainable than the state kindergartens. Since 2009 these alternative centres have been modelled in various districts across Tajikistan and, to date, there are 707 centres operational.

The TLSS 2007 surveyed the most common reasons for households not sending children to pre-primary school. The most common reason given was that no pre-school facilities were available (52 per cent) followed by a preference to keep the children at home (27 per cent) and a view that the children were too young to attend school (11 per cent). Cost, quality and distance were found to be less important.

Figure 2.2 Main reasons for not attending pre-primary school



(Source: The Republican Statistical Agency, 2007, *Tajikistan Living Standards Measurement Survey (TLSS) 2007*)

2.1.2) Dimension 1 by gender

Statistics indicate gender bias favouring boys beginning at the earliest stages of education. The MoE report for 2010-2011 reveals the total number of 6-year-old children in preschool institutions as 11,619, of which only 5,094 (44 per cent) are girls. Similarly, it reports that 7,160 6-year-olds are enrolled in general education and that only 2,467 girls (34 per cent) are among them. UIS also reports a difference of enrolment for children of pre-primary age, with approximately 9 per cent

of males and 7 per cent of females enrolled. From this, it can be extrapolated that there exists gender bias favouring boys in pre-primary education.

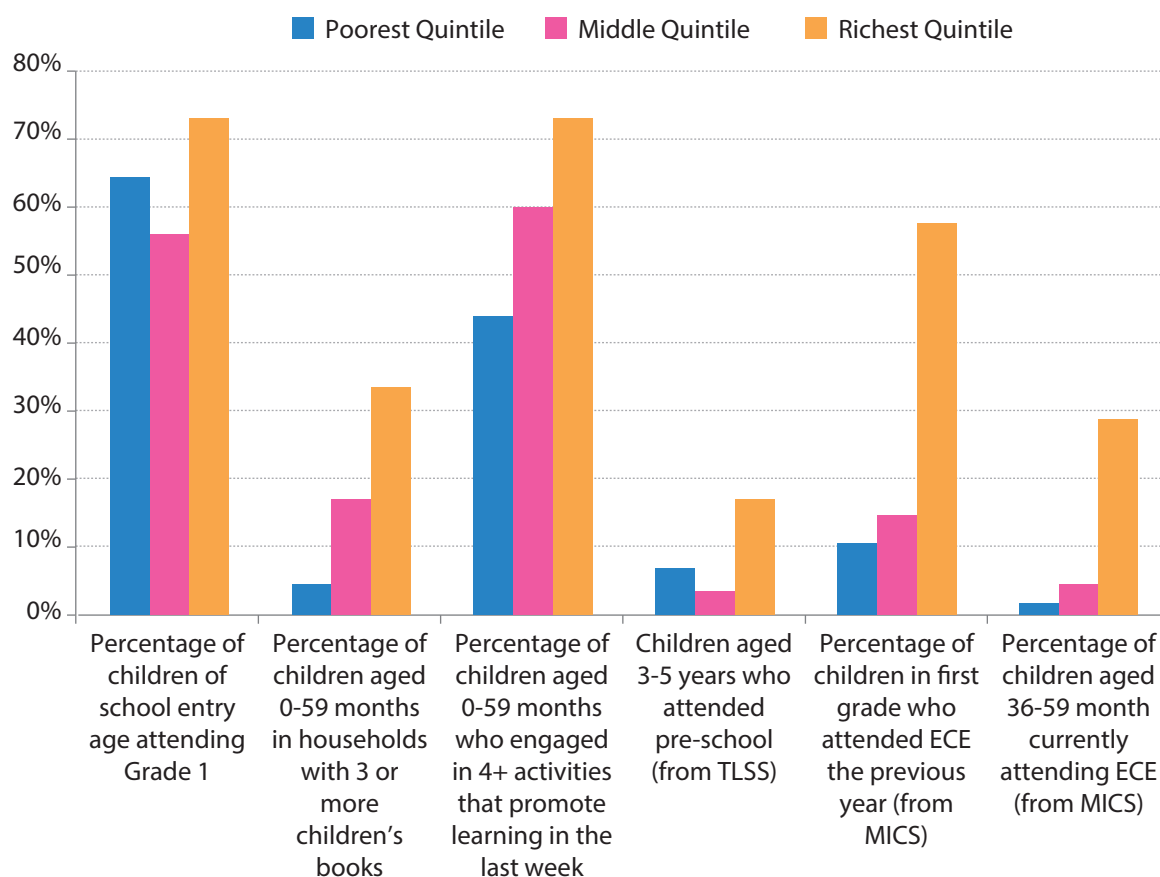
2.1.3) Dimension 1 by wealth quintiles

Data from the MoE and UIS do not disaggregate education statistics by wealth quintile. However, analysis of the MICS 2005 and TLSS 2007 household surveys, conducted with cooperation from the State Committee on Statistics of the Republic of Tajikistan can be used for such analyses.

The TLSS 2007 indicates that wealth is an important factor for pre-primary attendance. By quintiles of consumption, attendance of 3-5-year-old children was 6.6 per cent for the poorest quintile, 5.8 per cent for the second quintile, 3.5 per cent for the third quintile, 8.1 per cent for the fourth quintile, and 17.1 per cent for the richest quintile.

Figure 2.3 provides information from a detailed study on early learning in Tajikistan conducted for UNICEF Tajikistan in early 2010. It also illustrates significant wealth-dependent variations in learning and ‘school readiness’ amongst young children in Tajikistan. The richest quintile had the highest percentage of children at Grade 1, age 7, attending school; was most likely to have books in the household; was most likely to have children under 5 engaged in learning activities; and had the largest percentage of children in Grade 1 who had attended early childhood education in the previous year.

Figure 2.3 Indicators of learning and school readiness



(Source: McLean, 2010, *Laying the First Bricks True: A Situation Analysis of Early Learning in Tajikistan*)

In summary, there are differences in pre-primary education by household wealth with a strong correlation between wealth and early childhood development indicators. MICS analysis indicates a positive advantage as wealth increases.

2.1.4) Dimension 1 by location

There is also a difference between urban and rural pre-primary school attendance. The MoE report from 2010-2011 states that, of the 11,619 6-year-old children who are in pre-primary programs, 9,778 (84 per cent) are in urban areas, and only 1,841 (16 per cent) are in rural areas. This demonstrates the significant advantage of urban dwellers as over 70 per cent of the population actually lives in rural areas. There is no report on 6-year-olds in primary education disaggregated by location; however, the majority of children enrolled in Grade 1 (typically age 7) are in rural areas (72 per cent), which more closely match the actual population distribution.

Estimates from the TLSS 2007 indicate that 21.3 per cent of children aged 3 to 5 living in Dushanbe had attended pre-primary school in the previous academic year. The figure was 18.6 per cent for other urban locations; however, the figure for rural areas was 3.1 per cent. The MICS 2005 indicates that 25.3 per cent of first graders (age 7) reported having attended pre-primary school in the previous academic year.

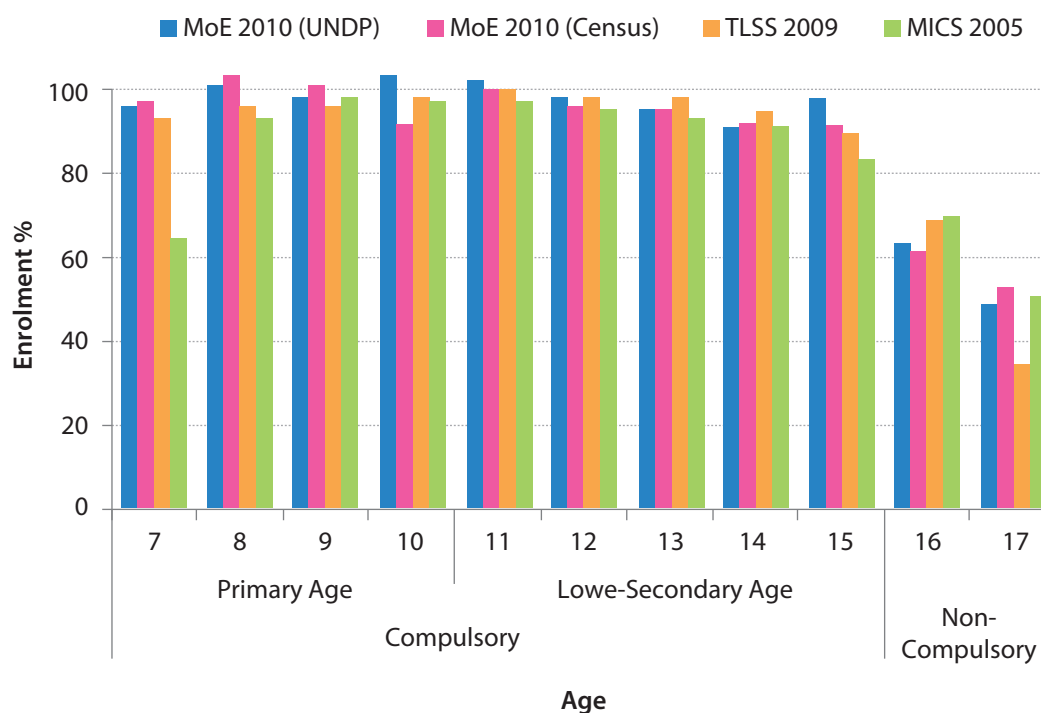
2.2) Dimensions 2 and 3

Dimension 2: Children of primary school age who are not in primary or secondary school
Dimension 3: Children of lower-secondary school age who are not in primary or secondary school

2.2.1) General overview of Dimension 2 and 3

Whereas the coverage of pre-primary education described above is well below 10 per cent, levels of enrolment in compulsory education are well above 90 per cent. Figure 2.4 presents estimates of school enrolment by age using data from three sources, the MoE, the TLSS 2009 and the MICS 2005. As the MoE data only provide information on enrolment, the number of out-of-school children was calculated with both census data and UNPD estimates of population. MoE estimates using census data show that 99 per cent of primary aged children are enrolled in school. Estimates with UNPD figures indicate that over 100 per cent of children of primary-age (ages 7 to 10) are enrolled in school, although this varies between a low of 96 per cent of 7-year-olds and 104 per cent of 10-year-olds. As it is theoretically impossible to have net enrolment rates higher than 100 per cent, the findings indicate that there are either inconsistencies with the population estimates from UNPD or within the data from the MoE. Nonetheless, a very high rate of enrolment for primary-aged children is confirmed by UIS estimates from 2010, which indicate that 2 per cent of children of primary age are not enrolled in school. Estimates from the TLSS 2009 and the MICS 2005 support the general trend showing that over 95 per cent of children of primary age are enrolled in school, with the exception of MICS calculations of 7-year-olds. As the population size for each of the data sets varies, a comparison of results to ascertain changes overtime is not recommended.

Figure 2.4 Enrolment in primary, lower-secondary or upper-secondary by age



Source:

Enrolment data: the Ministry of Education, 2011, *Statistical Yearbook for Education Sector for 2010-2011*; The Republican Statistics Agency, 2009, *Tajik Living Standards Survey (TLSS) 2009*; State Committee on Statistics of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2005, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2005*.

Population data: MICS2005; TLSS 2009, UNPD (2010 revision); MoE, Census 2010, ; Statistical Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2012, *Population of the Republic of Tajikistan by sex, age, and marital status V2, 2012* [Население Республики Таджикистан по полу, возрасту и состоян и в браке Том II, 2012]

Enrolment rates begin to drop for children of lower-secondary age, although enrolment remains above 90 per cent. MoE estimates using census data show that 95 per cent of lower-secondary-aged children (11 to 15) are enrolled in school. The percentage of out-of-school children increases with age, as over 98 per cent of 11-year-olds are enrolled in school, but only 92 per cent of 15-year-olds are enrolled. Estimates of the percentage of the out-of-school children using UNPD data are higher than those shown by the MoE data. The UNPD data indicates that 98 per cent of children of lower-secondary are enrolled and the same pattern of increasing out-of-school children with age is observed. Similarly, UIS estimates that only 3.7 per cent of children of lower-secondary age were not enrolled in school in 2010. The pattern is repeated in the data from the TLSS 2009 (showing a 10 per cent drop in enrolment between the ages of 11 and 15) and the MICS 2005 (showing a 14 per cent drop in enrolment).

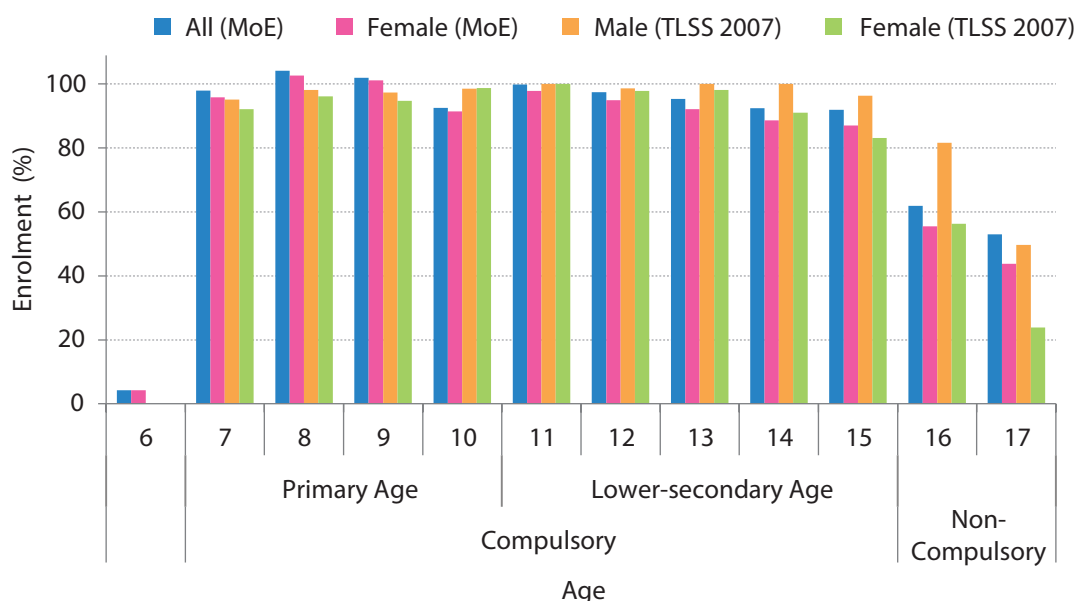
Although outside the scope of this study, the drastic drop in enrolment at ages 16 and 17 should be mentioned. Enrolment at these ages is not compulsory. Estimates based on the 2010 report from the MoE indicate that only 64 per cent of children aged 16 and 49 per cent of children aged 17 are enrolled in school. TLSS 2009 and MICS 2005 estimates follow the same trend more or less.

2.2.2) Dimensions 2 and 3 by sex

In the description above of vulnerable populations of out-of-school children, girls figured highly as potentially not attending school; at risk of never enrolling in school; and as school dropouts. Several types of analysis that demonstrate the various dimensions in which girls are disadvantaged are reviewed below.

Sex differences do exist at both the primary and lower-secondary age levels. Figure 2.5 displays estimates using data from the MoE and census population data. Across all age groups, girls are enrolled in school at lower rates than boys. The gap between girls and boys increases with age. On average, girls of primary age are enrolled in school at rates 1 per cent lower than boys. The difference in enrolment rates between boys and girls aged 11 is 2 per cent, growing to a difference of 5 per cent between girls and boys age 15. The difference in enrolment rates between boys and girls of post-compulsory age is even higher at close to 8 per cent. UIS also reports differences of 3 percent between sexes at the primary age level in 2010 but does not have data for the lower-secondary age level. Data from the TLSS 2007 indicate a similar pattern, fewer sex differences among primary age children and increasing differences among lower-secondary and upper-secondary boys and girls. This basic pattern was first reported by Falkingham (2000), indicating that this is a long-standing trend in Tajikistan. However, the gap between boys and girls in recent reports is lower than Falkingham's estimates a decade ago.

Figure 2.5 Enrolment in primary, lower-secondary, or upper-secondary by age and sex



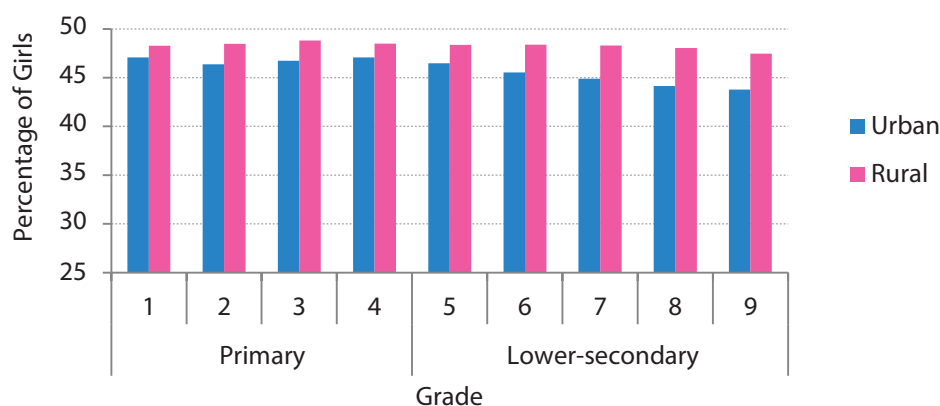
(Source: Enrolment data: the Ministry of Education, 2011, *Statistical Yearbook for Education Sector for 2010-2011*. Population data: *Population of the Republic of Tajikistan by sex, age, and marital status V2, 2012* [Население Республики Таджикистан по полу, возрасту и состоянию в браке Том II, 2012])

And, it is of note that attendance rates of girls and boys remain a concern. To date, there is no measureable tracking of attendance at the school level, but studies indicate that attendance is an issue with approximately 50 per cent of girls and 30 per cent of boys having irregular attendance.

2.2.3) Dimension 2 and 3 by sex and rural/urban differences

Analyses using data from the recent MoE publication indicates that there are differences between rural and urban areas in the percentages of girls attending school. UNPD estimates show that females are about 49 per cent of the school-age population, although the difference between rural and urban populations is unknown. In urban regions, girls are less than 49 per cent of students, indicating a disadvantage relative to boys. Surprisingly, the results counter what is commonly understood because it shows that across all grade levels that girls make up a larger percentage of students in rural areas than in urban areas.

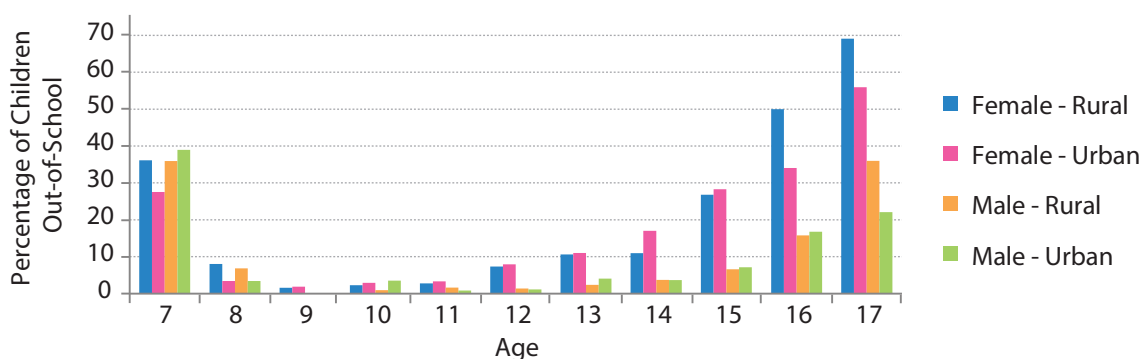
Figure 2.6 Percentage of all students who are girls by urban/rural



(Source: the Ministry of Education, 2011, *Statistical Yearbook for Education Sector for 2010-2011*)

Analyses from the TLSS 2007 also support the general findings of an advantage for rural girls over their urban counterparts. Beginning at age 9 (theoretically Grade 3), more urban girls are out of school than rural girls. The gap between the two increases by age through lower-secondary school but shifts radically in the post-compulsory age level. There is no conclusive difference amongst rural and urban boys.

Figure 2.7 Out of school rate by age, sex, and location



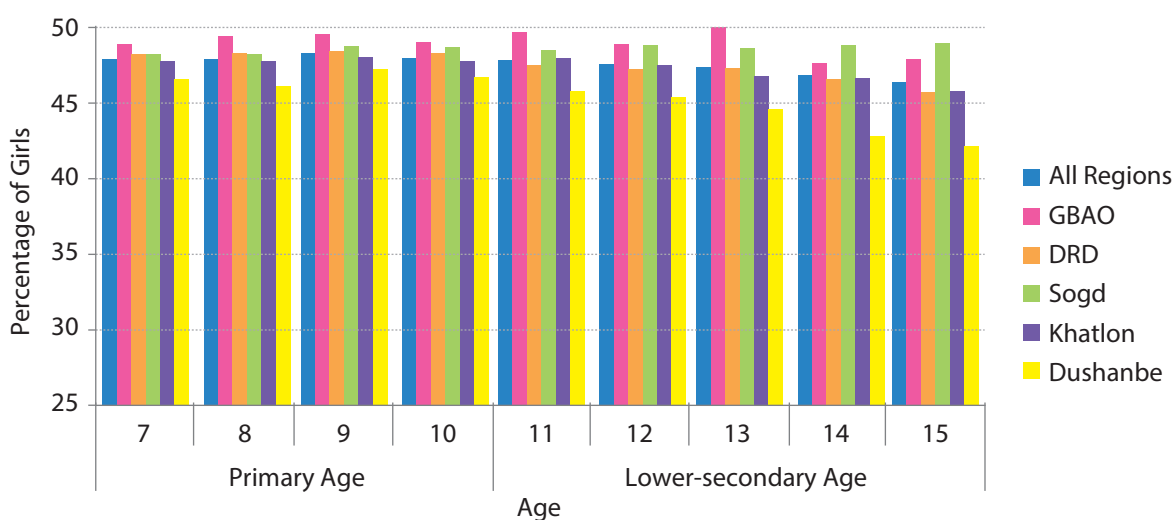
(Source: The Republican Statistical Agency, 2007, *Tajikistan Living Standards Measurement Survey (TLSS) 2007*)

2.2.4) Dimensions 2 and 3 by sex and region

Just as there are differences in girls' attendance by urban and rural residence, there are significant regional differences. Most importantly, it should be highlighted that the lowest percentages of students who are girls live in Dushanbe. This supports the findings above that higher percentages of rural students are girls. The fact that girls make up a larger percentage of students studying in GBAO and the DRD, largely rural regions, also supports this finding.

That gap between girls increases with age. The percentage of students who are girls in Dushanbe decreases by age more drastically than in any other region. This is followed by DRD and Khatlon, respectively. There are negligible differences between ages in GBAO and Sughd.

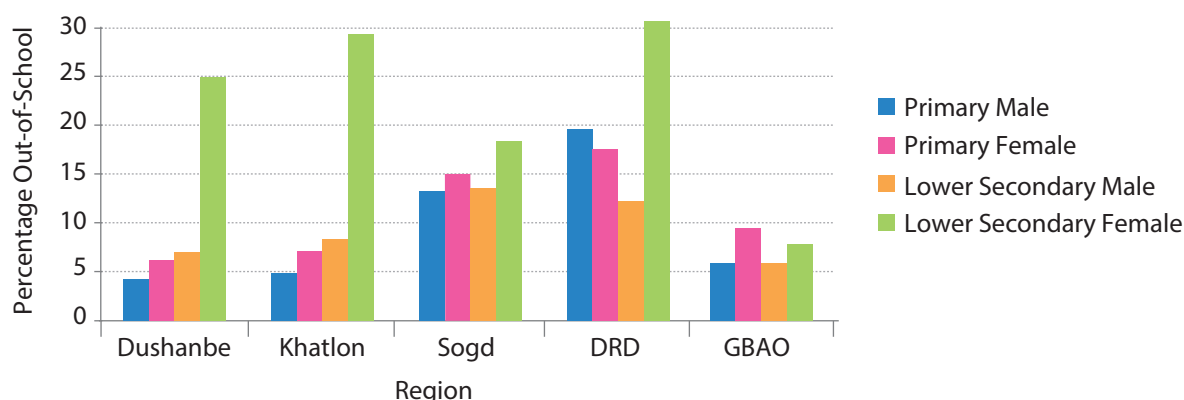
Figure 2.8 Percentage of all students who are girls by region



(Source: The Ministry of Education, 2011, *Statistical Yearbook for Education Sector for 2010-2011*)

Analyses of MICS 2005 data do not support the regional patterns of MoE data for primary-aged children. In fact, they show the opposite pattern. Figure 2.9 shows that out-of-school rates are lowest in Dushanbe (4.1 per cent for boys and 6.2 per cent for girls) followed by Khatlon (4.9 per cent for boys and 7.1 per cent for girls), GBAO (6.1 per cent for boys and 9.3 per cent for girls), Sughd (13.5 per cent for boys and 15.1 per cent for girls) and DRD (19.6 per cent for boys and 17.7 per cent for girls) for primary-aged children.

Figure 2.9 Out of school rate for primary and lower-secondary school aged children, by sex and region



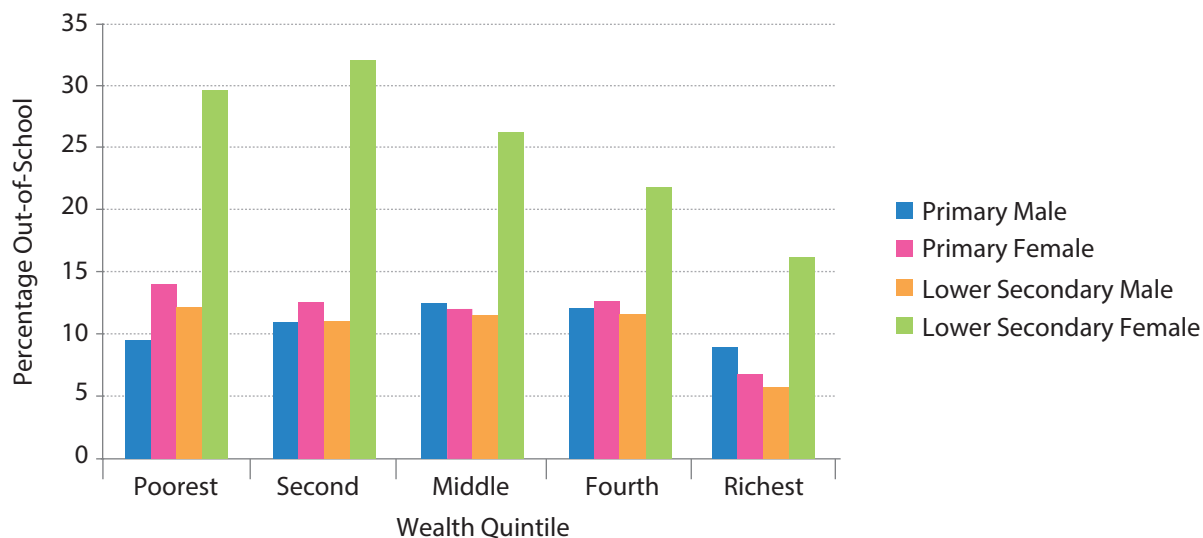
(Source: The State Committee on Statistics of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2005, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2005*)

More girls than boys are out of school across all regions at lower-secondary school ages, and the differences are more extreme than at the primary level. Opposite of trends at the primary age level, differences between sex are greatest in DRD, Khatlon and Dushanbe. The findings for Dushanbe run counter to the belief that girls in urban areas would have greater access to education and hence would have lower out of school numbers. Girls' education is highly encouraged in GBAO, the results of which appear to be reflected in Figure 2.9.

2.2.5) Dimensions 2 and 3 by sex and wealth

The pattern of girls' disadvantage carries across most wealth quintiles, as seen in Figure 2.10, which further disaggregates data by wealth quintile and sex using data from the MICS 2005 because data from the MoE cannot be disaggregated by wealth. The difference between boys and girls is greatest in the poorest quintile, and evident in the second and fourth quintile.

Figure 2.10 Out of school rate of primary and lower secondary school aged children, by sex and household wealth



(Source: State Committee on Statistics of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2005, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2005*)

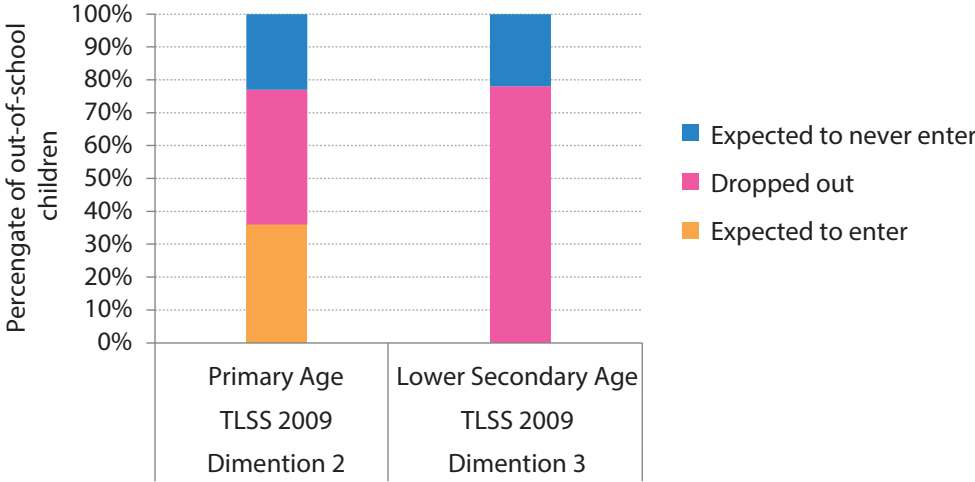
At lower-secondary school age, more girls are out of school than boys across all wealth quintiles. As shown in Figure 2.10, this gap decreases as family wealth increases, with the exception of the second poorest quintile. It is important to note that the variance between boys of different wealth categories is smaller than the variance between girls. Approximately twice as many girls of lower-secondary age from the two poorest quintiles are out of school compared with the two wealthiest.

2.2.6) Dimensions 2 and 3 by school exposure

Children in Dimensions 2 and 3 can also be subdivided into three categories based on past and expected school exposure: children who will enter late; children who are at risk of never attending school; and children who attended but dropped out.

Figure 2.11 displays calculations based on TLSS 2009 concerning the exposure to school of children who are out of school. The TLSS analysis indicates that the majority of out-of-school children (40 per cent) of primary age have dropped out of school, while over 30 per cent of children who are out of school at the primary age will be expected to enrol in school. At the lower secondary level, over 70 per cent of out-of-school children have dropped out while the remaining children out of school at the lower secondary level are expected never to enter school.

Figure 2.11 Percentage of out-of-school children who have dropped out, are expected to enter school, and who are at risk of never attending



(Source: The Republican Statistical Agency, 2009, Tajikistan Living Standards Measurement Survey (TLSS) 2009,)

Most of the out-of-school children have dropped out of school (approximately 70 per cent). Both the MICS 2005 and the TLSS 2009 also estimate that 20 to 30 per cent of the out-of-school children at this age are at risk of never entering school.

Analyses of out-of-school children by school exposure by age provide a more focused picture of differences among primary and lower-secondary age. As seen above, the majority of out-of-school children who are expected to enter school late are those in the youngest ages. Calculations using both the TLSS 2009 and the MICS 2005 indicate that only out-of-school children younger than 10 years old are expected to enter school. The two data sets differ slightly as in MICS calculations only 7-year-old out-of-school children are predicted to enter school late and in the TLSS out-of-school children ages 7, 8, and 9 are predicted to enter school late.

As age increases, the proportion of out-of-school children who are dropouts increases. There are differences among advantaged and disadvantaged groups concerning late entry into school. Ru-

ral students of primary school age make up a slightly larger percentage of out-of-school children and fewer of them are expected to enter school. Thus the advantage of urban children is seen in that fewer of them are out-of school and a greater number will enter school. There is little difference in the proportion of out-of-school children of lower-secondary age from rural and urban settings who dropped out and those who are never expected to enter school. Although the rural advantage of having fewer out-of-school children of lower-secondary age should be noted.

In terms of school exposure, there are few differences in the proportions of male and female out-of-school children who will enter school, are dropouts, or at risk of never attending school at either the primary or lower-secondary age levels. However, girls remain a larger portion of out-of-school children, especially at the lower-secondary age level, as already described above.

Differences between poor and rich children are complex. More poor children are out of school than rich children at the primary age; however, a greater portion of out-of-school children who are poor is expected to enter school than wealthier out-of-school children. In contrast, a larger portion of poor out-of-school children have dropped out of school at the primary age level than rich out-of-school children, although the portion of out-of-school children from poor families who have dropped out is very small, 3 per cent. At the lower-secondary age level, a greater percentage of poor children are out of school than wealthier children. However, a greater portion of rich out-of-school children have dropped out compared to poor out-of-school children.

In Tajikistan, the estimated rates of participation for primary-school-aged children (Dimension 2) and lower-secondary-aged children (Dimension 3) are above 95 per cent. This indicates that most children are covered by compulsory education. Analyses of children who are out of school using data from the MICS 2005 and the TLSS 2009 show that a significant portion (20 to 30 per cent) is at risk of never attending school. This highlights the fact that children who are out of school in Tajikistan come from the most vulnerable populations.

2.2.7) Dimensions 2 and 3: Vulnerable Categories

Because the coverage of primary education is over 95 per cent, the children who may never attend primary school are from the most marginalized groups. In Tajikistan there are two major groups that may never attend primary school: children with disabilities and children living and working on the streets. There will be other children with specific circumstances who may never attend school, such as children living so remotely that there is no school accessible; those in such poverty that work is required at the expense of an education; or those with a migrant parent who has abandoned the family. There may be very particular family circumstances that preclude attendance at school. Also, it is becoming clearer that children living and working on the streets are likely to drop out of school after enrolment. Given the resource and time limitations of this study the focus is on two groups: children with disabilities and children living/working on the streets.

a) Children with mental or physical disabilities

Survey data defined the term 'disability' as 'incapacity' and includes medical conditions that are preventable or irrelevant where resources are available, as well as mental health issues. In Tajikistan, there are some prevailing attitudes towards people with disabilities that result in their isolation, either by being isolated in the home environment or in an institution, or by the lack of infrastructure to make travel outside the home accessible. However, children in such institutions as MoE's residential care institutions are able to get access to a certain type of educational activities.

There are no clear data on the number of children with disabilities within the country. Responsibility is divided between three different ministries (Labour and Social Protection, Education, and

Health). The most comprehensive study of children with disability was conducted by the OECD in 2009. It estimated that only 20 per cent of all school-aged children with disabilities attend school (sources do not indicate whether this is attendance at mainstream or special schools). This implies children with disabilities make up a large portion of out-of school children who are out of school.

According to the latest data provided by the MLSP, There are approximately 26,000 children with disabilities under the age of 18 registered with the bodies for social protection in Tajikistan. The Ministry of Education has traditionally offered education for children with disabilities through specialised boarding schools: 13 in total throughout the country. UNICEF's TransMonEE 2012 database indicates that as of December 2010, 1,744 children with disabilities were in residential care i.e. boarding schools for children with disabilities and boarding houses for persons with disabilities.

There are provisions under the revised Law on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2010) whereby if education in mainstream or special schools is not possible and if parents or guardians wish, home-schooling is carried out with support from educational institutions. According to Hunt (2012), the previous input-based financing was considered as additional or substitute payment for teachers working with children with disabilities; teaching two children with disabilities at home was deemed equivalent to teaching one class (twenty working hours) at school. However, the per capita financing formula has no direct provision for children with disabilities.

Data from the MoE concerning the number of children with disabilities it serves are unclear, further adding to the confusion concerning the coverage of education for children with disabilities. In 2010, the MoE reported that there were 2,988 students with disabilities. But, this total does not indicate how these children are engaged in the education system or is it disaggregated by sex, region, or type of disability. In either case, roughly 3,000 students with disabilities out of approximately 26,000 of children with disabilities indicate very low coverage.

UNICEF Tajikistan consolidated data on children with in residential care in Table 2.1. However, data differs by source. According to the MoE, as of 2011, there are 1,755 children with disabilities in residential (boarding) schools run by the MoE, which accounts for 14.06 per cent of all children in residential care operated by the MoE. Based on MLSP data, children with disabilities in residential care only account for only 6.05 per cent of all children with disabilities.

Government assessments employ the use of an 'inclusion coefficient,' which is the ratio between the number of children with disabilities studying in regular schools and the total number of children with disabilities involved in education. Figures from the Analysis of the National Census of Schools Findings and EMIS Data for 2008–2009 Report indicates that there is a 60 per cent inclusion coefficient for children with disabilities who are registered by the MoE and are integrated into mainstream schools rather than attending special schools. This figure compares well with international levels, but at the same time, it may be misleading because it only includes children already in education and does not take into account the number of children with disabilities who are not in school.

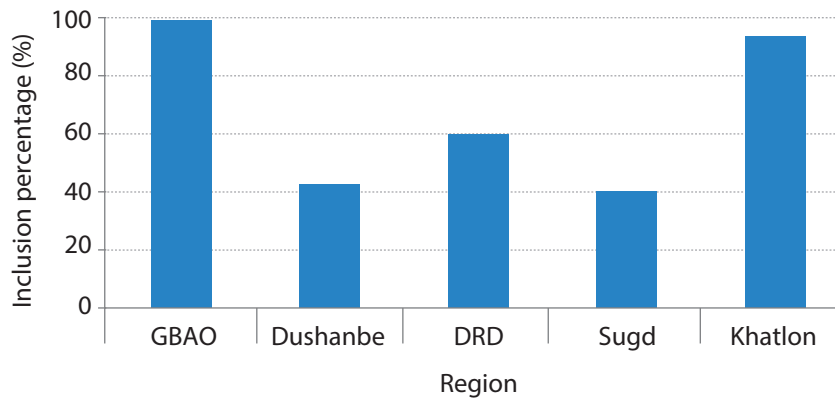
There are also large regional differences highlighted in the inclusion coefficient, shown in Figure 2.12. GBAO and Khatlon regions have high inclusion coefficients, and available literature does not point to why this is the case. It is possible that lack of places in residential homes may mean that more families look after children with disabilities in the home, and enrol them in mainstream schools, or that there are difficulties providing home-schooling in the rural areas.

Table 2.1 Information on children in residential care institutions

Information on Children in Child Protection Residential Care Institutions in Tajikistan, as of December 2009																	
Type of Institution	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection			Ministry of Education			Ministry of Interior		Ministry of Justice		Ministry of Health		Total				
	Centre for Elders and Invalids, Child Sec-tion	Boarding School for Children with Mental Dis-abilities	Vocational Lyceum for persons with Dis-abilities	Special Boarding School for Children with Visual/Hearing Impairment	Special Vocational School for Children in Conflict with the Law (Boys 14-18)	Special School for Children in Conflict with the Law (Boys 11-16)	Boarding School for Orphans and Children from Poor Families)	Temporary Isolation Centre	Colony for Minors (Boys 14-18)	Republican Pre-Trial Detention Centre	Colony for Women (where minor girls are kept)	Infants (Children's House (of 0-4)		Sanatorium for Children	Centre for Mental Health		
Number of Entities	3	1	1	4	1	1	8	2	1	1	0	4	1	29			
Number of Children	132	185	254	784	35	36	1,791	45	40	15	0	199	147	3,723			
	Total Number of Institutions - 5;			Total Number of Institutions - 14;			Total Number of Ins. - 2;		Total Number of Institutions - 2;		Total Number of Institutions - 6;		Total Number of Children - 406				
	Total Number of Children - 571			Total Number of Children - 2,646			Total Number of Children - 45		Total Number of Children - 55		Total Number of Children - 406		Total Number of Children - 406				
LOCAL GOVERNMENT-REGIONAL AND DISTRICTS LEVEL																	
Loca-tion	Soughd oblast			Khatlon oblast			Dushanbe		Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast		Direct Rule Districts			Total			
	Regional Special School for Children with Dis-abilities	Boarding School (for Or-phans and Children from Poor Families)	Boarding School for Tuberculosis Children	Chil-dren's House	Boarding School for Children with Dis-abilities	Boarding School (for Orphans and Children from Poor Families)	Pre-School Children's House (3-7)	Boarding School (for Orphans and Children from Poor Families)	Boarding School under the School	Boarding School (for Orphans and Children from Poor Families)	Boarding School for Orphans under the School	Boarding School (for Orphans and Children from Poor Families)	Chil-dren's House		Sana-torium for Chil-dren		
Number of Enti-ties	5	4	7	1	3	1	1	2	3	1	17	3	8	2	1	69	
Number of Chil-dren	623	249	365	274	122	1,115	120	902	265	66	521	365	458	189	485	6,235	
	Total Number of Institutions - 17;			Total Number of Institutions - 14;			Total Institutions - 6;		Total Number of Institu-tions - 18;		Total Number of Institu-tions - 14;		Total Number of Institutions - 14;			Total Number of Children - 1,497	
	Total Number of Children - 1,331			Total Number of Children - 1,533			Total Children - 1,287		Total Number of Children - 587		Total Number of Children - 406		Total Number of Children - 406			Total Number of Children - 406	
Total Number of Institutions in the Republic													98				
Total Number of Children in Institutions													9958				

Source: Compiled in 2009 by UNICEF Tajikistan Country Office based upon the data from the related institutions and ministries (MoE, MLSP, MoJ, and MoI).

Figure 2.12 Inclusion coefficient by region



(Source: *National Census of Schools Findings, EMIS Data for 2008 – 2009*)

b) Children living and working on the streets

The reasons why children live and work on the streets are varied, and there is little research in Tajikistan on this issue. Some children have been abandoned by their parents or relatives, or their parents have died. Other children have abandoned their parents and do not want to live in state institutions. Still other children live with their parents but spend the majority of their time on the streets. Based on studies conducted by the Centre for Strategic Research under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, “practically all street children were of school age,” and 52.4 per cent of them were not enrolled in school in the cities of Dushanbe, Khujand, Kurgan-Tube and Kulyab. According to these studies, the majority of children living and working on the streets in these cities are boys (86.2 per cent). Based on the 9,600 estimated number children living and working on the streets for these four main cities, this equates to 5,030 out-of-school children in these cities.

There is little information indicating how children living and working on the streets and attending school enrol in and support their education, It is not clear from these studies whether these are children living and working on the streets, or they are children working on the streets, but living with a family at home (See Table 2.2). Save the Children (2008) explains that the majority of interviewed working children (68%) in urban areas are working in the trade sector.

Table 2.2 Estimated number of children living and working in the streets, by city

City	Number of Children
Dushanbe	6,000
Khudjand	2,000
Kurgan-Tube	1,000
Kulyab	500-600

(Source: Centre for Strategic Research, 2007, *Comprehensive situation analysis of street children in Dushanbe, Kurgan-Tube, Khujand cities*)

2.3) Dimensions 4 and 5

- Dimension 4:** Children who are in primary school but at risk of dropping out
- Dimension 5:** Children who are in lower-secondary school but at risk of dropping out

2.3.1) Overview of Dimensions 4 and 5

As indicated in the introductory chapter and in the section above, there is significant overlap between the characteristics or profiles of the populations that had attended and dropped out of school (Dimensions 2 and 3) and the population at risk of dropping out (Dimensions 4 and 5). This is due mostly to the high participation rates in primary school that then carry over into fifth grade, which is the first year of lower-secondary school. The survival rate is very high, as 99.7 per cent of boys who enter first grade reach the fifth grade (lower-secondary). The corresponding figure for girls is 98.9 per cent. As shown in Figure 1.9, the MICS 2005 indicates that there are insignificant differences in dropouts between rural and urban out-of-school children, and male and female out-of-school children. However, there are differences in dropouts between rich and poor out-of-school children, where poorer out-of-school children of primary age are more likely to dropout in comparison with their wealthier counterparts.

2.3.2) Dimension 4 and 5 Profiles

As described in detail above, girls are the largest population, in terms of total numbers, of out-of-school children. More girls than boys are out of school across most regions and wealth quintiles. The MICS 2005 data indicate that more boys in urban settings were out of school; however, MoE data indicate that girls make up less than half of all students in both rural and urban areas. Given that descriptions of out-of-school children by sex were reviewed above they will not be a focus here. Instead, this section focuses on highlighting information on other key populations at risk of dropping out, including:

- a) Children engaged in labour;
- b) Children with migrant parents;
- c) Children in conflict with the law;
- d) Children in institutions; and
- e) Children in remote areas.

a) General Overview of Children engaged in labour

Regarding analyses concerning the relationship between child labour and out-of-school children, IOM (2012), Save the Children (2008), and the Centre of Contemporary Central Asia and the Caucasus (2010) have attempted addressed the issue. Also, MICS studies contain modules on child labour, which asks about workforce participation of children ages 5 to 14. Table 2.3 outlines the specific work activities of children based on the ILO categories and presents information about sex and urban/rural differences. Because the MICS sample size only includes 1,133 children who are working, out of which only 10 per cent are involved in child labour, it is not prudent to disaggregate the data further.

Table 2.3 Child labour in Tajikistan

	Percentage of children ages 5-11 involved in economic activity for at least one hour	Percentage of children ages 12-14 involved in economic activity for >14 hours	Percentage of children ages 5-14 involved in		Sample size children ages 5-14 who are working
			Household chores for 28 hours or more	Child labour	
Total	4.4	6.4	5.2	10	1,133
<i>Sex</i>					
Male	4.5	6.3	4.6	9.4	582
Female	4.2	6.6	6	10.6	551
<i>Area</i>					
Urban	5.9	5.8	2.4	8.1	212
Rural	3.9	6.7	6.2	10.6	921
<i>School attendance</i>					
No	1.9	15.7	1.5	4.4	118
Yes	5.6	5.8	6.5	11.8	1014

* See a clarifying note at the end of the chapter.

(Source: State Committee on Statistics of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2005, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2005*)

As shown in Table 2.3, only 10 per cent of the MICS population ages 5 to 14 were considered to be involved in child labour, according to ILO definitions. The effect on school attendance is unclear. It appears to be negligible, as a majority of children in child labour, across a variety of categories, are enrolled in school. However, a large percentage of children ages 12 to 14 who are not in school were working more than 14 hours. Further analysis of MICS data reveals that only 0.87 per cent of the sampled boys and 1.35 per cent of the girls (ages 5 to 14) were both out of school and involved in child labour.

The unclear relationship between child labour and enrolment from the MICS data may stem from a couple of reasons. First, MICSs are household surveys. Perhaps the largest percentages of children involved in child labour are outside of the home. The section above discussing children working and living on the streets quoted much higher numbers of children than the MICS sample. Second, the Tajik school day is typically only four hours, which allows substantial time for children to be both enrolled in school and involved in work.

Although quantitative analysis may not provide clear relationships between work and school enrolment, evidence of the effects of child labour on school attendance is provided by qualitative studies, as examples, the 2010 study on "Demand-Side Interventions on Girls' Education in Tajikistan: a Needs Assessment", UNICEF, and the 2007 study, "Children's Voices: A Qualitative Study of Poverty in Tajikistan".

Langbehn (2010) reported that 69 per cent of the girls interviewed (Grades 7 to 9) attended school irregularly because they had to work. Girls also contributed to the household income or worked to cover school expenses. Girls had an important role as caretakers, looking after younger siblings and sick relatives. Many interviewed girls said that they did not attend school when their mother was sick. They had to undertake household chores as a matter of course if the father was a labour migrant and the mother also had to work. They often assisted with preparing community events such as weddings and funerals. These duties usually fell to the eldest daughter still living in the household.

Girls were also active in agriculture. A third of those who missed school due to work were working in the fields. Work also affected boys' school attendance because they worked in the markets. Many children are under pressure to assist parents or to generate money for the household, with the subsequent impact on their education.

a.i) Children engaged in household labour

Saidov (2007) conducted focus group interviews that indicated that, in most poor households, children undertook a significant amount of household chores. This was particularly the case in families with a migrant parent, orphaned children, or families where one parent had a disability. Children agreed that housework was divided depending on sex and age. Chores varied depending whether children lived in stand-alone houses, multi-storey housing, villages, or cities.

The survey showed that rural housework differed by region. Village boys mainly collected wood, cut hay and tended livestock, or worked on subsidiary plots. Girls were mostly engaged in cleaning, washing dishes, laundry and cooking. Where mothers worked outside the household, girls did all the cooking and looked after younger children. In the southern districts, girls milked cows, baked bread, prepared fuel and fetched water.

In harvest season, all children helped, and in cotton growing areas, children collected cotton stems (guzapaya) after cotton picking for use as fuel for cooking and heating. In Kanibadam District of Sughd region, children helped with dry fruit production.

In the cities of Khujand and Kurgan-Tube, girls assisted in making clothes, and in Khujand, children helped make traditional sweets. Children living in apartment buildings indicated that they did less housework than children living in rural areas, but they had to bring water to higher floors of buildings. Children from wealthy families did almost no hard physical work.

Overall, most children, whether rural or urban, boy or girl, in Tajikistan, were engaged in some level of household labour that affected their participation in the education system.

a.ii) Children engaged in economic activity

From the same report, Saidov (2007) focus group interviews showed that children were the main household earner in some poor families. The type of child labour varied. For example, in cities and district centres children mostly worked in the markets. In rural areas they engaged in agricultural work. Tasks varied by sex and age.

In the cities, older boys mainly worked in markets moving goods, unloading trucks, and selling fruit and vegetables. Younger children washed cars, sold cigarettes, plastic bags, and chewing gum. In Dushanbe, Khujand and Kurgan-Tube, children earned money working on private mini-buses and giving change. In Khujand, older boys drove people from the railway station to the markets. Boys in cities also worked in construction or informal recycling.

In cities, older girls mainly sold food goods in the market. Many girls worked as nannies and servants for wealthier households, or as waitresses and dishwashers in bars and cafes.

Rural children had fewer options because of the lack of markets and people willing to hire them. In rural areas, older boys worked as hired worker in agriculture and construction. In most cases children received food, mainly wheat, as payment for their work.

In major cities, some children begged professionally in the markets and public places. Many of these children were from families without a male household head, or had parents who had disabilities or were ill. Some were from families under stress or had parents in prison. With regard to child labour, the key issue is the poverty trap. Children work when a household cannot generate enough income to survive without this assistance. This results in a disrupted education and perpetuates the poverty cycle through the lack of means to improve their own standard of living as they reach adulthood.

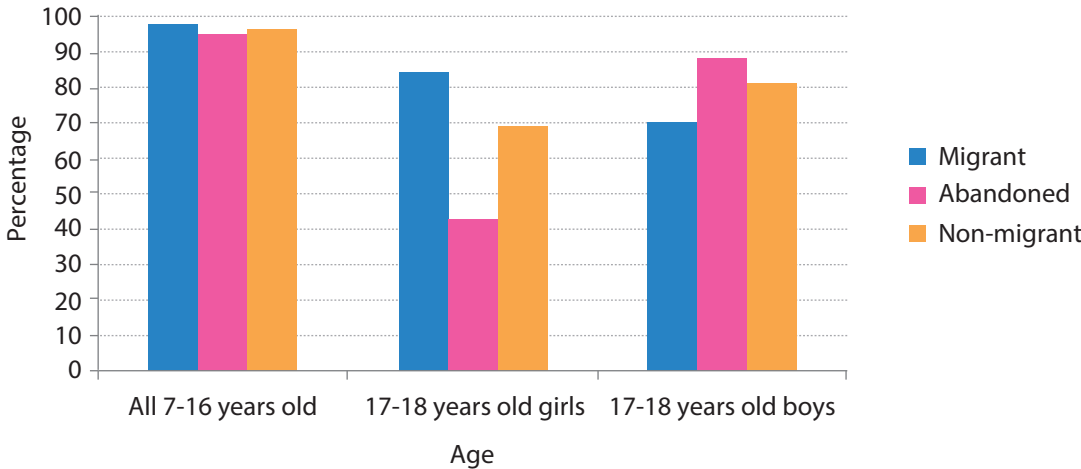
b) Children with migrant parents

This profile covers children who have a migrant parent, normally the male breadwinner who migrates for work (usually to Russia) and sends remittances back to the family. Though, cases also occur in which a migrant parent will desert the family and not send remittances.

Data from the Migration Service of the Tajik Ministry of Internal Affairs suggests that in 2008 852,100 people were registered as migrants in the Russian Federation. This figure is an underestimate of the total number of migrants as it does not include those who are not registered. Estimates of all migrants (both registered and non-registered; in Russia and in other countries) are approximately 25 per cent of the total population. Data from the National Bank of Tajikistan indicate that remittances by migrants amounted to about US\$2.67 billion, or equivalent to almost 50 per cent of GDP, in 2008.

Some data are available for children with a migrant parent from the study, “Impact of Labour Migration on Children Left Behind in Tajikistan” (2011). Figure 2.16 indicates that children’s enrolment in school for ages 7 to 16 for migrant households is slightly higher than non-migrant households, and the gap in participation is wider for children ages 17 to 18. This study concludes, however, that abandoned migrant households were likely to be poorer, and hence the percentage of out-of-school children was likely to be higher. The study further concludes that there may be an influence on dropout rates, particularly for girls following completion of compulsory education, where the migrant parent abandoned the family. The study shows that enrolment for girls in this category dropped to 43 per cent, compared with 89 per cent of boys. Figure 2.13 summarises the relevant findings from the study.

Figure 2.13 Enrolment rate, by age, sex, and migrant parent status



(Source: Oxford Policy Management, 2011, *Impact of Labour Migration on Children Left Behind in Tajikistan*)
 (Note: An abandoned household is one containing at least one child (under 18 years old) who has at least one parent who has been abroad during all of the last year. This parent should be away either for work or for study and has not been in contact with the household during the last year and not remitted any money over the last year. In addition, the family should consider themselves abandoned.)

The 2011 study concludes that migration from Tajikistan has had a mixed impact on the enrolment and attendance rates in education. Lack of employment and insufficient wages had driven parents and young people to work abroad, particularly in Russia and low teachers' salaries caused qualified teachers to migrate, again, mainly to Russia.

Separation left many children with less family support and brought added responsibility at home, resulting in poor attendance and increased drop-out rates. However, many young people used remittances to continue and complete their education. Some children feel that migration was inevitable for them and that this was negative for their studies, whilst others feel it was important to get the best education and hence be prepared for working abroad. There is some sense of optimism, with many children thinking that education quality, job prospects, and salaries would improve and migration would become less necessary

Children from the study comment that migration by teachers has seriously affected education quality in their school, since the majority of teachers leave for Russia in March and work until September or November. Consequently, their teachers are only available for three months in winter at a time when classrooms are cold and dark. In other cases, some specialist subjects cannot be taught, such as foreign languages, chemistry, physics and biology. As a result, students and teachers lose interest in, and stop attending school, or in the case of teachers, fail to prepare for lessons. Some teachers also drop out of the profession when they return from migration, either due to ill health, or because they set up businesses with their savings.

c) Children in conflict with the law

The Tajikistan Criminal Code, the new Code of Criminal Procedure, and the Code of Execution of Criminal Sentences have brought juvenile justice into greater harmony with international standards. However, some provisions of the codes are not compatible with international standards. For example, there are no juvenile or children's courts whereas child-friendly courtrooms are being established in seven district courts in the main administrative centres. Also, the Tajikistan Criminal Code defines the age of criminal responsibility as 16 years old although that limit can be reduced to 14 years old when a child commits a serious offence.

According to UNICEF's TransMonEE 2012 database, offending by juveniles has declined in recent years. During the period of 2000 to 2007, the number of offences increased from 503 cases to 643 cases. In 2010, it decreased by an impressive 42% i.e. 374 offences. The proportion of offences committed by girls has gradually increased from 5% in 2000 to 9.5% in 2010, but their number remains small – under 40 offences in 2010. Anecdotal evidence (for example, from newspaper reports) indicate that juvenile crime is on the rise in Tajikistan, while official reports have yet to confirm.

A UNICEF report titled "Assessment of Juvenile Justice Reform Achievements in Tajikistan" (2012) identifies that the MoE operates one special school for 10- to 14-year-old boys in conflict with the law, which houses 80 boys (as of April 2011), and a special vocational school for boys ages 14 to 18 in conflict with the law, with 36 children (as of May 2011). Also, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) operates a juvenile prison colony for boys ages 14 to 20, with 91 children (as of April 2011). The juvenile prison colony does not provide children with vocational education or cultural/recreational events, although secondary education is provided based upon the national curriculum. Also, very few children receive appropriate support necessary to return and reintegrate to the community. Although a network of community-based centres to support social integration has been established by the Government of Tajikistan, children who leave such institutions as the juvenile prison colony may drop out of school if these reintegration services are not provided to them in a proper and timely manner.

d) Children in institutions

The term 'children in institutions' refers to orphans, children with disabilities, children with learning difficulties, children from poor households whose parents cannot look after them, or children in correctional facilities. There are specialized facilities for these different groups that are described in detail in the following sections.

According to UNICEF's TransMonEE 2012 database, there were 12.481 children in institutions as of December 2010. However, many children in these institutions have one or both parents who are alive. Also, Tajikistan does not have any legislation that would allow for foster parenting as an option for parental care. The adoption process is bureaucratic; UNICEF's TransMonEE 2012 database indicates that in 2010, there were 502 adoption cases in the country.

The *Analysis of the National Census of Schools Findings and EMIS Data for 2008-2009 Report* indicates that, in Dushanbe, no orphans are registered as students at secondary schools that teach the full 11 years of primary (4 years), lower-secondary (5 years), and upper-secondary (2 years) education. It is not known whether after Grade 9 (the end of compulsory education) orphans in Dushanbe leave school or move to other educational institutions.

e) Children living in remote areas

In remote areas, the walk to school can be insecure particularly in winter and in wet weather, as roads become covered in snow or mud. Girls especially often lack suitable shoes for these conditions. There is also a cultural dimension to girls' travel to school. Generally, from the age of puberty, girls are not supposed to walk alone. In rural areas, most girls will stop attending school at the level provided in their village, rather than walk to the next village to a school providing education to a higher level. Therefore, there are some schools that provide dormitories to children from remote areas.

Specific research regarding school attendance in rural and remote areas is non-existent in Tajikistan.

A World Food Programme (WFP) study, undertaken in 2002 and 2008, that found that school attendance rose, especially in remote villages, with the provision of a food ration to students. The study indicated that with the introduction of food rations, average attendance for boys rose from 70 per cent to 90 per cent and for girls from 68 per cent to 89 per cent between 2002 and 2003. Under the same programme, attendance rates also rose steadily in the Rasht Valley after the school feeding programme was initiated.

2.3.3) Upper-secondary-aged children

This group is not strictly an out-of-school children profile, as schooling after the age of 15 is not compulsory. It has been observed that less than 50 per cent of boys and less than 25 per cent of girls are in school by age 17. The reasons are likely related to poverty and the need to work after compulsory education has been completed; lack of perceived value of higher education in preparing young adults for the workplace; lack of availability of upper-secondary education, particularly in rural and remote areas; and for girls, cultural and traditional values with regard to marriage and women's role in the household.

2.4) Analytical summary

The high enrolment rates for children of primary and lower-secondary age, coupled with the findings that most out-of-school children will not enter school, demonstrate that it is the most marginalized populations that are out of school. There is an obvious overlap between the populations of children who are at risk of dropping out and those who have dropped out of school.

Numbers of out-of-school children and dropouts are only available for demographically defined profiles (by age, sex, wealth and urban/rural location). Only a limited number of data disaggregation is possible within these categories, as samples become too small to be significant. Data on out-of-school children for most special circumstance profiles are not available. This makes it impractical to compare profiles in terms of actual numbers of children because of the lack of data and the overlap of demographic profiles with special circumstance profiles. For example, the profile 'poor rural girls' may include working children; children with migrant parents; and/or children with disabilities. However, it is clear that poverty, gender issues and rural/urban location are important factors for children not attending school or dropping out, and hence, these are areas for action.

Findings specific to each Dimension are reviewed below.

2.4.1) Key issues for Dimension 1

- 9 per cent of 6-year-olds are enrolled in pre-primary education, according to MoE data from 2010.
- The most common reason given for not sending children to pre-primary school is that no pre-school facilities are available (52 per cent), followed by a preference to keep young children at home (27 per cent). This would indicate that there is a demand for more pre-primary places.
- The number of state-run pre-primary school institutions fell drastically from 944 in 1991 to 555 in 1995. The number has continued to fall, but at a slower rate, and there were 488 in 2010.
- Children from the richest quintile are enrolled in pre-primary education at disproportion rates in comparison to children from the poorest quintile;
- There is a clear urban bias in favour of pre-primary education in the capital and other cities.

2.4.2) Key issues for Dimensions 2 and 3

- Over 95 per cent of children ages 7 to 15 are enrolled in school; the most marginalized populations are those who remain out of school.
- For example:
- Only 20 per cent of children with disabilities attend schools (mainstream or special boarding schools); and
- 52.4 per cent of children living and working on the streets were out of school.
- Girls form the largest total population of out-of-school children, and their exit from educational institutions begins in primary school, with 2.5 per cent dropping out at age 9 and 0.7 per cent at age 10.
- Out of school percentages rise for girls to 13 per cent at age 14 and 27 per cent at age 15, according to MICS estimates.

2.4.3) Key issues for Dimensions 4 and 5

- For girls, the dropout rate is 7 per cent for age 13 and increases to 21 per cent for age 15, according to MICS estimates.
- Girls in lower wealth quintiles and residing in rural areas are most at risk of dropping out.
- The dropout rate for boys is much lower than for girls. Only 2 per cent of boys age 13 are dropouts, and this increases to only 6 per cent of boys age 15, according to MICS estimates.
- A number of specific categories of children are profiled as at risk of dropping out. These include: working children, children with migrant parents or from single-parent families, children in conflict with the law, children in institutions and children in remote areas.
- The relationship between work and school is puzzling, as only 0.87 per cent of boys and 1.35 per cent of girls ages 5 to 14 were out of school and working.

Note:

Child labour is a legal rather than a statistical concept, and the international legal standards that define it are therefore the necessary frame of reference for child labour statistics. The three principal international conventions on child labour – ILO Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age) (C138), the CRC, and ILO Convention No. 182 (Worst Forms) (C182) together set the legal boundaries for child labour and provide the legal basis for national and international actions against it.

But the translation of these broad legal norms into statistical terms for measurement purposes is by no means straightforward. The international legal standards contain a number of flexibility clauses left to the discretion of the competent national authority in consultation (where relevant) with worker and employer organizations (e.g., minimum ages, scope of application). This means that there is no single legal definition of child labour across countries, and concomitantly, no single standard statistical measure of child labour consistent with national legislation across countries. The resolution on child labour statistics adopted at the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 2008 provides a first-ever set of global standards for translating the international legal standards on child labour into statistical terms.

The ICLS resolution states that child labour may be measured in terms of the engagement of children in productive activities on the basis of the general production boundary. The general production boundary is a broad concept encompassing all activities whose performance can be delegated to another person with the same desired results. This includes unpaid household services (i.e. household chores) that are outside the narrower SNA production boundary.

Based on the measurement guidelines contained in the 18th ICLS resolution, and restricting the scope to children up to and including 14 years of age (the most common upper age limited for basic schooling), the child labour measure used in this study comprises three groups of children:

- i. 5- to 11-year-olds in economic activity (i.e. those engaged in any activity falling within the SNA production boundary for at least one hour during the reference week). Economic activity covers children in all market production and in certain types of non-market production,

-
- including production of goods for own use. It includes forms of work in both the formal and informal sectors, as well as forms of work both inside and outside family settings;
- ii. 12- to 14-year-olds in non-light (or “regular”) economic activity (i.e. those engaged in any activity falling within the SNA production boundary for at least 14 hours during the reference week); and
 - iii. 5- to 14-year-olds in hazardous unpaid household services (i.e. those engaged in the production of domestic and personal services for consumption within their own household, commonly called “household chores”, for at least 28 hours during the reference week).

The first two groups relate to ILO Convention 138, which stipulates a minimum age of at least 14 years in less developed countries for admission to employment or work (art. 2), but states that national laws may permit the work of persons from age 12 years in light work (art. 7). In determining the hours threshold for permissible light work, which is not defined explicitly in C138, the ICLS resolution recommends a cut-off point of 14 hours during the reference week, below which non-hazardous work can be considered permissible light work.

Please note that the second group does not include those children working for less than 14 hours per week, but in hazardous work, because hazardous sectors are defined by national legislation.

The inclusion of the third group marks recognition of the fact that the international legal standards do not rule out a priori children’s production outside the SNA production boundary from consideration in child labour measurement. The ICLS resolution, building on this recognition, recommends classifying those performing hazardous unpaid household services as part of the group of child labourers for measurement purposes, where hazardous unpaid household services, in turn, are defined as those requiring long hours; involving unsafe equipment or heavy loads; in dangerous locations; etc.

The ICLS resolution does not recommend a specific hours threshold for classifying household chores as hazardous (and therefore as child labour) and cites establishing hazardousness criteria as an area requiring further conceptual and methodological development. In the absence of detailed statistical criteria for hazardousness, an hours threshold of 28 weekly working hours is used in the current paper, above which performance of household chores is classified as child labour. It should be kept in mind, however, that this threshold is based only on preliminary evidence of the interaction between household chores and school attendance, and does not constitute an agreed measurement standard.

The child labour indicator utilized in this study, therefore, represents a benchmark for international comparative purposes, but, is not necessarily consistent with (estimates based on) national child labour legislation, again, owing to the flexibility clauses contained in the international legal standards and to the measurement issues discussed above.

3) Bottlenecks and barriers

3.1) Overview of bottlenecks and barriers

This chapter provides an analysis of the barriers and bottlenecks considers the dynamic and causal processes of exclusion and is intrinsically linked to the disaggregation of data on out-of-school children and to risk factors for children in school. The causes and links between factors such as poverty, gender, location, disability and culture are identified in relation to exclusion from school and are linked to the profiles.

As a general principle, attendance at pre-primary school makes attendance at primary level more likely and lowers the risk of dropping out. At the primary level, there were few differences between children in terms of wealth characteristics or rural and urban location. As the previous chapter highlighted, however, gender differences arose, with more out of school girls than boys. The trend begins in primary school, and the gender gap widens with age.

For children of lower-secondary age, there were several populations of special concern, indicated in the previous chapter. Children with disabilities and children living and working on the streets make up the largest percentage of out-of-school children who have never attended school. Children who have enrolled in school but at risk of dropping out include:

- Children from poor households;
- Children engaged in labour;
- Children in rural areas;
- Children with migrant parents;
- Children in conflict with the law;
- Children in institutions; and
- Children in remote areas.

These are not the only groups at risk of dropping out, but these should be identified as priority groups.

Multiple factors across many spheres of society influence whether or not children are out of school. These are divided into 'demand-side' and 'supply-side' factors. Demand-side factors refer to issues that affect children's desire to attend school, and whether parents/guardians wish to send their children to school. Supply-side factors address issues related to the availability and quality of education. Socio-cultural, demand-side factors, economic demand factors, supply-side factors, and political, governance, capacity and financial factors are reviewed below.

3.2) Socio-cultural, demand-side barriers

Socio-cultural, demand-side barriers and bottlenecks are those experienced by children and their parents in matching the cultural and social aspects of life with expectations from the education system.

3.2.1) Gender norms

Girls form greatest number of out-of-school children. Tajik society is patriarchal and grounded in traditional culture, which has strict customs and values about gender identities and roles; a strong adherence to an honour and shame system; widespread practice of arranged marriages; and a

deep-seated custom of intergenerational family control. Many of these characteristics contribute to girls being out of school.

In particular, fathers and brothers put pressure on girls not to attend school. The investment in education is often not considered worthwhile, as most girls marry young. Many families take the view that girls will marry and become the responsibility of their husband and his family.

Poor treatment of girls in the home by parents or guardians can also result in dropout. The UNICEF 2010 report provides information on this issue, indicating that threats of violence and intimidation by teachers and boys are important reasons why girls drop out of school. Difficulty in travelling to school and perceived or real threats en-route is another barrier for girls to remain in school.

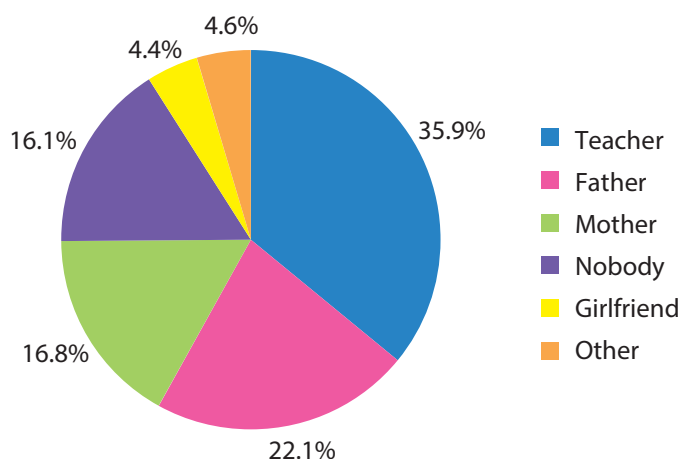
Men generally receive support from their family and the community for their use of violence to chastise their wives and sisters, particularly if it is for so-called just causes. Failure of a man to control his family, particularly female relatives, may contribute to a loss of standing in the family and community. From a very young age, girls generally are expected to comply with their prescribed role and face control, including force and intimidation by their fathers, brothers and even their mothers. Later in life, this control is transferred to their husbands and in-laws. This control issue is often why mothers prefer to marry their sons to uneducated girls, who they can control and who will have little interest in getting a job. Mothers fear that a woman with a university education, or who is financially independent, might decide to challenge the family system. It would appear that culturally, women (i.e. mother-in-law or mother-in-law to be) are as instrumental as men in discouraging girls' education.

Traditionally, boys are considered the future earners and heads of households. They grow up with the awareness that they will have the responsibility for the family, and they become more aware of the necessity to acquire skills and a profession. Therefore, they are usually encouraged to attend school regularly. Many families encourage or even force their sons to study and make financial sacrifices in an effort to get boys into higher education. In contrast, the main role for women is as housewives. The 'ideal' housewife is one who stays at home, cares for the children and serves her in-laws, thus those families see education unnecessary for housewives.

Langbehn (2010) indicates that, with regard to socio-cultural, demand-side reasons given by girls for missing school, 14.7 per cent indicated that they are not permitted to attend by relatives, or because patriarchal principles prevent them. Also, 25.6 per cent responded that they let other siblings attend rather than attend themselves. The study also indicates that girls have an important role as caregiver. They may also be required to undertake household chores if the father is a labour migrant and the mother works in the fields. At the same time, however, case studies generally indicate that out of school girls who need to work also express the desire to have an education.

When asked who encourages them to go to school, girls most often cite their teacher (35.9 per cent), their father (22 per cent), their mother (16.8 per cent) and nobody (16.10 per cent), as seen in Figure 3.1.

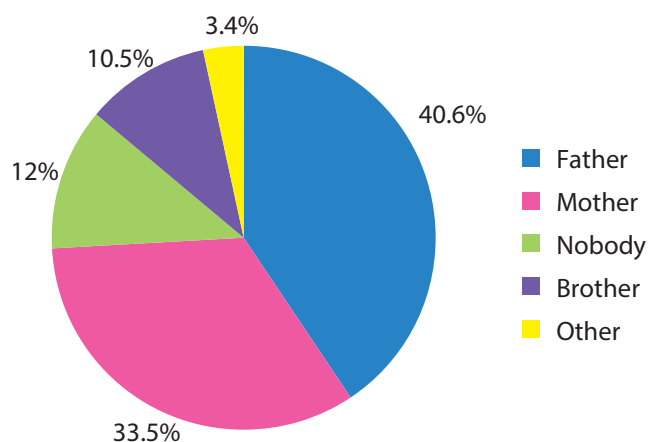
Figure 3.1 Response to the question “Who Encourages You to Go to School?”



(Source: Langbehn, 2010, *Demand-Side Intervention on Girls' Education in Tajikistan: a Needs Assessment*)

When asked who discourages them from going to school, girls most often indicate their father (40.6 per cent) and mother (33.5 per cent), as depicted in Figure 3.2. Clearly, family has a significant impact on school attendance for girls.

Figure 3.2 Response to the question “Who Discourages You from Going to School?”



(Source: Langbehn, 2010, *Demand-Side Intervention on Girls' Education in Tajikistan: a Needs Assessment*)

Once a girl reaches puberty, she can be considered eligible for marriage. To avoid speculation and maintain a solid reputation, some girls are kept at home with their mothers. There is a belief within some of the population, including among girls themselves, that pubescent girls should stop attending school, to ensure that there is no untoward gossip thus ensuring eligibility for marriage.

Some teachers explain that parents are not putting enough effort into encouraging their daughters' education. They feel that parents have a casual attitude towards girls' education because they know that their daughters will marry young and are unlikely to find jobs even if they receive a full education. Some families also fear that school will result in immoral behaviour.

In some districts, Isfara for example, girls who study at university and graduate when they are 22 or 23 years old are not considered good candidates for marriage. Fathers are worried by contact between young male teachers and their daughters, as well as boys' behaviour and the effects on girls' security at school. Some fathers want their daughters to wear the hijab, which is not allowed at school.

The UNICEF 2010 study reports that an 18-year-old female living in the village of Sebiston says:

There is a tradition in our village that makes entering institutes or universities for girls after leaving the secondary school impossible. Some say, "It is not good for a girl to study". Unfortunately, our people think that if a village girl goes to the city for study, she will become involved in some bad situation. Men in the village say, "It is very easy for village girls to go astray". We village girls want to study, but we know well that [for this and other reasons], our parents do not allow us to continue our education, and we are therefore not encouraged to study.

(Source: UNICEF, 2011, *Youth Perspectives of Education Quality in Tajikistan: A case study of education quality for youth in the CEECIS region*)

3.2.2) *Discrimination against children with disabilities*

Children with disabilities are generally considered within Dimension 2 or 3, with a high likelihood of never attending school. Many children in need of special education come from groups that are marginalized because of their economic status. They have inadequate health and nutrition when young and lack access to services and support because of poverty or isolation. Their mothers may have received poor prenatal and postnatal care, and it is likely that they received little in the way of early child development support. Some negative attitudes towards people with disabilities prevail in Tajikistan, resulting in isolation in institutions or at home, and lack of access to attend mainstream schools. Societal stigmatization and the negative perceptions of disability as a defect have added to the obstacles faced by children with disabilities in gaining access to education.

Social stigma can lead families to conceal the fact that they have a family member with a disability, resulting in keeping children at home. Disability also affects children indirectly, since physically able children may have to drop out of school to become a carer for a sibling, parent or relative with a disability, or need to work to maintain family livelihood. It is necessary to remember that education is a rights issue for all children. Children with special needs are the most neglected of all. In addition, children in need of special education, whatever the cause, form a considerable number of current out-of-school children. Improving access to education for these children is essential to meet the MDGs.

In Tajikistan, figures for 2012 indicate that approximately 26,000 children under age 16 with disabilities registered with bodies of social protection. Data for 2010 indicate that 1,744 children with disabilities are in specialised boarding schools, under the responsibility of the MoE. There were 340 children in homes under the responsibility of the MoH of which 165 had disabilities. Between 2003 and 2008, there was a 20 per cent increase in the number of residential institutional places for children with disabilities.

3.2.3) *Demand for early childhood education*

There is very low attendance countrywide in pre-primary school. Fewer than 5 per cent of children in rural areas attend kindergarten, and only approximately 1 per cent of children from the poorest quintile attend. There are no survey data relating directly to demand for pre-primary education, but the MICS 2005 indicates that 52 per cent of parents gave the reason for not sending children

to pre-primary school as there being no pre-primary school available. This was followed by a preference for keeping young children at home (27 per cent) and a view that children were too young to attend school (11 per cent). Cost, quality and distance were found to be less important. This would tend to indicate that there is demand, and supply is lacking. The McLean, 2010, report also indicates that UNICEF and the AKF report very high demand for their alternative pre-schools. As of 2012, total number of 707 alternative pre-schools has been operating. Enrolment in the state system has been stagnant for the last 10 years; hence, it was likely that the provision of alternative pre-school provision is critical in providing access to quality pre-school education.

The assumption in the recommendations of the Maclean report appears to be that, if access to quality pre-school was available, the children would enrol accordingly. A quotation from a parent in the McLean report provides an indication that all is not well with the existing pre-primary system:

There is no difference in the education of children going to this kindergarten and children that don't go. This kindergarten is in a horrible condition; it would be better if it was closed. Conditions are not hygienic, there is no food. No one from the village takes their children there, only those children, whose parents are in Moscow, are taken there by their relatives. Children in this kindergarten are not even learning any new games, and no toys are available for them.

(Source: Begijanoa, 10 September, 2009.)

The MICS 2005 finds that 27 per cent of parents indicate that they prefer to keep their children at home. No studies or reports provide reasoning for this preference.

3.2.4) *Lack of parents' education*

During the Soviet era, school enrolment and attendance was higher, resulting in a current situation where the younger generations are less well educated than their parents. The MICS 2005 shows that a mother's level of education has an influence on school attendance. Primary school enrolment is 20 per cent lower for children whose mothers have primary level education only, or no education, compared with mothers with higher educational attainment. For secondary education, there is over 30 per cent difference in enrolment. The reason is probably two-fold: uneducated parents are likely to be the poorest; therefore, poverty directly impacting the dropout rate of children due to a need to generate income and the need to work; and uneducated parents may not understand the importance of education in breaking the poverty cycle and may not encourage their children to remain in school. The 2011 study *Impact of Labour Migration on 'Children Left Behind' in Tajikistan* concludes that "The education levels within the [migrant parent] household, particularly of mothers, were considered extremely important in school outcomes", and "the attitudes of parents and children towards the importance of education were crucial determinants of years of schooling, attendance and achievement".

3.2.5) *Remote Areas*

This issue is considered within the demand-side constraints but overlaps with supply-side constraints as well. When weather conditions are poor, children may lack suitable clothes and footwear to travel to school. There are cases of schools closing due to lack of an available teacher and students' unwillingness to travel to other villages. In remote areas, the walk to school can be insecure particularly in winter and during wet weather, as roads become covered in snow or mud. Girls in particular may lack suitable shoes for these conditions. There is also a cultural dimension to girls' travel to school. And, as discussed previously, in some circumstances girls are not permitted to walk alone and, as a result, stop attending school. However, in terms of statistics, these difficulties and barriers to schooling are not reflected in the numbers. GBAO represents an isolated,

rural, low-density area with difficult access. The TLSS 2007 figures show that the percentage of children of school age attending school in GBAO was higher than any of the other regions (93.7 per cent).

3.3) Economic, demand-side barriers

Economic, demand-side barriers and bottlenecks are those experienced by children and their parents in balancing the need to maintain an adequate household livelihood with attendance at school.

3.3.1) General household poverty

The issue of poverty is discussed in this section in relation to households and personal circumstances. Poverty issues at a regional or national level resulting in lack of funding for education are discussed as finance issues in Section 3.5.3.

Tajikistan is a very poor country. The 2012 HDI ranks Tajikistan in 125th place in the world. A World Bank Report titled *Tajikistan: Delivering Social Assistance to the Poorest Households* (2010), based on data from the TLSS 2009, states that an estimated 46.7 per cent of the population fell below the poverty line (162 Somoni per month), and more than 17 per cent of the population fell below the extreme poverty line (the cost of a nutritionally minimum basket of food). There is a difference in rural and urban areas, with 49.2 per cent of people living in rural areas classed as poor, and 41.8 per cent of people living in urban areas classed as poor.

The Poverty Assessment Report 2009 shows a clear correlation between education level of the household head and poverty. Sixty-seven per cent of households with a household head with no education were likely to be poor, whereas thirty-seven per cent of households with a household head who had university level education were likely to be poor. This figure is indicative of the conditions in Tajikistan. In 2007, the Tajik working age population (15 to 64) was 4.2 million. Of those, two million were considered out of the workforce (students, housewives, and retirees). Of the total labour force, 1,965,231 were considered to be working, and 205,777 were unemployed. The latter tended to be people looking for work, people that worked seasonally, or people completely who gave up on finding employment.

Poverty can result in the necessity for children to work, the inability to pay for school-related costs, and hence is a major cause of out-of-school children. The Bascheri and Falkingham 2007 report concludes that: child poverty was significantly higher than overall poverty, with 66 per cent of children under the age of 18 defined as poor, compared with 61 per cent for adults; children under the age of 3 were more likely to be poor than older children; there were regional differences, with child poverty highest in GBAO and Khatlon regions; low wages, even when both parents worked, were often insufficient to lift families out of poverty. This report also indicates that 65,000 children aged 5 to 14 were engaged in paid work and that children in poor households were more than twice as likely to be engaged in child labour as those in the richest households. The requirement for child labour effectively excludes children from poor households from the opportunity to develop their full potential.

3.3.2) Affordability of schooling

Research has shown that school costs are a significant barrier to school enrolment, especially for the poor. Although the law indicates that schooling is free of charge up to Grade 9, there are formal and informal costs associated with schooling. Direct costs include providing children with school uniforms or suitable clothes to travel to school and wear during the school day; textbooks

and other equipment; food; and transport to and from school. Informal costs include contributions to school funds to support repairs, provide heat, and provide classroom supplies. Below are examples of the costs households report paying for education. It is important to note not only the average costs, but the wide range of costs demonstrated by the maximum amounts reportedly paid and the large standard deviation.

Table 3.1 Average educational costs to households

Type of cost (in Somoni)	Average
School fees/tuition	14.50
School uniforms	101.24
Textbooks	22.06
Supplies (notebooks, etc)	32.90
Meals/lodging	6.81
Building repair/educational equipment	11.15
Other expenses	3.50
Total direct costs*	311.46

(Source: The Republican Statistical Agency, 2007, *Tajikistan Living Standards Measurement Survey (TLSS) 2007*)

The Strategic Research Centre under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan conducted a study of corruption, based on a public opinion survey, and over 40 per cent of respondents report encountering corruption in the education sector, although about 20 per cent of respondents indicate that it is a rare occurrence. Corruption is also more commonly associated with higher education than compulsory education. Table 3.2 indicates the number of households with children of compulsory school age that paid informal funds or provided extra services to their schools. As with Table 3.1, there is a wide range of costs demonstrated by the maximum amounts reportedly paid and the large standard deviation.

Table 3.2 Percentage of households that report contributing informal funds

	Per cent	Average	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Provided informal funds	9				
Average amount of informal funds (in Somoni)		11.82	17.06	0	300
Provided service for education	2				
Average hours of service		4.80	9.03	0	54

(Source: The Republican Statistical Agency, 2007, *Tajikistan Living Standards Measurement Survey (TLSS) 2007*)

The 2011 Lowicki-Zucca report *Youth Perspectives of Education Quality in Tajikistan* published by UNICEF indicates that, at times, informal costs are requested in schools, including for holiday celebrations, birthday parties for teachers, and during exam periods. A 17-year-old student reports, "Teachers require us to set the table during examinations and provide them with delicious food. If you do it, they promise good marks." Another student describes instances of "teachers selling the answers to questions." A 14-year-old male secondary school student in Panji Bolo town says, "We have books and computers, but a teacher of the computer lesson asks us to pay before using the computer." In one town, youth say, "There is no computer teacher at school. If any student pays

one or two Somoni, then they can use the computer. Otherwise, they are not allowed to use the school computers for learning.”

In response to a question on what the children and their parents think about corruption in schools, one youth responds, “We must pay the bribe; otherwise, we will get bad marks.” Another boy replies, “It doesn’t matter whether we want to pay the bribe or not, since we must pay regardless.”

On the positive side, despite reported widespread bribery in schools, there are reports of teachers who refuse to take bribes from students. One girl says, “I go to a village school in Dushanbe, and teachers do not take bribes here.” Another young person in Zafarobod District says, “I once bought a power generator for my teacher in the hopes of getting a good mark, but the teacher said that s/he would give the mark deserved because it would be more useful to my future.” A 14-year-old female in Faizabad says, “Teachers in our school are honest. The head of our class doesn’t even accept presents on holidays. She says she gets her salary and doesn’t need more.” Based on this anecdotal evidence, it is clear that bribery occurs in the education sector.

In addition to direct costs for schooling, the opportunity costs should also be considered, in terms of lost family income for children at school who are not working. For girls’ education, families often consider the cost is not reasonable because girls will get married and will become the responsibility of their husbands.

3.3.3) Children engaged in labour

The development of a legal framework for a market economy since independence has created favourable conditions for new businesses in Tajikistan. However, the expansion of legitimate businesses has also resulted in a parallel expansion of a shadow economy that uses unqualified workers for manual labour in insecure enterprises. A low-value, shadow economy combined with poverty and worker migration results in an environment that promotes the use of child labour. The minimum legal age of employment in Tajikistan is 15. However, there are many children below this age who are engaged in labour and many children above this age who are illegally employed.

In the urban environment, child workers tend to be where markets, bus stations, trade centres and wholesale markets are located. In rural areas, children work in multiple areas of agriculture, including the cotton harvest, which is one of the main reasons for school absenteeism in the autumn.

The ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) 2005 Rapid Assessment of Child Labour in Urban Areas of Tajikistan finds that the majority of families with working children were population groups with below-average educational achievement and with mothers that also lacked professional skills. The parents’ attitudes were that child labour made children independent, responsible, and act with initiative. From the age of 10 to 12, the view was that a child should contribute to household income. Many parents could not distinguish between work that was useful to a child in terms of preparing them to be members of society and potentially harmful labour that involved dangerous working conditions or resulted in overwork. Many parents believed that education did not help in getting a good job and personal connections or informal payments were necessary. Mothers were more pessimistic than fathers, and it was often the mothers who stopped both girls and boys from attending school.

The same study indicates that 78 per cent of parents approved of their children working, but some children who were interviewed (36 per cent) did not approve of the idea that their younger siblings should work because they felt that they should go to school, and 15 per cent of children thought their siblings were too young to work and that they should be allowed to study.

This tends to indicate that there is little demand for education from parents with working children but that the children note a demand for education, either for themselves or their siblings. Another demand-side pressure comes from the safety aspect; children indicated that they felt more protected at home and in school than when working on the streets.

Although the case studies in the ILO-IPEC report cover only a small sample of child workers, they provide useful insights into the demand for education. One 14-year-old boy worked but attended school for three days per week, on a seasonal basis. When asked if he would rather work or study, he was resigned to the situation that he had to work because his father was in prison. At the same time he wanted to become a doctor to be able to treat his family and friends.

Case studies, reports, and studies literature indicate that there is a high demand for education by children, but poverty and family circumstances result in increased absenteeism, increasing drop-out rates, and lack of enrolment in school.

3.3.4) Migration

Migration is a complex issue with many different features. Migration can be legal or illegal, long-term or seasonal, paid well, or verging on slave labour. Work can be in the formal or informal sectors, integrated with the host country's society or segregated. The nature of the impacts of migration on children will be different depending on the circumstances of the migrant parent. This could be compared to the situation of parents having different jobs such as with high regular wages and good conditions or low, irregular, unpredictable wages and poor/unsafe working conditions, with the additional factors of distance from home and long periods of absence. Child well-being will depend on these different aspects.

Data from the Migration Service of the Tajik Ministry of Internal Affairs suggests that, in 2008, 852,100 people were registered as migrants in the Russian Federation, while further migrants are unregistered or in other countries. Figures indicate that approximately one family in four has a migrant worker. Data from the National Bank of Tajikistan indicate that remittances are equal to approximately 50 per cent of the GDP, as of 2008. This decreased to an estimated US\$1.75 billion in 2009, as a result of the international financial crisis. Remittances remain one of the main sources of household finance. This level of mass migration has many effects, not only economic, but political, social, and demographic.

The 2011 *Impact of Labour Migration on "Children Left Behind" in Tajikistan* study concludes that abandoned households are likely to be poorer, and hence, the percentage of out-of-school children within them is likely to be higher. There is evidence that abandoned households are usually poorer, so there is a correlation between abandonment and child labour. However, in non-abandoned households, the enrolment of children (ages 7 to 16) from migrant households is slightly higher than that for children from non-migrant households. There is also a link between migration and child work, as children from migrant households, (including abandoned households), become labour substitutes for the absent parent. Also, remittances may increase productivity of migrant households if used to finance productive investments such as land or equipment.

The children in the study have a mixed response to effects of migration on the quality of education. Some children noted a positive effect of migration in that remittances support the formal and informal costs to education. Other children indicated psychosocial effects in the stress that is caused by an absent parent. And, it was evident amongst the children that the quality of education was affected by migration as increasing number of teachers are emigrating in search of better salaries, leaving classrooms unattended for periods of the academic year.

3.3.5) *Quality of education*

This is considered in detail under supply-side barriers, but there is also an economic demand-side issue. The quality of education is considered insufficient to provide relevant skills and knowledge to prepare young people for the work place, which might result in dropping out of school.

3.4) **Supply-side barriers**

Supply-side refers to provision of services by schools, teachers, parent teacher associations, and other stakeholders to students. Supply-side issues from regional and central government are considered under the next section relating to political, governance, capacity, and finance issues. Supply-side issues are influential on all profiles of out-of-school children. Overall, the problems of supply-side barriers stem from the lack of funding for education, and hence, the inadequacy of infrastructure, shortage of teachers and poor quality of schooling, including unqualified and under-qualified teachers. Section 3.4 considers the reasons why students do not attend or drop out of school from the perspective of education provision. Supply-side barriers are considered according to two overall areas – the condition of facilities for education and the quality of education provided.

3.4.1) *Condition of facilities*

Lack of facilities

There is an acknowledged lack of pre-primary, primary, and secondary school facilities. The majority of existing schools (85 per cent) operate double or triple shifts, and there are schools that operate from non-school buildings such as shops, private homes, or barracks. Rural children are at increased risk of being out of school or dropping out because low population density often means they have to travel greater distances to school, sometimes across difficult terrain, or terrain that can be impassable at certain times of year. When weather conditions are poor, children may lack suitable footwear and clothes to travel to school. There are cases of schools closing through lack of an available teacher and students' unwillingness to travel to other villages. In some cases, the village school will only offer education up to lower-secondary Grade 9.

The poorest households in many rural areas are often the furthest from roads, markets, health services, and schools. Even relatively short distances to school can significantly reduce attendance. Physical barriers such as rivers and forests also may increase the time required to reach school. Girls' attendance is particularly sensitive to journey times because of concerns over safety.

Tajikistan is prone to earthquakes, landslides, floods, and mudflows, avalanches, and rock falls. Due to the insufficiency of arable land, large numbers of the rural population are living in disaster-prone areas. All of these constraints can affect the ability to travel to school safely, within an acceptable travelling time. In remote areas, the walk to school can be insecure, particularly in winter and wet weather, as roads become covered in snow or mud.

Physical conditions of the school

The *Analysis of the National Census of Schools Findings and EMIS Data for 2008 – 2009 Report* indicates that many students are educated in unsafe premises. On average, 6 per cent of all students study in dangerous buildings. There are regional variations, ranging from 2 per cent in Dushanbe to 18 per cent in GBAO, as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Percentage of students studying by conditions of school buildings

	Percentage of children studying in dangerous buildings	Percentage of children in schools requiring major repairs
Tajikistan average	6	30
GBAO	18	25
Dushanbe	2	24
RRS	6	29
Sughd	4	26
Khatlon	8	34

(Source: Agranovich, 2010, *Analysis of the National Census of Schools Findings and Education Management Information System Data for 2008-2009 Report*)

In terms of students studying in buildings that are not dangerous but which require major repairs and renovation, the figures are much higher, as shown in Table 3.4. On average, this figure is 30 per cent, with regional differences ranging from 26 per cent in Dushanbe to 34 per cent in Khatlon.

The Ittus report from 2007 indicates that, generally, most schools were in poor condition, requiring maintenance. Over 40 per cent of rural areas reported their school facilities were of an unsatisfactory quality in all aspects. Classrooms were often very cold and dark in winter, students needed to wear their coats. In many classrooms, there was no heating, and those that had stoves did not use them because of the lack of fuel; even in schools that supposedly had central heating, these systems never worked. For example, the Rasht Department of Education reported that 20 schools in the district had central heating, but none of the heating systems worked. Schools also had leaking roofs and broken windows. As well as making school attendance an unpleasant experience, cold classrooms led to sick days for children. Students indicate that each sickness period could result in 10 to 20 days off school.

Lack of electricity in schools during the winter also has an impact on the quality of education provided, with subsequent impacts on attendance. This especially affects the ability of schools to offer computer courses. Due to the inability to adequately light classrooms, classes need to end early in winter, and children are sent home earlier than the scheduled end of the school day. In some cases, teachers try to continue to teach using candles. There are acute shortages of furniture affecting the education system. The GPE summary documentation states that approximately three out of 10 students do not have adequate desk space. More desks and chairs for students are required, as are blackboards and bookcases in classrooms and basic furniture for the school principal.

As an example from the Ittus study, according to the Rasht Department of Education, there were 82 schools in the district, seven were not safe, 15 primary schools did not have proper buildings and were using barracks, six schools operated from private houses, and one used a shop. The cost of physical renovation is major supply-side barrier, even in cases where communities actively participate in the renovation process.

Only 55 per cent of schools have access to safe water. Lack of safe drinking water is an important factor for 25 per cent of students who failed to attend or dropped out of school. Only 48 per cent of schools have access to a functioning water supply system; 86 per cent of schools have separate toilets for boys and girls, with 83.8 per cent of these toilets being simple pit latrines.

The Asian Development Bank's (ADB's) School Mapping Study demonstrates that the physical condition of school buildings is one of the major problems affecting school attendance. Sanitation is an important issue, especially for teenage girls. Many schools have very basic latrines and washing facilities. Lack of clean water, poor quality toilets, lack of sanitary facilities and lack of

privacy may discourage teenage girls from attending school. In the UNICEF study of girls who had dropped out of school or were at risk of dropping out, 18 per cent of the girls interviewed say that they have missed school because of poor sanitation facilities.

Table 3.4 Percentage of children studying at schools equipped with electricity, clean water and sewage system

	Total			Rural Areas		
	Primary schools (Grades 1-4) (%)	Basic schools (Grades 1-9) (%)	Complete secondary schools (Grades 1-11) (%)	Primary schools (Grades 1-4) (%)	Basic schools (Grades 1-9) (%)	Complete secondary schools (Grades 1-11) (%)
GBAO	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dushanbe	N/A	21	65	-	-	-
RRS	3	7	23	3	7	18
Sughd	0	4	26	0	3	23
Khatlon	1	7	11	1	8	7
Average	1	8	25	1	4	12

(Source: *Analysis of the National Census of Schools Findings*; the Ministry of Education, EMIS Data for 2008-2009 Report)

As urban areas are generally wealthier than rural areas, urban areas are also more likely to receive improvements to infrastructure.

The physical infrastructure of schools is also a barrier to students with disabilities and is one reason why few students with disabilities attend mainstream schools. Education officials report that schools are not prepared, in terms of physical infrastructure, to serve students with disabilities. The Lowicki-Zucca 2011 youth study reports that youth with disabilities said they require facilities that are equipped to meet their needs, including entrance ramps and lifts. Young people discussing these issues in a focus group agree that all children and youth with disabilities should be able to study in mainstream schools.

Availability of food during the school day

WFP provides food for approximately 360,000 primary school children and staff in approximately 2,000 schools. These figures represent approximately 60 per cent of children in Grades 1 to 4 in rural, food-insecure regions. According to the WFP, "Studies show that improving nutrition can help increase students' attention span and alertness, and enhance their opportunities for personal development, which can in turn help reduce poverty for their family, community and country."

The WFP Take Home Rations programme in the Rasht Valley (DRD) provided food rations for families of secondary age girls, conditional on 80 per cent school attendance. Between 2001 and 2009, the programme increased the enrolment probabilities of girls ages 16 and 17 by 26 per cent in six districts and helped narrow the gender gap in enrolment in Grades 10 and 11. This programme indicates that provision of food can be a useful incentive to encourage school attendance.

Table 3.5 shows the percentage of schools and students receiving hot meals by school type and region. The national average shows that approximately 40 per cent of primary and basic secondary schools, and 58 per cent of complete secondary schools provide hot meals.

Table 3.5 Percentage of schools and students receiving hot meals

	Percentage of schools providing hot meals								Percentage of students receiving hot meals							
	Total				Rural areas				Total				Rural areas			
	Primary Schools (Grades 1-4)	Basic Schools (Grades 1-9)	Complete Secondary Schools (Grades 1-11)	Gymnasias, lyceums	Primary schools (Grades 1-4)	Basic Schools (Grades 1-9)	Complete Secondary Schools (Grades 1-11)	Gymnasias, lyceums	Primary schools (Grades 1-4)	Basic Schools (Grades 1-9)	Complete Secondary Schools (Grades 1-11)	Gymnasias, Lyceums	Primary Schools (Grades 1-4)	Basic Schools (Grades 1-9)	Complete Secondary Schools (Grades 1-11)	Gymnasias, Lyceums
GBAO	12	8	9		12	8	9		13	4	2		13	4	3	
Dushanbe	*	40	24	50						19	3	7				
RRS	53	29	28	60	53	29	28	100	38	12	7	24	38	12	7	
Sughd	71	68	88	43	69	69	95	0	70	28	29	6	64	28	32	11
Khatlon	35	45	67	17	37	45	72	13	33	21	24	10	37	21	28	43
Total Republic of Tajikistan	41	40	58	31	42	40	62	15	32	18	20	9	37	18	23	40

*Not Applicable.

(Source: *The Ministry of Education, EMIS data for 2008-2009. Source does not state whether meal provision is by government or the WFP.*)

Special schools

Tajikistan has traditionally educated children with disabilities in specialised boarding schools. According to the Iltus 2007 report, in addition to the 13 nationally supported boarding schools (section 3.2.2), there were a further 60 boarding schools in the country supported by local budgets, and “some special boarding schools.” Not all boarding schools are for children with disabilities; many children without parental care and children whose families cannot educate them also attend boarding schools. One of the key issues with boarding schools is the segregation of children from the community. Segregation of children with disabilities compounds their isolation from society.

There is also a special school and a special vocational school for children with behavioural difficulties. These schools raise rights issues for children, who can be deprived of their liberty using administrative processes. There are no data in the literature on the type and quality of education provided in these institutions.

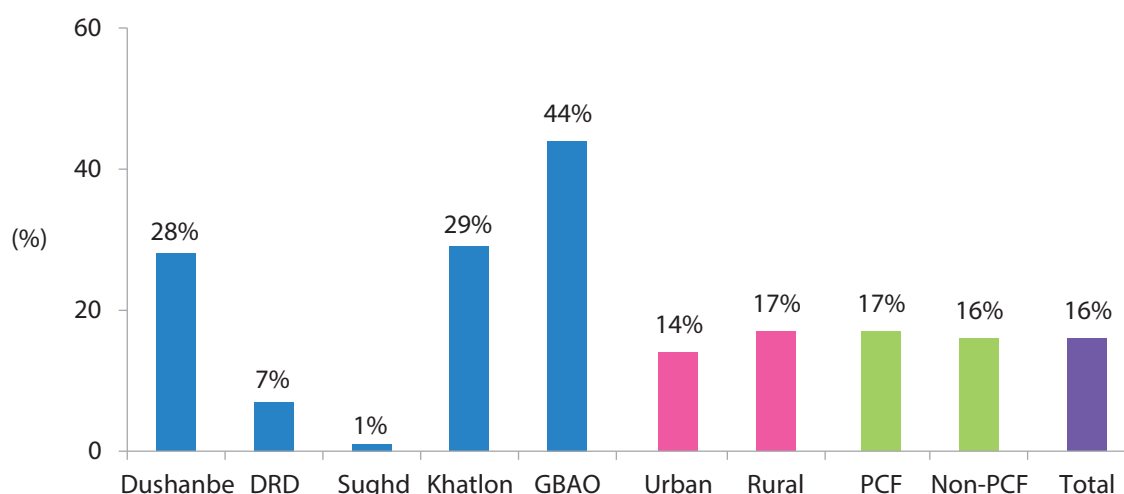
3.4.2) Quality of education

Availability of textbooks and equipment

According to the Poverty Assessment Report, 57 per cent of communities reported improvements between 2002 and 2007 in key aspects of school essentials such as provision of desks, chairs, blackboards and textbooks, and 48 per cent reported improvements in the provision of heating fuel. Most improvements were concentrated in wealthier and urban areas, while deterioration was more common in poor and rural areas. Across all types of facilities, wealthier communities were more likely to report improvement than poorer communities.

Numbers of textbooks are generally lacking; on average, only 16 per cent of principals surveyed in 2007 considered that they had an adequate supply. This varied by region, with only 1 per cent of principals in Sughd having reported an adequate supply, as shown in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 Proportion of school principals reporting on adequate number of textbooks in their schools



(Source: World Bank, 2007, *Republic of Tajikistan Public Expenditure Tracking Survey*)

Textbook supply is considered insufficient from two perspectives; either because the required texts are not available or published, or because the quantity of books received by a school is not adequate. Table 3.6 (reproduced from PETS 2007) provides data on the lack of textbooks by subject area and the reasons for insufficient provision of textbooks.

Table 3.6 Reasons for insufficient textbooks

Subject	% of schools with insufficient number of textbooks	Reason for Insufficient Textbooks				
		Not published	Not returned from previous year	Insufficient amount received from Regional and Central Education Departments	Not translated into Uzbek/Kyrgyz/other language	Others
Tajik/Russian Language in classes with other language of instructions	72.0	72.9	0.7	21.6	2.2	2.6
Tajik/Russian/Uzbek Literature	48.5	79.1	2.3	10.9	6.2	1.6
Physics	47.5	69.3	0.9	17.5	10.5	1.8
Math/Algebra/Geometry	47.0	73.9	3.4	16.0	5.0	1.7
Chemistry	42.0	63.4	1.1	26.9	7.5	1.1
Foreign Languages (English/German/Farsi/Arabic)	35.5	69.5	2.4	22.0	2.4	3.7
Biology/Ecology/Botany	35.0	69.7	1.3	18.4	9.2	1.3
Modern History/History of Tajik People/History of Religion	31.5	58.0		21.7	18.8	1.4
Introduction in Basics of State and Law	23.5	86.0	1.8	7.0	5.3	
Geography	17.5	50.0		21.1	21.1	7.9
Human Rights	14.0	82.1		14.3	3.6	
Alphabet and Reading	7.5	81.3	6.3	12.5		
Primary Military Training	7.5	73.3		13.3		13.3

Subject	% of schools with insufficient number of textbooks	Reason for Insufficient Textbooks				
		Not published	Not returned from previous year	Insufficient amount received from Regional and Central Education Departments	Not translated into Uzbek/Kyrgyz/other language	Others
Information Technology	6.5	61.5		30.8	7.7	
Classes Taught in Primary School	5.5	72.7		18.2	9.1	
Natural History	4.5	40.0	20.0	30.0	10.0	
Drawing/Sketching	4.0	100.0				
Singing and Music	3.5	85.7				14.3
Drawing	2.0	50.0		25.0	25.0	
Others	2.0	5.9		5.9	88.2	
Labour/Technology	1.5	100.0				
Physical Training	0.5	100.0				

(Source: World Bank, 2007, *Republic of Tajikistan Public Expenditure Tracking Survey*)

Lack of textbook production is the major reason for inadequacy across all subjects, resulting in lack of availability. This problem supersedes problems with the actual number of books provided. Textbooks in minority languages are particularly lacking. Table 3.7, reproduced from the *Analysis of the National Census of Schools Findings and EMIS Data for 2008 – 2009 Report*, shows the average number of textbooks per student, by language, with evident discrepancies amongst ethnic minorities.

Table 3.7 Textbooks per student based on language

Language of instruction	Primary school (Grades 1-4)	Lower-secondary school (Grades 5-9)	Upper-secondary school (Grades 10-11)
Tajik	3.3	6.1	7.7
Russian	0.5	0.8	1.0
Uzbek	1.3	1.6	0.9
Kyrgyz	1.5	1.2	0.3
Turkmen	0.6	0.2	0.3

(Source: Analysis of the National Census of Schools Findings; the Ministry of Education, *EMIS Data for 2008 – 2009 Report*)

Data from the PETS 2007 report indicate that, since 1991, textbooks have been rented to pupils with a view to covering the cost over a three-year period. After three years, textbooks become the property of the school and can be rented at a different rate. A reported 98 per cent of schools rent out textbooks, contributing to the direct costs of schooling for parents and students.

Although the secondary curriculum for information technology provides for one hour per week of instruction in Grades 7-9 and two hours per week in Grades 10-11, there are insufficient numbers of computers. The *Analysis of the National Census of Schools Findings and EMIS Data for 2008 – 2009 Report* indicates that the provision of computers in schools ranges from approximately one computer per 35 students in GBAO, to one computer per 130 students in Dushanbe. The unexpected difference results because there are fewer and smaller schools in GBAO.

Science laboratory facilities are quoted in terms of laboratory area per pupil, and the national average is 0.8 square meters per student. This figure on its own is not an especially useful indicator, as it does not provide information as to whether the laboratory facilities are in a useable condition or whether there is adequate provision of working materials such as equipment, chemicals, gas, and electricity.

The lack of equipment results in provision of poor quality education that is not valued as a means to improve prospects for a good future livelihood, which might reduce students' incentive to attend school.

Teacher quality and shortage

Tajikistan reportedly has an abundance of university-trained teachers, but low salaries deter many of them from working as teachers, and hence, many schools have a teacher shortage. In the school year 2007-2008, there were 6,856 unfilled teacher vacancies. Teacher vacancies prevent some schools from teaching the full curriculum. Salary increases for teachers appear to be going some way to addressing the issue (in the 2013 – 2014, teachers' salaries will be increased by 60 per cent), but pay still lags behind income possibilities available in other sectors.

As the school-aged population rises, on-going training and hiring of new teachers will be necessary. The education system suffers from inefficiencies as a result of a high pupil-teacher ratio that does not benefit the students educationally.

The situation is further complicated because secondary school teachers tend to specialize by subject and so are constrained in the range of subjects they can teach. As a result, schools might have a low pupil-teacher ratio or an average teaching load, whilst experiencing a shortage of teachers in certain subjects. In urban areas, this is less problematic because of the larger pool of teachers with different skills. Teachers tend not to be geographically mobile, so it is not always possible to fill teacher shortages in one area from another.

The NSED 2015 acknowledges that Tajikistan has been unfortunate in losing a large percentage of its trained and qualified teachers to migration in the last decade. However, teacher qualification and training are also major issues. In 2007-2008, only 62 per cent of teachers were qualified, and again, there was a shortage of teachers in particular subjects. Data from the PETS study, 2007, indicate that 7.3 per cent of teachers had incomplete higher or pedagogical higher degrees, and 2.6 per cent had not completed pedagogical college. However, the study cannot confirm that these teachers did not have a diploma or teaching certificate.

According to the Lowicki-Zucca 2011 study, satisfaction with the skills of teachers is generally high, yet respondents cite many areas for improvement, from the need for more teachers, to differences in teaching quality between and within schools. Overall, youth between the ages of 13 and 24 in Tajikistan feel that the quality of Tajikistan's education provision has been compromised due to a lack of teachers and lack of teachers with appropriate qualifications. At the same time, the efforts made by teachers are greatly appreciated in view of very low salaries.

Students further comment that important teachers are missing, for example, those with specialist skills such as computing, and inexperienced teachers are not taken seriously by students. There is a lack of software available for teaching computing. Rural students comment that living in a village is an obstacle for young people because there are few other resources to make up for gaps in teaching, knowledge and skills in schools. For example, there are no foreign language centres or Internet cafes in many rural areas. A 17-year-old secondary student in Ayni District says that low teacher salaries mean that teachers have additional jobs.

Some youth feel that poor quality teaching contributes to poor student motivation. A 16-year-old girl in Dushanbe says that school children do not want to study because some teachers give incorrect information and do not explain their subjects well.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that classroom learning is primarily rote learning and teacher-centred. Teacher training at both pre and in-service levels do not substantially provide skills for teachers to engage in inclusive, child-centred pedagogy. This may result in a lack of incentive for children to attend school.

Curriculum, quality, and relevance of teaching content

Tajikistan inherited an education curriculum model from the Soviet system, where the design and development of the curriculum was done in Moscow. This centralized model prevented Tajik educators from participating in any meaningful way in the curriculum development process. This lack of capacity is reflected in the minimal amount of curriculum development work that has been undertaken since independence.

Secondary school students receive five hours teaching per day. Where there are two shifts, they are operating from 8:00 to 13:00 and from 13:00 to 18:00; some schools are working three shifts. In winter, particularly in rural areas where the electricity supply is unreliable, schools may end early in the afternoon due to lack of lighting.

According to the *Analysis of the National Census of Schools Findings and EMIS Data for 2008 – 2009 Report*, the total educational experience in Tajik schools is lower than in developed countries and Russia. In OECD countries, children between the ages of 7 to 15 spend 7,828 hours in classes. In Russia, the figure is 6,747 hours, and for Tajikistan, it is 5,494 hours. This is 30 per cent fewer hours compared with OECD countries and almost 18 per cent fewer compared with Russia. When considering primary and secondary education cumulatively (not limited to 7- to 15-year-olds), children in OECD countries receive 11,410 hours, those in Russia receive 8,570 hours, while those in Tajikistan receive 7,496. These differences arise because the Tajik education system is shorter in terms of number of years, and there are fewer weeks of learning per year compared with OECD countries.

In comparison with OECD and Russian Federation countries, the subjects on Tajikistan's curriculum look similar. There is a slightly greater emphasis on languages and social sciences, but vocational skills such as technological disciplines and practical/professional skills appear to be almost the same as in other countries. This analysis may miss issues such as total amount of time spent on vocational skills and the fact that OECD countries are likely to have more up-to-date equipment and more of it in terms of quantity that is relevant to teaching these skills.

Table 3.8 Comparison of curriculum content between countries

	Compulsory subjects											Total, Compulsory Subjects	Alternative Part, Compulsory	Total, Compulsory Programme
	Mother Tongue and Literature	Mathematics	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences	Foreign Languages	Technological Disciplines	Art	Physical Training	Religious Education	Practical and Professional Skills	Others			
OECD (Average)	16	13	12	12	13	3	8	8	3	2	3	96	9	100
Russian Federation	15	14	24	9	9	3	4	6	-	1	-	85	15	100
Tajikistan	16	13	14	18	16	4	5	7	1	2	0	99	1	100

(Source: Analysis of the National Census of Schools Findings; the Ministry of Education, *EMIS Data for 2008 – 2009 Report*)

The NSED 2015 identifies that the content of education has not changed for nearly 20 years and that it has not adapted to changing market conditions. As of 2013, the MoE has begun a revision of the standards and curriculum at the primary and secondary levels that aims to mainstream Life Skills based Education into the curriculum and move the curriculum from knowledge-based to competency-based.

In terms of learning content, the Langbehn (2010) study reports findings from focus group discussions. Some parents and relatives think that school does not provide children with proper knowledge, especially if classes run only two or three hours per day. Some also feel that children's knowledge is very poor. Higher education is not considered a viable option for employment, and some feel that the school leaving certificate has no value. The lack of an updated curriculum that matches the requirements of potential employers results in provision of an inappropriate education that is not valued as a means to achieve fruitful future employment, which might reduce students' incentive to attend school.

3.5) Political, governance, capacity, and financial bottlenecks

3.5.1) Political bottlenecks

Tajikistan has taken great strides in increasing funding to education and implementing many educational reforms such as those outlined in the NSED 2015 and the NSED 2020.

Yet, Cassidy identifies the major bottlenecks to reform and progress in the education sector at the political level as: the highly politicized and centralized nature of the current education management system; emphasis on control and compliance with centrally mandated, prescriptive regulations, decrees and orders; dominance of an administrative mind-set; and the dominance of ad hoc directives.

The distinction within the government system between political and administrative civil servants is an important issue. Many countries function with a politically affiliated minister of a department whose role it is to oversee the implementation of government policy. The executive is usually headed by a permanent secretary (a senior civil service employee), who is not subject to political alliance and has administrative staff whose function it is to carry out the minister's instructions. Cassidy states that, in Tajikistan, the distinction between the political and administrative roles is not clear. This distinction is important in terms of maintaining long-term stability within the MoE,

is needed to implement and sustain strategies and policies for improving education, including reducing the number of out-of-school children.

3.5.2) Governance and capacity bottlenecks

Cassidy reports that, within government, people worked in and looked after their own domain with a lack of integration, communication, and planning, within highly centralized decision-making processes and standardization of rules. There was little coordination and integration of either day-to-day work with development activities, or alignment of activities with the stated national goals and objectives. It is not clear from the source whether Cassidy refers only to MoE staff or all government staff when making these statements.

Cassidy also reports that the system, its leaders, managers, administrators, teachers and others who were working to strengthen and reform education, were overwhelmed with good ideas, promising initiatives, and pilot activities that were frequently uncoordinated and unaligned with other related elements in the system. The scope and pace of activities was overwhelming the capacity of the system. There was an urgent need to manage the sector more systemically in order to focus limited resources on careful management and monitoring of the progress of investment and grant programs and on evaluation of potential pilot projects.

Teachers are generally paid more than principals because salaries are based on the number of teaching hours. This issue has been addressed with the introduction of the per capita funding mechanism. If principals have a more significant role in the management and development of schools, it will be necessary to pay commensurately for the increased workload and responsibility and to provide training and professional development. Therefore, the impact of school management on school dropout, particularly of principal's involvement, should be tested through further research.

Many countries have decentralized education, allowing more freedom of operation and budgeting at local and school levels. However, additional research will be required to examine how decentralized educational administration influences the number of out-of-school children in Tajikistan.

3.5.3) Financial bottlenecks

State funding for education follows the distribution of responsibilities for the education system as defined in the Law on Education. This is divided into Republican and local budgets. These are built upon the stipulations of the Law on the Main Foundations of Budgetary Legislation in the Republic of Tajikistan. The Republican budget is shared between the MoE and the other ministries and institutions with education responsibilities in their portfolio. More than two thirds of the state funding for education is contributed by the local budgets (provinces, districts and city administrations). During the decade 1997-2007, poor economic performance resulted in substantial budget deficits and the reduction of spending on education. This encouraged other sources of funding such as tuition fees and fees for services and the founding of private educational institutions. It has also led to expenses for parents within the state system such as the cost of renting textbooks and informal fees.

The education sector is dependent on external funding. In 2013, the education system received over US\$6 million in loans and grants, approximately 20% of the total education system budget. This included contributions from UNICEF, USAID, the Open Society Institute, the ADB, the WB, grants from Germany and contributions from the Aga Khan Development Network and Education Services.

Tajikistan has increased the amount of spending on education both in real terms and with reference to per capita funding. In 2008, the percentage of public expenditure on education was 4.5 per cent of GDP or 15.8 per cent of the public budget. However, it is estimated that in order to meet the minimal needs for maintenance and development of the education system, the average annual share of budget for education should be 6 per cent of the GDP. There are also inefficiencies in financial allocation management. The Report on Costing of NSED in Tajikistan indicates that it would cost US\$166 million in order to: provide schools that are currently run from unsuitable buildings with new premises; conduct emergency and major repairs on existing schools; complete unfinished school buildings; expand overloaded schools; and provide additional rural schools where the existing schools cover several villages. An estimated US\$4.44 million per year (2009-2013) is further required to replace school furniture, US\$7.69 million over five years is required to improve sanitation, US\$6.8 million over five years is required to provide electric heaters (with an on-going replacement cost of US\$1.4 million per year). The cost of in-service teacher training is estimated at US\$4.7 million per annum. The projected cost of providing textbooks ranges from US\$6 million in 2009 to US\$9 million in 2013. These cost estimates do not appear to take account of the 26 per cent projected increase in the number of school-aged children by 2016.

The GPE, (which, again, was formerly the FTI Catalytic Fund Project) provided US\$9.2 million under FTI-1 (2006/2007), US\$9.2 million under FTI-2 (2008/2009) and US\$13.5 million under FTI-3 (2010/2011) for expenditure on civil works, curriculum modernization, textbooks and teaching-learning materials, school furniture/equipment and visual aids, in-service training of pedagogical and managerial personnel, capacity-building of education personnel on per capita financing, fiduciary and management capacity strengthening in the system and the EMIS. And, the MoE will receive US\$ 6.2 million under GPE-4 for four main components: increasing access to early childhood education; enhancing the quality of education; improving child-friendly learning environments; and, strengthening system capacity.

The PETS 2007, reports that, at the upper tiers of the hierarchy, from the Ministry of Finance (MoF) to the regions an effective system of financial accountability was in place. However, there were problems of financial accountability at the district and school levels. For example, school budget accountability was weak due to lack of record keeping regarding the provision of, and payment for services and equipment. It was unclear what happened to non-wage resources in the last links of the finance chain. This is now being addressed through the introduction of the per capita system of financing education.

In terms of financial efficiency, schools use facilities and teachers' time intensively. As also noted above, most schools teach in two shifts, and some even teach in three shifts. Class sizes are higher than other former Soviet countries and compared to the levels observed in OECD countries, although there are regional differences. There is a clear correlation between efficiency of expenditure and class size, and a correlation between school size and average class sizes. Larger classes result in a better teacher-pupil ratio, and hence, lower costs per pupil. Regional differences in population density clearly make teaching in rural areas more expensive. Schools are smaller and have smaller class-sizes because of the lower population density. Consolidation at classroom level is limited by the need to avoid children of different school years in the same class. Consolidation at school level would result in closures of some schools and merger into larger, more efficient schools. However, this may result in impractical travel distances for students, in particular girls, a known factor affecting their school attendance. In isolated areas, this could result in the inability to reach a school, particularly during bad weather conditions or times of natural disasters. Even in small schools, teachers are still needed in specialized subject areas, potentially resulting in inefficiency.

In Dushanbe, the average school size is 1,658, with a pupil-teacher ratio of 1:26. In GBAO, the average school size is 251, with a pupil-teacher ratio of 1:11. PETS indicates that there may be

opportunities for efficiency gains by consolidating classes in some schools. This appears to be what per capita-financed schools have done on receiving financial autonomy. However, in rural areas, there are fewer opportunities to do this and still meet curriculum requirements.

Attracting teachers into the profession is problematic because of low wages, which are lower than those of production workers. Wages have been increased in the last few years, but recruitment of sufficient numbers of, and appropriately qualified, teachers is problematic as a result of the financial bottleneck.

3.6) Analytical summary

3.6.1) Demand-side barriers

General household poverty

Poverty results in the necessity for children to work, and hence, not attend school. For households with low income, although schooling is free, formal and informal payments are not sustainable. Poverty is cross-dimensional and common to all profiles.

Gender discrimination

Females have less access to education than their male counterparts. Cultural barriers have been shown to prevent some girls' from continuing their education.

Lack of parents' education

The education levels within the household, particularly of mothers, have influence on school attendance. There is a direct correlation in Tajikistan between the lower level of education of a mother and higher dropout rates.

Early childhood education

52 per cent of parents gave the reason for not sending children to pre-primary school as having no access.

3.6.2) Supply-side barriers

Lack of facilities

There is an acknowledged lack of pre-primary, primary, and secondary school facilities, which causes double or triple shifts. In addition, distances to school, physical barriers such as rivers, and disaster-prone terrain can reduce attendance. Girls' attendance is particularly sensitive to journey times because of concerns over safety.

Physical conditions of the school

Many students are educated in unsafe premises or where major repairs are required. Classrooms are often very cold and dark in winter. Lack of suitable infrastructure is also a barrier to students with disabilities.

Availability of textbooks and equipment

The lack of books and equipment results in provision of a poor quality education that is not valued as a means to improve prospects for a good future livelihood, which can be seen as one of the factors that might hamper children's regular attendance.

Teacher quality and shortage

Low salaries deter many people from entering the profession, and many trained teachers have migrated or left the profession. The lack of teachers and lack of adequately trained teachers result in the provision of poor quality education, which is not inter-active, gender-sensitive, or inclusive. Such teacher-centred pedagogy is not conducive to achieving learning outcomes, which might cause children's irregular attendance or dropout.

Curriculum, quality and relevance of taught content

The lack of an updated curriculum results in provision of an inappropriate education that is not valued as a means to achieve fruitful future employment, which might reduce students' incentive to attend school.

Availability of food during the school day

Provision of food has a direct impact on school attendance amongst both boys and girls. An increase in supply would potentially assist the poorest children, who are most likely to be out of school.

All supply-side issues are cross-dimensional and potentially cover all profiles.

3.6.3) Political, governance, capacity and financial bottlenecks

Political bottlenecks

The distinction between political and administrative roles is not clear. This distinction is important for maintaining long-term stability within the MoE, which is needed to implement strategies and policies for improving education, and hence, reducing the number of out-of-school children.

Governance and capacity bottlenecks

There is a lack of integration, communication, and planning within the highly centralized decision-making processes. At the school level, the centralized system means that the principal has responsibility for the quality and performance of the school. Therefore, the impact of educational administration and school management on school dropout, particularly of principal's involvement, should be tested through further research.

Financial bottlenecks

The education sector is dependent on external funding. In 2008, the percentage of public expenditure on education was 4.5 per cent of GDP, or 15.8 per cent of the public budget. It is estimated that this should be 5.5 per cent of GDP.

4) Policies and strategies relevant to out-of-school children in Tajikistan

In many ways, reducing the number of out-of-school children equates to a targeted approach to reaching marginalized children. This chapter provides information on current policies and strategies relevant to out-of-school children. Legislation, national strategies, reports by international organizations and international initiatives all play a part in shaping current and future directions. Future practical action to reduce the number of out-of-school children in Tajikistan will need to be grounded within current policies and strategies, or where the current policy settings are not considered adequate, in new policies and strategies. Therefore, it is useful to understand the major agenda-setting strategies and policies within Tajikistan.

Key policies governing education and out-of-school children are introduced, followed by a review of policies according to the structure of the bottlenecks and barriers chapter (socio-cultural policies and strategies; economic demand-side policies; supply-side policies; and policies relating to government management).

4.1) Key policies and strategies

In this chapter, the analysis prioritizes documents with ‘high authority,’ including legislation that has been debated within Parliament, national strategies, and strategies or reports sponsored by the United Nations that can generally be assumed to represent agreed perspectives. Legislation relating to education and administrative processes is described in Chapter 1.

The national documents of greatest relevance to educational planning and reform, and thus, the main sources for information in this chapter, are the NSED 2009-2015 and the NSED 2020.

4.1.1) NSED 2015

This document describes the vision for the development of the education system that provides universal access to quality education to all children and young people. It identifies the following issues for action and implementation by 2015:

- The establishment of a relevant education system, appropriate to the current needs of the country and a changing global context.
- Reform of the governance and management of the education sector to move from a centralized state system to a system of partnerships at different levels that would allow for greater private sector, civil society and community participation in education.
- Establishment of clear inter-linkages between different education systems such as primary, secondary, higher and vocational; and establishment of standards and monitoring for quality.
- Mobilization of resources (human, material, financial and social) towards development of the education system.
- Ensuring development of adequate institutional and human capacity to efficiently manage these resources.
- Ensuring equal opportunity and access to education for children with special situations such as those from rural areas, with disabilities, and with special talents.
- Ensuring gender parity at all levels of education.

The NSED 2015 identifies the priorities for the government as general secondary school education and providing access to basic education for all children. The necessary allocation of financial resources and investments are to be made as necessary.

4.1.2) NSED 2020

The NSED 2020 was developed in accordance with the goals, set forth by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan in the area of education and also in line with major goals and objectives of the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan up to 2015. The National Education Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan up to 2020 takes into account the main priorities of Millennium Development Goals, goals and objectives of “Education for All” and other significant strategic documents in the Republic of Tajikistan.

In response to continued economic hardship, the emphasis in Tajikistan has changed to the development of education as a means to achieve the main goals of socio-economic development, the elimination of poverty, reduction of unemployment and the improvement of living standards and quality of life in general. The NSED 2020 was the tool for implementing the developments in the education system required to achieve these objectives. The strategy notes that a knowledge-based approach will not be sufficient and that a competency-based approach to education is required to provide students with the opportunities to acquire work skills and to understand the importance of skills such as decision-making, professional career planning, lifelong education, communication skills and continued professional development.

The priority goal of the NSED 2020 is to create conditions to ensure functional and effective provision of educational services and to provide access to quality education for all. This goal focuses on implementation of the following objectives:

- Ensuring the well-being of citizens, and societal stability;
- Establishing a skilled personnel base for economic growth in priority sectors, developing technologically effective production and attracting investment into the country;
- Modernization of the education system; and
- Structural changes in the education system.

4.2) Socio-cultural strategies and policies

The value of education in society, as well as social norms that dictate who should receive education and to what degree, are strong determinants of whether or not a child commences or completes schooling. It follows that positive strategies and actions on these same aspects should be developed. In any country, there are many and varied social-cultural influences at play. Chapter 3 on socio-cultural barriers mentions three populations influenced by specific socio-cultural norms, which are negatively affected by traditional gender norms, and children with disabilities, who are affected by social stigma. Socio-cultural understandings of child development often do not favour early childhood education.

Tajikistan has specific laws and strategies that stipulate parents’ responsibilities to promote ideals of greater equality for girls and children with disabilities. The Law on Education (see Chapter 3) concerns parents’ responsibilities in education.

The Government of Tajikistan recently passed legislation “On Responsibility of Parents for Child Education and Upbringing.” The law mandates, in article 7, that parents:

-
- Provide access to education for their children and do not prevent them from receiving a comprehensive secondary education.
 - Provide all necessary conditions and facilities for education and development of children.
 - Treat children equally regardless of sex, age and physical and mental capacity.
 - Provide children with disabilities with the necessary conditions for education and future employment. If parents are unable to support a child, they should be referred to an appropriate state institution.
 - Be aware of the conditions of children who stay at ‘internats’ and other special state institutions, visit them, and cooperate with the institution to monitor their children’s education process.
 - Provide conditions for children under 6 to get fundamental knowledge and education.
 - Do not involve children in hard and dangerous work that might cause harm to health or other types of work harmful for children’s mental and physical development.
 - Do not involve children under 15 in entrepreneurship or business except in cases where it is allowed by legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan.
 - Provide school clothes at all stages of education.

The law covers a number of activities that could improve the socio-cultural situation for girls, children with disabilities, demand for early childhood education, and the situation of children in institutions. This new law regulates responsibilities of parents, guardians, and individuals fulfilling the role of parents in regard to children.

Recognition of the centrality of parental/guardian responsibility for the upbringing and development of children is welcome and is strongly aligned with the CRC ratified by Tajikistan in 1993. The CRC makes the need for state support for parents/guardians clear in the performance of their childrearing responsibilities and requires the state to provide appropriate institutions, facilities and services for the care of children. At the same time, the focus of responsibility with the Tajikistan legislation remains firmly with the parents. The role of the Government of Tajikistan in supporting families and in providing services when parents are unable to do so is almost entirely absent in the adopted proposed legislation. This ‘parental control’ and ‘punitive’ focus extends to ‘liabilities to be imposed’ on parents whose children remain out of school.

This mandate extends to marginalized populations as well, as parents are required to provide children with disabilities with necessary conditions for education and future employment. As noted, parents must also be aware of the condition of their children who stay at ‘internats’ and other special state institutions, visit them and cooperate with the institution to monitor their children’s education process.

In the development of future strategies to tackle the problem of out-of-school children, care must be taken to ensure state responsibility for assistance to parents and provision of appropriate direct services is adequately promoted and provided. The current misalignment between the legislation “On Responsibility of Parents for Child Education and Upbringing” and a holistic approach to supporting children to attend and remain in education needs to be closely examined.

4.2.1) Policies and strategies to increase participation by girls

In the previous chapter, multiple socio-cultural issues relating to girls’ education were mentioned. In recognition of these factors, various policies and strategies have been adopted.

The ADB and UNDP have supported the Government of Tajikistan in developing a cross-sector gender policy, adopted in May 2010 called “The National Strategy on the Promotion of Women’s Roles.” Nonetheless, specific (albeit older) strategies can also be found in the NSED 2015, NSED

2020, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the Living Standards Improvement Strategy (LSIS) from 2013 – 2015, the National Development Strategy (NDS) and the UNDAF. Within the NSED 2015 and NSED 2020 the issue of gender equality is addressed in socio-cultural terms. Activities designed to sensitize local communities (through television and radio programmes) are planned, and measures to ensure that curricula and teaching staff are ‘gender-sensitive’ will be introduced. In fact, media programmes highlighting the importance of girls’ education have already been aired with support from UNICEF and other organizations.

The Centre for Gender Pedagogics has been established under the Academy of Education (part of the MoE), by which two rounds of gender auditing were conducted on the curricula, textbooks, and teacher training programmes. Specialists working for the Centre for Gender Pedagogics have been especially trained to build their knowledge and skills for these purposes. The NSED 2020 also mentions a plan to “create motivation and conditions to continue education for girls,” but it specifically mentions this as a goal for post-compulsory education, and the conditions of girls in compulsory schooling is not mentioned, except in general plans to increase education for all children. International partners, including UNICEF, are advocating for increased girls’ participation in compulsory and post-compulsory education.

4.3) Economic demand-side policies

The discussion of bottlenecks and barriers to providing out-of-school children with education identified key economic demand-side issues including: general household poverty, the affordability of schooling, working children and migration.

4.3.1) *General household poverty*

Economic development has been a key goal of national policy since independence. Success has been achieved, as the percentage of families living in poverty has been significantly reduced over the past decade. The Poverty Assessment Report 2009 identifies a clear correlation between education level of the household head and the poverty status of households. Poverty results in the need for children to work, the inability to pay for school-related costs, and hence, is an important cause of children being out of school. The Bascheri and Falkingham 2007 report concludes that child poverty was significantly higher than overall poverty, with 66 per cent of children under the age of 18 defined as poor. Child poverty was highest in GBAO and Khatlon regions. Child labour that helps meet household expenditure excludes children from poor households from the opportunity to develop to their full potential. Households most affected by poverty are generally headed by a single parent, most often the mother, when the father has abandoned the family.

Multiple policies dictate strategies to increase economic development within the country but are not detailed here in order to focus on policies specifically relating to children and education. For further reference, the key documents used to guide economic and social development in Tajikistan include, the NDS for the period to 2015; the Republic of Tajikistan’s Poverty Reduction Strategy; LSIS, and the UNDAF 2010-2015.

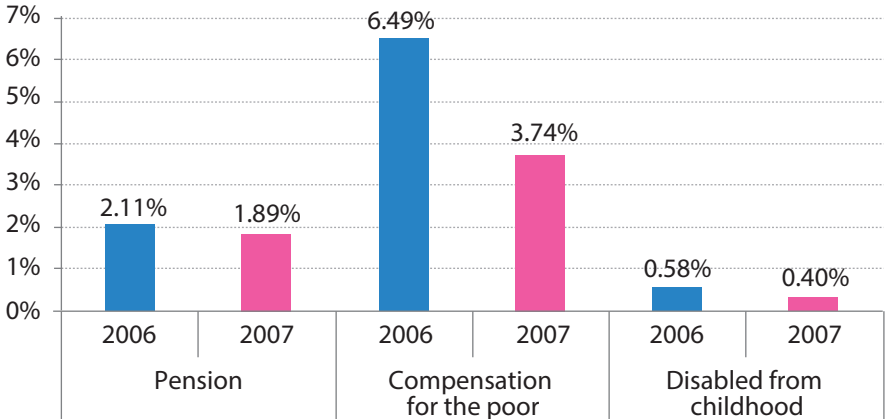
4.3.2) *Social protection payments*

Tajikistan is a very poor country. The TLSS 2009 finds that 46.7 per cent of the population fell below the poverty line of 162 Somoni per month (approximately US\$36) and more than 17 per cent of the population fell below the extreme poverty line. The government budget for social assistance in 2009 was 0.2 per cent of GDP (excluding social pensions, and 0.5 per cent including these). This was the lowest percentage in the European and Central Asian member countries of the WB. For comparison purposes, Hungary apportions 17 times the amount (as a percentage of GDP) to

social assistance. The major allocation of social protection funds in 2009 was US\$12.22 million on social pensions (paid to poor elderly people who have not contributed to the pension fund); US\$4.87 million for electricity and gas compensation; and US\$2.86 million as compensation to needy families whose children are in school. It should be noted that gas and electricity subsidies were available to households connected to the national grids. The poorest households, who are not connected to national grids, did not receive any subsidy or equivalent.

The Figure 4.1 below shows the relatively low coverage of social benefits in Tajikistan. In response to high poverty rates and inequality, the social protection system remains rather incoherent. Given the lack of data on the majority of programmes, it is unwise to draw conclusions on the development of coverage and expenditure over time.

Figure 4.1 Coverage of select social benefits as a percentage of total population



(Source: *Tajikistan’s Country Snapshot, UNICEF RO CEECIS, 2011*)

The amount of money available for social protection is low and as a result, demonstrates little impact for the recipients. The WB 2009 report concludes that social assistance programmes in Tajikistan only lowered the number of households in poverty by 0.3 per cent. This was largely because social assistance benefits were very small. A mechanism for ensuring that assistance was directed to the poorest households was developed, however, to improve allocation of this small budget. In 2009, only 23 per cent of households in the lowest wealth quintile received social assistance. The problem is further exacerbated by the lack of a formal mechanism and transparency, resulting in donors unwilling to invest in social benefits. For implementation, it would be necessary to look at the trade-offs between benefit size and coverage, particularly given high rates of child poverty.

Table 4.1 shows a summary of the programmes and coverage.

Table 4.1 Summary of social protection programmes and allocation

Title of the Programme	Type	Targeting	Objectives	Existing Coverage
Social pension	Social assistance; non-contributory; in cash; means-tested	Children and families with children: orphans, parents with disabilities, large families (with more than 5 children), unemployed parents, single parents, poor families	Social security and smoothing consumption	In 2007, 15,319 children with disabilities up to 18 years old. Of that number, 238 are orphans
Children's allowance: birth grants and childcare benefits	Social insurance and social assistance; contributory and non-contributory; in cash	Contributors and needy people	Social security and smoothing consumption	Birth grants beneficiaries: 8,530 in 2006 Childcare benefits beneficiaries: 46,375 in 2006
Compensation for the poor	Social assistance; non-contributory; in cash; means-tested	Poor people	Poverty relief	Beneficiaries of social assistance benefits: 407,398 in 2006, 251,800 in 2007, and 190,524 in 2012
Disabilities from childhood		People with disabilities		Beneficiaries of social assistance benefits: 36,965 in 2006, 27,129 in 2007, 24,013 in 2010, and 30,133 in 2011

(Source: *Tajikistan's Country Snapshot, UNICEF RO CEECIS, 2011, UNICEF's TransMonEE 2012 Database, and the data from the MLSP.*)

The process of application for social assistance requires families to apply at the jamoat (administration below district) office in person. The requirement to apply in person makes the process difficult for people in isolated areas. The selection process for eligibility lacks transparency, with out-of-date lists of eligible families: payments made to households that are not poor, and many obviously poor eligible families excluded. Clearly, there are problems with fair selection and distribution of funds to the needy.

4.3.3) Payments to promote school participation

The WB 2009 report indicates that a programme was developed in the early 2000s to provide cash payments to poor families as an incentive for children to attend school. This targeted the poorest 15 per cent of households with children of compulsory school age. In 2009, payments of \$2.86M were made under this programme.

The programme provided 40 Somoni per year for each child in school (for up to three children). This was paid in two six-monthly payments to families. At the current exchange rate, this is only US\$8.50 per year and is equivalent to approximately 30 per cent of the annual direct schooling costs for a family. One of the problems with this programme is that the MoF transferred funds to the districts as part of a block grant, along with other social protection payments, resulting in

unclear division of payments. As a result, districts could divert funds away from the intended purpose.

Local school parent-teacher associations (PTA) have most of the authority for selecting programme beneficiaries. According to the WB report, verification processes have not been in place to determine that benefits are allocated and paid fairly. The system has had potential for abuse.

The WB concluded that US\$8.50 per year is too small to influence school attendance, and the fact that it is necessary in some cases for children to work in order to provide the household with sufficient income indicates that the programme is not effective.

The ILO–IPEC Rapid Assessment on Child Labour (2005) reports that most children of those interviewed (69 per cent) earned up to 5 Somoni (US\$1.61) per day; 11 per cent earned between 5 and 10 Somoni (US\$1.61 - US\$3.22), 7 per cent between 10 and 20 Somoni (US\$3.22 - US\$6.44) per day, and 2 per cent earned over 20 Somoni (US\$6.44) per day. Children were asked how important they thought their earnings were for the household, and 77.2 per cent responded that their earnings were “substantial”, while 7.2 per cent of respondents said that their earnings formed the basis of the family budget. Only 3.4 per cent said that their earnings were not significant for the family budget. Clearly, even at the lower end of the earnings scale, the government scheme falls way short of compensating families for the income lost if a child is in school and not working.

In-kind transfers for encouraging girls to stay in school have been considered. Grogan, 2009, reports on the effects of a WFP initiative aimed at secondary school girls. The programme provided a monthly ration of a large sack of flour, pulses and cooking oil, conditional on reasonable school attendance. This began in 2001 and expanded to cover all secondary-school-aged girls in six districts of the country. It was found that the programme increased the enrolment of 16- and 17-year-old girls (non-compulsory education) by approximately 26 per cent, relative to boys and to girls in other districts without the programme.

In conclusion, high levels of poverty characterize Tajikistan. Around half of the population is poor, which constitutes an extremely high percentage. Data from 2006 show that social assistance benefits targeted only approximately 15 per cent of the people up to the age of 23. Considering that approximately half of the population is below the national poverty line and that young people are vulnerable, the social protection schemes were not effective in alleviating poverty and promoting school enrolment.

4.3.4) Affordability of schooling

School affordability is a key link in the relationship between poverty and education. The Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan states in Article 41 that compulsory education is provided free of charge. However, there are significant informal and formal costs associated with attending school. There are no policies that directly address informal school costs, especially the costs associated with corruption in education. Section 3.3.2 expanded on the associated costs to education in Tajikistan for households.

4.3.5) Strategies towards the elimination of child labour

For reasons of economic necessity and enabled by cultural acceptance, many children in Tajikistan are engaged in some form of labour. For some children, this may be seasonal work (for example at cotton harvest time), and for others, regular or full-time work. In terms of strategies and policies against child labour, Tajikistan is party to the CRC and has ratified ILO Convention 182 on The Elimination of The Worst Forms of Child Labour as well as ILO Convention 138 on

Minimum Age for Admission to Employment. In 2006, the president also banned mobilization of children for cotton picking. Whilst legislation in Tajikistan addresses child labour, enforcement of laws and monitoring are areas of concern.

The ILO tackles child labour in the first priority of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme for 2011-2013. The role of the ILO in terms of preventing child labour is that of supporting national institutions, with a strong focus on capacity-building. Outcome 1.3 of the Programme – increased capacity of the government and social partners to fight the worst forms of child labour is supported by:

- Preventive and promotional activities – awareness-raising, prevention, rehabilitation and re-integration of children;
- Setting up a child labour monitoring system; and
- Provisions for a policy/programme/plan to eliminate the worst forms of child labour.

At this stage, success and outcomes are not known, and this may be reviewed in future studies.

4.4) Supply-side strategies and policies

Tajikistan has made great strides in the provision of schooling in the last decade. The NSED 2020 put a high priority on expanding access to quality compulsory education. The strategy document acknowledges concerns, challenges, and risks that face the education sector and sets out to rectify some of the shortfalls through the overarching goal of NSED 2020: “creating conditions to ensure functional and effective provision of educational services and access to appropriate quality education for everyone.”

It is significant to note for this study that attention to equality in education is included in both of the NSED 2015 and the NSED 2020. Both documents emphasize children with disabilities, orphans, children from poor families, rural children and children with limited opportunities. The emphasis on equality of these groups in national strategies provides an important foundation for serving them.

Despite the rhetoric, the needs across all groups of children have been so great that few resources have been specifically allocated to marginalized groups. The LSIS targets this issue stating that the expenditure in education, as a percentage of GDP is increasing on a yearly basis, “it is not sufficient when compared to [the sector’s] requirements” and, aims to ensure equal access for all children including “children from poor families and children with limited opportunities.”

In the sections that follow, policies and strategies designed to address the expansion of the education system, the additional year of primary education, infrastructural changes, curriculum development and teacher training are discussed. Special emphasis is placed on the cases of children with disabilities, children in remote areas, and children living and working on the streets, as they are specific populations affected by supply factors in education.

The goals of the NSED 2015 and NSED 2020 have been heavily supported by the GPE. The design of the fund is flexible, such that it can be used to fill major gaps in NSED implementation. The FTI-3 financing provided US\$13.5 million, less than 10 per cent of the requirement. The FTI-3 grant was designed such that 75 per cent of the funds will help to meet two priorities of construction (US\$7.7 million) and school furniture/equipment (US\$2.6 million). GPE-4 funds (US\$16.2 million) will be utilised to complement other donor assistance, for access to international expertise, improvement of the equality of education both at primary and secondary levels; promote inclusive education; support construction and rehabilitation of schools; and promote capacity development.

FTI/GPE funds are also used to provide resources to enable the introduction of the EMIS, which helps improve strategic planning, policy development and analysis, and monitoring and evaluation. Further details on FTI/GPE support to the implementation of national education programmes are provided in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Summary of GPE fund allocation

Key areas of support	Key accomplishments		Expected accomplishments	Planned activities
	FTI-1 (PMU) (USD 9.2 mln; 2006/2007	FTI-2 (PMU&MOE) (USD 9.2 mln.; 2008/2009	FTI-3 (MOE) (USD 13.5 mln.; 2010/2012 (on-going)	GPE-4 (MOE) (USD 16.2 mln.; 2013/2016) Indicative figures
Civil works	~USD 3.2 Construction/ rehabilitation of 237 classes in 27 schools, benefiting 14,380 students (nationwide except GBO); 1 rayon edu- cation department (RED), and RIITT ¹ building.	~ USD 4.2 Construc- tion/rehabilitation of 21 schools (230 classrooms) benefi- ting 9,640 students and 1 RED (nation- wide)	USD 7.5 mln. Con- struction/rehabilita- tion of 28 schools (280 classrooms) benefiting approx. 13,000 students (Sugd and RRS regions), 2 REDs, and rehabilitation of RIITT dormitory	USD 7.0mln Construction/ rehabilitation of 30 schools (240 classrooms) benefi- ting approx. 7,900 students; USD 0.6 mlnTAfor CWs design and monitoring. (com- ponent 4.5)
Furniture, equip- ment incl. IT, and visual aids for schools and educa- tion institutions (incl. distribution)	~ USD 2.4 mln	~ USD 1.9 mln.	~USD 2.5 mln	USD 1.0 mln School furniture provision (compo- nent 3.2)
Curriculum mod- ernization	Curriculum for key subjects for G5 is updated	Functional Review of the curriculum development system	-	Revision of stand- ards and curriculum (component 2)
Textbooks and teaching-learning materials publica- tion for general education (grades 1-11)	Publication of 13 textbooks in 873,500 copies	Publication of 14 textbooks in 790,000 copies	Provision of sup- plementary read- ing materials for primary grades to 1,000 schools (26% of schools in the country)	USD 1.18mln Provision of Teaching-Learning Materials (TLMs) for primary grades (component 2)
In-service training of pedagogical and managerial person- nel INSET ² system reform	Training of 333 school directors in school management and 3,122 teach- ers and mentors in active learning techniques -	Training of 100 school directors in school management and 620 teach- ers and mentors in active learning techniques INSET delivery sys- tem review	Training of approx. 800 school directors in school manage- ment and 650 men- tors in supporting teachers to improve teaching-learning practices; INSET programmes review	Expansion of training in school management and pedagogical leadership to 1,900 school directors and 450 kindergartens principals (financial management only); training of 2,600 primary grades teachers (compo- nent 4.2)

Key areas of support	Key accomplishments		Expected accomplishments	Planned activities
Capacity building of education personnel on per capita financing	Scaling up of PCF to additional 12 districts, leading to more efficient and transparent resource use	Scaling up of PCF to additional 24 districts, yielding more efficient and transparent resource use.	Scaling up of PCF to final 25 districts and consolidating reform nationwide	In general education, PCF evaluation and light support to its national implementation. In pre-school, PCF extension to state kindergartens (component 4.3)
Fiduciary and management capacity strengthening in the system.	Fiduciary system acceptable to the Bank was established in the MOE enabling the latter to implement externally funded operations; Fiduciary Capacity Strengthening Action Plan Phase -1 is fully implemented	Functional Review of the MOE; professional development plans for education staff; strengthened fiduciary capacity in the sector, partial implementation of the Fiduciary Capacity Strengthening Action Plan Phase -2.	Management capacity building; provision of technical assistance in strategic planning, policy analysis and monitoring; fiduciary capacity building	Continuation (component 4.1)
Education Management Information System (EMIS)	-	Nation-wide operationalization of first phase of EMIS; introduction of second phase; provision of IT equipment to rayons, oblasts and MOE, along with basic IT training to relevant staff at all levels	Nation-wide operationalisation of second phase of EMIS	EMIS expansion to other levels of education: pre-school, primary VET, and higher education
Improve enrolment and attendance study	-	-	Schools transportation study	-
Pre-school access and quality	-	-	-	Analysis of pre-school system, evaluation of the ECE models and expansion of the latter: teacher training, TLMs and furniture provision.
Inclusiveness	-	-	-	Rehabilitation of schools for accessibility; provision of learning materials and teaching aids to support inclusive education.

^a RIITT – Republican Institute for In-Service Teacher Training.

^b INSET – In-Service Training

4.4.1) *Adding a year of primary education*

The expansion of primary education by an additional year starting from 2020 is the most significant policy change recently undertaken by the MoE affecting out-of-school children. The MoE announced that children will begin entering school at 6 years old. The explicit purpose is to provide better early childhood educational opportunities for all children, especially the disadvantaged. In view of the high participation rates at the primary level, this is an excellent way to increase coverage of education for most children.

Implementation of the change to compulsory schooling is difficult to realise and highlights deficiencies in management at the MoE. The plan was originally announced in 2010 to begin phased implementation in 2011. The overall goal was stated as increasing compulsory education to 10 years to better match international standards. Thus the first phase of implementation was to require all children to attend until Grade 10, but no additional schooling for upper levels was planned, thus upper-secondary would have been only 1 year. The next phase was to then accept 6-year-old children into the new programme in 2014 and to add a twelfth year of education. The process and dates of implementation have been revised several times, with 2020 estimated as the date of implementation. One of the key factors delaying implementation is a need for further financial and operational planning.

4.4.2) *Strategies for development of infrastructure*

In order to deal with the issues linked to the poor quality of the physical infrastructure of schools and education institutions in Tajikistan, the NSED 2020 sets out the objective to develop the infrastructure in educational institutes, including the following actions by 2015:

- Facilitate major repairs, installation of sanitary and hygiene equipment and water supply systems in preschool institutions;
- Create new student places for general education, sanitary conditions (heating, water, sewage, catering equipment) and supply with school furniture and school
- Reconstruction and renovation of initial vocational education institutions in accordance with territorial distribution of production, labor force, and labor market needs;
- Create resource centres of modern technologies in the initial vocational and secondary vocational systems to improve effectiveness;

Other documents such as the NDS, the PRSP, the LSIS, and the UNDAF also acknowledge the legacy of years of under-investment and support measures in this area of intervention.

4.4.3) *Strategies for curriculum development*

The quality of education was cited as one of the reasons why some children were out of school. Findings from the study on demand-side issues as to why girls drop out indicate that some parents think that there is no reason to send girls to school when nothing is learned. Comments from the 2011 Lowicki-Zucca report point to similar links between out-of-school children and the quality of education. Therefore, the impact of education quality on school dropouts in Tajikistan should be tested through further research.

The NSED 2020 places high priority on establishing standards and curricula, through a revision of state standards for general education school, primary, secondary and higher professional education is planned. The proposed new curriculum will be moving from knowledge-based to competency-based, with an integration of Life Skills Based Education throughout. At the pre-primary level,

the National Early Learning Development Standards have been set and adopted and the draft Early Childhood Education curriculum is expected to be finalised and adopted by the end of 2013.

A National Centre for the Publication of Textbooks has been established and is responsible for drafting textbooks. In addition, a plan for the publication of textbooks and methodological teaching manuals is being worked out. This plan will be needs-based, with special attention paid to the issue of language of instruction.

Finally, the NSED 2020 states that education should be more relevant to the demands of the market in order to contribute to the economic growth and development of the country. This is emphasized through the development of vocational training programmes. Although the vocational plans of the NSED 2020 are for upper-secondary levels, it may promote higher attendance at the compulsory level, based on the incentive to enter professional training. As stated above, many citizens fail to see the relevance of education because of its poor links with the job market. Improving these links may have a residual effect of raising attendance at the compulsory level, although the introduction of vocational training programmes would require sound analysis of the labour market.

4.4.4) Teacher training

The NSED 2020 recognizes the need to update teacher education strategies both at the pre and in-service training levels and education workforce policies. The strategy documents calls for a revision of pre-service teacher training revising the training programme and an expansion of training institutes at the regional level.

The NSED 2020 states that the most important component of modernizing the education system is solving staffing problems and improving the socio-economic status of education workers, primarily teachers. As described above, currently, there are personnel shortages, insufficiently qualified staff and an increasing demand for teachers, which is due to population growth, and, therefore, an increasing number of school children.

In order to achieve these, the NSED 2020 identifies that the following will be required:

- Introduction of bachelor's programmes for teacher training for primary and general schools and of a master's programme for teachers in senior secondary schools;
- Reorganization the system of advanced professional training for teachers;
- Reorganization of the system of pedagogical colleges and higher education institutions; and,
- Encouraging universities to offer teacher training programmes.

The NSED 2020 recognizes that professional administrators will be required in the education sector, whom will also require specialized training. There are plans to invite specialists from overseas to work in universities and to expand participation in international education programmes. Advanced training of teachers will be conducted in scientific institutes, and overseas, and will focus on technology.

For restructuring the system of advanced training and retraining of both teachers and administrative staff, the following will be required:

- Creation of appropriate conditions for the development of basic and secondary specialized vocational education, focusing on innovation and improvements in production technologies; and,
- Raising of social and economic status of professional school workers.

By 2020, the goal of advanced teacher and administrative staff training is to have the following characteristics:

widely implemented system of advanced training, consisting of organizations of supplementary professional education system, establishments of secondary and higher specialized professional education with facilities where advanced training programmes may be implemented, as well as other organizations, including non-governmental. Educational institutions, through the Internet, will have permanent access to [methodical] materials for teachers and electronic educational resources for professional growth. Advanced training programmes will be built on a modular and competency-based approach. A Credit-modular system of advanced training will be introduced, providing teachers with a choice of training programmes, meeting the needs of territories and educational institutions and improving the effectiveness of use of budgetary funds;

advanced training will be attached to the certification procedure for teaching personnel and will be conducted on a regular basis, not less than once every three years, in order to satisfy the needs of updating the teaching arsenal with new educational technologies and solving education development tasks;

advanced training programmes will be able to use ICT technologies and distance learning methods. Staff training for a professional school will be conducted at leading enterprises of the Republic and overseas universities.

(Source: The Ministry of Education, *National Strategy for Education Development of the Republic of Tajikistan 2020*)

The GPE funds are used to ensure wider coverage for methodological support for teachers and school directors training in areas of reform, in particular, the introduction of child-centred teaching and learning techniques and of autonomous school management. Under FTI-1, 333 school directors were trained in school management, and 3,122 teachers and mentors received training in active learning techniques. Under FTI-2, 100 school directors were trained in school management, and 620 teachers and mentors received training in active learning techniques. The FTI-3 (2010/2011) is providing training for approximately 600 school directors and 650 mentors in supporting teachers to improve teaching and learning practices, and for developing policy to reform the in-service training and support system. Further training of teachers and assistance to the in-service teacher training programme will be supported by GPE-4.

With regard to teacher education, ensuring that education is relevant to labour market needs in order for it to contribute to the economic growth and development of the country is a pressing issue. This is covered in Chapter 3.3 of the NSED 2020: Develop the programme on training of specialists in accordance with labour market needs and perspective trends of economic development.

With regard to education workforce policies, staff capacity-building is to be undertaken within the MoE and other bodies at the regional level. This includes human resources development planning and in-service training and retraining for staff. In addition, other documents such as the NDS and the LSIS support measures in this area of intervention.

4.4.5) *Strategies to increase participation in remote areas*

In the NSED 2020, there is specific mention of the educational needs in remote populations. Children in remote populations are specifically mentioned in the document, and some specific strategies are mentioned. For example, “organization in rural areas, involving trips for teachers or a team of specialists to remotely populated areas to conduct lessons with children and consultations for their parents on issues of development and training.”

Transportation is an issue for children in remote locations that is raised in both the NSED 2015 and NSED 2020. According to the NSED 2015, up until 1991, in almost all districts, there were transport facilities for students in central schools maintained by local authorities. Neither the NSED 2015 nor the NSED 2020 outlines specific plans to deal with transportation issues. However, FTI-3 does include funding for a very small pilot study of the cost-efficiency of bussing in two districts. The findings of this study could have an impact on out-of-school children in remote areas if it is found that distance and difficulty in accessing school are the main bottlenecks.

4.4.6) *Increasing education services for children with disabilities*

The lack of school facilities and trained staff that can properly educate children with disabilities is one of the key reasons why so many children with disabilities are out of school. The Republic of Tajikistan Law “on Social Protection of Disabled People in the Republic of Tajikistan” (#675, December 29, 2010) includes a regulatory and legal framework for education, but implementation is uneven. The NSED 2015 includes some mention of children with disabilities, but only the NSED 2020 outlines specific strategies to educate children with special educational needs.

Within the NSED 2015, disability is dealt with under the heading of “children with special needs.” Thus, they are included in Strategic Goal 4 – ensuring equitable access to basic education and merit-based access to other levels of education (see section 3.1.1 above). Children with special needs are defined as children from rural areas, children with disabilities and talented children.

The NSED 2015 signals forthcoming action specifically for young children with disabilities. It mentions plans to develop and implement programmes for the gradual mainstreaming of children with disabilities into regular pre-school institutions and to improve the performance of existing specialized pre-school centres for working with children with disabilities. These plans are more explicitly laid out in the NSED 2020 and are included in the newly adopted Concept on Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities that was passed in the spring of 2011, details of which are discussed below.

Under Chapter 3.3 of the NSED 2020, which deals with providing quality education, a few strategies are outlined for children with disabilities, including:

- Developing a *system of medical-psychological-pedagogical follow up* of children with special educational needs: detection and treatment of children at early pre-school age when intervention is most effective; establishing *early assistance service* for children (0 to 3 years old) and their families; developing *integrated and inclusive forms of education for pre-school children with limited possibilities*; creating sufficient programme-methodological materials, and technical and staffing capacity in institutions involved in education;
- Training and retraining of teachers working in schools for ethnic minorities, as well as surdopedagogists (*sic*) and defectologists (*sic*); and
- Developing the system of professional training and education for children with disabilities.

The recent (2011) adoption by the MoE of a National Concept of Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in the Republic of Tajikistan for the Period of 2011 – 2015 is of greatest potential significance. It aims to create conditions in kindergartens and general schools to ensure rights for children with disabilities and children with limited abilities. The concept paper describes the challenges faced by children with disabilities and describes a number of current initiatives in place to support students’ needs. The concept paper acknowledges the importance of health risk reduction for mothers and health care for infants and children of early age to reduce the prevalence and impact of medical disabilities. The paper also acknowledges the critical problem in Tajikistan of having very few people trained to work with children with disabilities. Those with training are older

workers. Young people are not attracted to the field, with the relevant university courses being substantially under-subscribed. This lack of skilled human resources is an on-going challenge.

The goal of the concept paper is to create a national model for involvement of people with disabilities in educational processes. The approach implies provision of equal opportunities and high-quality education to all students regardless of their sex, social and economic status, ethnic or racial affiliation, geographical location, special educational needs, age and religion. The concept paper recognizes that inclusive education requires access to educational services starting from early childhood.

Section 9 of the concept paper outlines the measures deemed necessary for implementation of inclusive education, including:

- Introducing changes and amendments to relevant legislation;
- Increased financing of educational institutions to allow access;
- Widened coverage of accessible education, especially in rural areas;
- Development of learning materials on inclusive education;
- Establishment of labour market quotas for people with disabilities;
- Provision of professional development to teachers and social workers on inclusive education;
- Conducting public awareness campaigns on inclusive education; and,
- Involvement of civil society in implementation of the concept.

Section 10 of the concept paper outlines the main directions and proposed measures for:

- Improvement of the legislation;
- Introduction of training for various specialists in inclusive education; and
- Formation of appropriate support units in all areas of education.

The paper outlines specific initiatives proposed for the first stage (2011-2015) and for the second stage (2016-2020). Given the clear link between having a disability and being out of school, such measures are important if overall educational participation and attainment rates in Tajikistan are to be increased. However, the concept paper is not specific about approaches to implementation. At the time of writing, it is not known what processes are in place to secure the funds, expertise and political commitment necessary to implement such ideas and which should be followed up as the next steps. This initiative will not only help children with disabilities, it will also help all children in their understanding of differences.

4.4.7) Education programmes for children living and working on the streets

The NSED 2015 does not address policies specifically dealing with children living and working on the streets. The NSED 2020 mentions the details of the report of the Strategic Research Centre under the President of Tajikistan, citing that 52.4 per cent of children living and working on the streets are out of school.

Chapter 3.1 of the NSED 2020 includes a section “supplementary education”. The objectives of supplementary education include:

- Prevention of deviant activities of children and teenagers;
- Strengthening of mental and physical health of children;
- Developing individuality, communication skills and talents; and
- Correction of psychophysical and mental development of children with special needs.

Interviews with officials at the MoE and with UNICEF colleagues indicate that the former, Soviet system of supplementary education, which was mainly for the Pioneers (the Soviet children's group), were being revised and restructured to serve at-risk populations such as children in contact with the law. This was specifically there is a lack of funding to construct new centres and the infrastructure of the old centres remain in many districts.

Multiple obstacles, however, are listed as barriers to implementation of this strategy in the interviews. First, the former pioneer centres are reportedly in a state of disrepair because they have been neglected for many years. Second, the original pioneer programme was meant to serve the 'gifted' or talented children. As with schools in general, teachers are not trained to work with children with disabilities or more at-risk children. These key obstacles have yet to be overcome for effective implementation of supplementary education.

4.5) Management and governance of education

Multiple planning documents and strategies outline difficulties in the management of the educational system. The NSED 2020 highlights the issue of weak and outdated management capacities, which is echoed in the LSIS (which was developed around the same time period).

The NSED 2020 indicates growth in management capacity. The NSED 2020 also lists a multitude of management changes that the government has made. For example, new divisions were established within the structure of the MoE, such as departments of: analysis and development of education system reforms; planning management; budget administration and planning in the area of education; international relations department; investment projects section; and an EMIS division.

Other organizations are established within the educational system in order to implement government policy, for example, the Academy of Education of Tajikistan, which is a Republican institute for advanced training and re-training of education sector employees; the Institute of Education Development, which provides state supervisory services for education; the Republican Training and Methodical Centre, which is a centre for ICT; the Republican Centre for Out of school Curriculum; the State Centre for International Programmes; and the National Educational Testing Centre.

There are at least two recent successes in the management of education that affect out-of-school children. One is the development of the EMIS, and the other is PCF. Information about EMIS is reviewed here, and the PCF programme is reviewed under section 4.6.

Discussion of establishing the EMIS began as early as 2002. In a UNESCO document outlining the need for educational management and establishment of the EMIS, the benefits of establishing an EMIS for many marginalized populations of out-of-school children are outlined. Plans for establishing the EMIS are included in NSED 2015 under Objective 1.6:

Create the EMIS in the MoE. With regard to Objective 1.6, efforts are to be made to ensure advanced computer technologies are introduced. This is also the basis for an incentive to encourage dialogue between the MoE, parents, NGOs and communities. Other activities include the development of indicators for monitoring and evaluation of resources and management performance. This will be accompanied by a public relations programme designed to raise public awareness.

The development of the EMIS has been strongly supported by the ADB and WB, and supported by the GPE. Under FTI-2, the nationwide implementation of the first phase of the EMIS was achieved, and the second phase commenced. This involved the provision of IT equipment to rayons, oblasts and the MoE, along with IT training to relevant staff at all levels. Under FTI-3, the target is full operation of the EMIS nationwide. GPE-4 will support a review and expansion of

EMIS to three sectors: pre-primary, vocational education, and higher education while providing for trainings on software usage, data entry and forwarding, and reporting.

The inability to track school attendance and out-of-school children is a significant barrier to monitoring out-of-school children, a key component for enforcing compulsory schooling.

4.6) Budgeting and financing of education

Tajikistan has increased the amount of money that is allocated to education in terms of percentage of GDP, percentage of overall government budget, and in real terms over the past several years. This demonstrates a strong commitment to the education sector. As with governance, however, there remain problems and inefficiencies in the distribution of these funds, which affect out-of-school children.

In fact, the establishment of countrywide PCF for compulsory education has been implemented in Tajikistan since 2005. The FTI-3 appraisal refers to PCF as “the central policy measure to meet the sector’s objective of improved efficiency in the use of resources.”

The objectives of the PCF, according to MoE were as follows:

- Efficient and effective use of budget resources;
- Fair and equitable distribution of budget resources, by districts;
- A more systemised approach for general secondary education planning and management;
- Improvement of the quality of education.

The MoE has raised issues with the current PCF model. At present, the formula does not allow for regional differences and, as a result, largely benefits urban schools with higher school populations than rural areas where there is low population density. The MoE is in the process of revising the formula and its coefficients to better address inequalities and inequities that arose during the implementation of PCF for the 2013 – 2014 school year.

4.7) Overarching analysis

The policy framework supporting education for out-of-school children, in general, is increasing; however, there is room for further development and at present, implementation is weak.

Compulsory education is guaranteed for all children, free of charge under Article 41 of the constitution. The government has made strides forward in passing policies and strategies aimed at tackling socio-cultural barriers to school attendance. The recently passed “Law on Parents’ Responsibilities Concerning the Upbringing of Children” addresses many socio-cultural issues, but legislating cultural change is difficult.

Increasing girls’ enrolment in school is another focus of policy and strategy. The NSED 2015 contains basic strategies to have media campaigns promoting girls’ education, and the proposed Centre for Gender Pedagogies was established. The NSED 2020 has more strategies, but they specifically target girls of post-compulsory school age. UNICEF has employed several socio-cultural measures in its projects for girls’ education in support of the MoE that could be templates for national strategies.

Economic, demand-side issues have not been adequately addressed. The system of compensation and support for families (with children) living below the poverty line remains limited, under-

funded, inefficient, and it lacks data to monitor effectiveness in reducing poverty and vulnerabilities. Little has been done to increase the affordability of education. Informal costs and corruption form part of the costs that families have to bear, but no policy even acknowledges that corruption exists and needs to be eradicated to increase participation in the education system.

There has been steady improvement in the supply of education. Supported by FTI/GPE grants, the number of classrooms and school buildings has increased. Policy addresses the needs to improve the quality of schooling through curriculum improvement and teacher training. There are also plans to increase the supply of schooling for children in remote areas, including increasing the number of teachers and piloting projects that provide transportation to school.

Initial steps have been taken to address issues of children living and working on the streets and children with disabilities through different programming, including through the utilisation of the former pioneer centres. However, there are still significant barriers to overcome in order to realize this goal.

The recent adoption of The National Concept of Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in the Republic of Tajikistan for the Period of 2011 – 2015 indicates positive changes for children with disabilities.

Although there have been multiple improvements in the management and financing of education, there is room for improvement, which is laid out in the NSED 2020 and supported by FTI/GPE funds. Two significant changes that may prove to reduce out-of-school children are the expansion of the EMIS and the introduction of PCF. However, further improvement is necessary to enable close monitoring of children's attendance at school, which will provide a clearer picture of children with poor daily attendance who may be at risk of dropping out. PCF increases the incentive for a school to have many students. The residual effect could be that local administrators may be more vigilant in seeking out-of-school children and bringing them back into schools.

Without dedicated focus, it is difficult to effect sustainable change. Often the most disadvantaged and marginalized of children, out-of-school children are more likely to continue to 'fall through the cracks' until they are the central focus of a dedicated and costed strategy/policy backed up by implementation and reporting plans.

5) Conclusions and recommendations

5.1) Conclusions

In drawing together the conclusions reached through the research undertaken on out-of-school children in Tajikistan, the task is at once simple and complex. Analyses of the profiles of out-of-school children point to the most marginalized in society.

The majority (91 per cent) of children of pre-primary age (6 year olds) are excluded from early childhood development and education opportunities. This is principally due to the lack of pre-primary education facilities nationwide, but there are also other factors identified which affect children's participation, including socio-cultural and economic demands of households.

At the primary level, enrolment rates are over 95 per cent and similar rates of children transition to Grade 5, the first year of lower-secondary education. There are, however, disadvantaged children who fail to access education or fail to participate in education on a regular basis. Children who have low enrolment rates are two main groups: children with disabilities and children living and working on the streets.

In terms of gross numbers, girls tend to be the largest group of children who access education but drop-out at a disproportionate rate and have the highest rates of irregular attendance. But, other populations at risk of dropping out include:

- Children engaged in labour;
- Children with migrant parents (with a special risk where families are abandoned);
- Children in conflict with the law;
- Children in institutions;
- Children in remote areas.

The interwoven combination of factors that increase a child's chance of being out of school in Tajikistan are quite complex. Demand-side factors (socio-cultural and economic) and supply-side factors are analysed in this study.

Girls are disadvantaged in maintaining continuous education by traditional cultural norms. High levels of stigmatization hinder children with disabilities from accessing education at all.

Financing limitations in the education sector contribute to the challenge. Despite large increases in GDP, general economic development is low in Tajikistan, and many families remain in poverty. Remittances from migrant workers contribute to the overall economy. Even minor formal and informal costs to education become significant barriers to children accessing education.

Policies that affect out-of-school children cut across multiple government sectors and ministries. A strong foundation has been laid for children's education in the country's constitution, which provides for compulsory education, at the primary and lower-secondary levels, free for all children aged 6 to 15. However, pre-primary education remains non-compulsory.

The recent *Law on Parents' Responsibilities Concerning the Upbringing of Children* addresses many socio-cultural issues relating to out-of-school children. The policy aims to strengthen the responsibility of parents and increase general awareness and access to education.

Still, much work needs to be done on developing policies that address economic, demand-side issues. While basic economic development has been a major focus of the government, there are no policies that address the informal and corruption costs associated with schooling. Management and financing of education still need strengthening, despite recent improvements. The on-going transition to better information management through EMIS and revisions to PCF may improve the situation of out-of-school children.

Policy work and funding strategies have increased the number of classrooms and school buildings in recent years. In addition, policies emphasize teacher training, recruitment, and retention. Still, disparities arise between rural and urban education settings, remote areas, and general access for children with disabilities.

This complex situation necessitates the implementation of interwoven, child-centred solutions. Within the current economic and social realities of Tajikistan, this appears to be challenging. Both policy-level initiatives and bottom-up work are required to respond to both demand and supply-side issues.

5.2) General recommendations

The following are recommendations, based on the findings of the study. The recommendations aim to strengthen and advance an enabling environment for addressing issues facing out-of-school children through policy and strategy formulation and implementation, and through regular monitoring.

Recommendation 1: Improve EMIS for strengthened data collection, to identify and monitor out-of-school children

EMIS is the current model for data collection on key indicators in the education sector. But, at present, EMIS only monitors the enrolment without a mechanism to track progress. To that end, it is recommended that EMIS include a module to measure attendance and completion rates of children in schools. This data would serve to highlight irregular attendance and those at risk of dropping out of the education system.

The capacity of EMIS should be further enhanced to seek out those excluded from the education system. The current EMIS does not have a mechanism by which to identify and capture the characteristics and location of out-of-school children. This critical data gap needs to be filled in order to ensure that the most marginalized in society are identified and then provided for through specific programming.

EMIS is composed of various modules which track different indicators: infrastructure; teachers; students. A module, or modules, is recommended to be developed and included at the pre-primary, vocational, and higher education levels to track key education indicators at these levels. In addition, tracking of indicators on attendance and out-of-school children is recommended. In doing so, a more comprehensive overview of the Tajikistan education system would be provided.

Furthermore, the capacity of the government and stakeholders needs strengthening in analyzing and utilizing data to promote a pro-equity approach in their interventions. Taking into consideration the identified out-of-school children profiles that necessitate addressing the pockets of disadvantaged population in society, an evidence-based, targeted approach should be further advanced, including education policies and strategies, as well as implementation planning, budgeting, and projections. It is, therefore, essential to build the capacity of the government in managing the data and making best use of its analyses.

Recommendation II: Revision of PCF to address inequities

Consideration should be given to the revision of the per capita financing formula with an aim to increase the number of children who are accessing quality education. At present, the PCF only provides support at the general secondary level. Numerous studies provide evidence for pre-primary education as critical in improving children's development indicator rates in education, health, nutrition, and other sectors. Moreover, the government of Tajikistan and other stakeholders have indicated support for scaling-up access to quality pre-school education. Therefore, it is recommended that the government provide per-capita financing for pre-school education, which would decrease the financial burden on families and communities while increasing access.

The present PCF formula exacerbates discrepancies between urban and rural education settings. Schools in urban centres tend to have larger populations, generating more income as per the PCF. But schools in low-density areas tend to be disadvantaged by the PCF. It is recommended that the PCF formula be revised to include coefficients for rural and / or mountainous regions where there are fewer children.

To address the concern of children with disabilities, which in terms of percentage amount to the largest group of children out-of-school, the PCF should be revised. Teachers who work in specialised boarding schools and those who provide home schooling to children with disabilities are paid a higher salary than regular teachers. It is recommended that teachers who integrate children with disabilities in mainstream schools are also offered additional compensation to encourage inclusive education.

Recommendation III: Improve access to general secondary education

Access to education remains an issue within Tajikistan. The MOE estimates that out of 3,747 schools in the country, 18% are in emergency conditions (with majority of them being unsafe) and 3.5% are situated in railway cars and private homes. In addition, 30% of schools require major rehabilitation work (related to roof and floor replacement). Many of these facilities lack lighting, heating, water and basic sanitation. Sanitary facilities not meeting sanitation requirements are often a source for the spread of infectious diseases.

Further, many schools are either closed or poorly attended by students and teachers during the winter period (which lasts up to 5 months in the mountainous areas). As a result, the curriculum cannot be fully provided in such schools. The stock of school furniture is also old, much of it dating from the Soviet period. The dire state of schools is the result of damage caused during the severe civil war in the mid-90s. It is also the result of the chronic underinvestment that afflicted the sector for much of the 1990s and early 2000s when the economy collapsed in the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

It is recommended that further attention and resources be given to upgrading the general infrastructure in the education sector to ensure that all children have access to education.

Recommendation IV: Improve quality of general secondary education

The quality of education should also be addressed. In doing so, students will be more engaged in their learning, less likely to drop out of school, and increase their attendance and participation rates.

For one, teacher training both at the pre and in service levels should be reviewed and adapted to promote inclusive, child-centred pedagogy. Teachers should have an opportunity to develop and

practice new teaching techniques that develop higher level, critical thinking skills amongst their pupils and become facilitators of learning rather than imparters of knowledge.

The standards and curriculum of general secondary education should continue to be revised and updated to meet with international standards and address emerging trends in pedagogy. And, in conjunction, textbooks, teaching, and learning materials should be developed to support the new curriculum, ensuring gender sensitive and gender equity within the materials. Special consideration should be given to the development, production, and distribution of learning and teaching materials for languages for ethnic minorities.

Existing vocational training programmes should be strengthened both in terms of infrastructure as well as in terms of quality of programming offered to meet the needs of the labour market and ensure that future generations are offered viable education that will translate into work force productivity.

Recommendation V: Address the problem of out-of-school children through specific programming

Analysing the different populations of out-of-school children, it is recommended to develop and implement programming that addresses the specific needs of these marginalised children. These programmes should aim to bridge out-of-school children back into the mainstream education system and / or provide sufficient basic education that permits the children to enter into the workforce. Options need to be mapped and analysed prior to the development and implementation of programming, ideally in conjunction with the views of children to ensure long-term success.

In addition, programming needs to be implemented throughout the nation to increase general attendance rates at the general secondary level as well as mitigate the dropout rate.

Pre-school children

Taking into account that the majority of children (91 per cent) do not access pre-school education, with significant disparities in urban-rural and socio-economic status, expansion of pre-school education is an utmost priority for the country.

It is therefore recommended that different alternative early learning models, which are currently supported by UNICEF, in conjunction with other partners, and promoted by MoE be further expanded and fully mainstreamed into the education system. These alternative models are community-based and low cost. The current draft law on Early Childhood Education and Care, expected to be adopted in 2013, would further recognise and systematise these models that would allow for development for increased options for pre-school education.

It is necessary to improve the quality and quantity of training for pre-primary teachers and ensure government funding for pre-primary teachers' salaries, in order to create demand for teachers to pursue and remain in the profession. In order to address the cultural, demand-side factors, district and school level events should be held for awareness-raising on the importance of early learning and development and the necessary involvement of parents, teachers, and community members in contributing to a child's development.

As coverage for pre-school education will remain relatively low in the ensuing years, it is recommended that early learning and development be promoted in the home and community environments through various means. Alternative programming to promote early learning standards and best practices of care should be considered and developed to ensure that all children are afforded the basic underpinnings of early childhood development.

Further, studies indicate that almost one quarter of parents prefer to keep their children at home, the reasons behind this should be examined further in order to have a more comprehensive overview of the barriers behind children accessing pre-primary education and early childhood development opportunities.

Girls

Girls form the largest population of out-of-school children in Tajikistan. The reasons for girls' irregular school attendance and dropout are multi-factored, and therefore, a comprehensive approach would be effective, addressing both demand-side and supply-side issues. Since various successful interventions are already being undertaken to promote girls' education, existing initiatives should be streamlined and scaled up as a targeted package.

A community-based approach should be undertaken to increase awareness of the importance and benefits of girls' education. This is particularly significant for Tajikistan, where cultural factors may equal economic factors as hindrances to girls' education. Better use should be made of PTA mechanisms, and religious leaders should be mobilized in communities to gain support for girls' education. It is important to create a better image of schooling for both boys and girls alike in the community so that girls who attend school will not be ostracized. Mass media, both at national and local levels, should also take an active role in supporting community-based initiatives for girls' education.

Children living and working on the streets

Data collection regarding children living and working on the streets should be improved. The Strategic Research Centre under the President of Tajikistan has estimated the number of children living and working on the streets as over 8,000, with more than half of them out of school. A better record of the background characteristics of these children could aid the development of strategic plans on how to bring them back into, and keep them in the education system. As examples, more information is needed on whether they have parents and homes to return to and whether they are migrants and are literate.

The system of supplementary education should be improved and enhanced. The NSED 2020 lays out plans to begin this work. Since many children living and working on the streets are already out of school, catch-up education (or second chance education) programmes should be considered with an official mechanism to reintegrate those children into the school system upon successful completion of the programme.

Children in conflict with the law

The on-going initiative of the JJAP should be used to strengthen education measures for children in conflict with the law. This project is based on utilising existing Centres for Additional Education at the district level, led by the MoE, with support from the MoJ. It aims to ensure rehabilitation and full integration of children in conflict with the law and at risk in society and is supported by established referral mechanisms for diversion and alternatives. There is scope for further development of wider alternatives in preventing children from being in conflict with the law and ensuring the right to education for children who are in conflict with the law.

Vocational Training

Vocational training is a viable programming option to addressing the needs of out-of-school children. With appropriate input and design of programmes that addresses labour market needs and coupled with general education, vocational training opportunities would make significant strides in addressing the needs of out-of-school children.

Recommendation VI: Promote inclusive education

Improvements should be made to data collection on children with disabilities. Responsibilities for children with disabilities are currently split across multiple ministries, and it is difficult to track their progress through the education system, although this is mandated by law. Since many children with disabilities are excluded from any form of education, it is also essential to establish and implement a system that can capture disaggregated data on those that are not receiving any education.

Government capacity should be enhanced at all levels to provide and advance inclusive environments in and around schools, allowing for the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. This includes both physical (i.e. infrastructure, school supplies and equipment), as well as human resources (i.e. training for teachers and specialists). The adoption of the Concept of Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities by the MoE is an encouraging start to achieving this goal, and its effective implementation needs to be carefully developed and monitored to ensure that the objectives are met.

In promoting inclusive education for children with disabilities, it is essential to ensure linkages and coordination with other relevant ministries, including the MoH and MoLSP. A cross-sectoral coordination mechanism should be established with a clear delineation of responsibilities and division of labour. The Concept on Inclusive Education which was developed and adopted in 2011 needs an implementation plan to realise its objectives.

Tajikistan has yet to sign and ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. There are signs, however, that this issue may soon be placed on the policy agenda. Advocacy efforts should be strengthened to promote government ratification of the convention and its reflection in the existing policy documents of different ministries.

A national communication campaign should also be conducted to raise public awareness of the rights of children with disabilities in order to reduce stigma and discrimination against them. Mass media can have an influential role in changing people's mind-sets through different channels of communication. Teachers, PTA members and community leaders should be sensitized and trained to take active roles in the campaign at school and community levels. It is also important for the campaign to effectively reach out to schoolchildren, so that children themselves will become powerful supporters in promoting inclusive education within classrooms.

All education staff should be encouraged to attend and participate in in-service professional development opportunities geared towards child-centred and inclusive learning practices to be developed and practiced within each mainstream school. New areas of specialty should further be developed for teachers to be able to work with children with disabilities.

School leaders, teachers, parents and children should be made aware of their potential roles in reducing the number of out-of-school children and should be empowered to initiate local initiatives to do so, including to ensure inclusion for children with disabilities.

Recommendation VII: Increase government funding to the education sector

As per the LSIS, to cover the current costs of education by 2015, the government needs to allocate 5.5 per cent of the GDP. As of 2011, the percentage of the GDP allocated to the education sector was only 4.5 per cent.

It is recommended that the government increase its funding to the education sector. In doing so, formal and informal costs to households would decrease and, in turn, increase the participation of children in schooling, particularly those from poorer households.

School costs to families should be further analysed to present a real picture of family expenditures, including informal payments. This analysis would help identify possible solutions to address corruption issues in and around schools and to suggest an overall strategy for reducing school costs.

The government is in the process of piloting a social protection scheme in the form of cash transfers targeting poor families to assess the effects. The scheme is for poverty reduction overall and does not specifically target reducing the number of out-of-school children. It would be worthwhile to include a component in the assessment to test the impact of the scheme on reducing out-of-school children. In the case of a positive correlation, scaling up this scheme should be an effective tool to reduce the number of out-of-school children, particularly those from poor households.

It is also recommended that the government increase the salaries of teachers. In 2013, the government aims to increase salaries by 60 per cent. Such measures will increase teacher retention, encourage new teachers to enter the profession, and lessen migration of teachers to other countries in search for better paying positions. In this vein, students will have a better cadre of qualified teachers and more continuous education in that teachers are not migrating periodically throughout the year.

Recommendation VIII: Build support and commitment

Specialized advocacy efforts should be made to mobilize the government and key stakeholders to create a platform to work together to address out-of-school children. The government, with support from UNICEF, should hold a series of high-level cross-ministerial/sectoral meetings, involving relevant line ministries and other national, local and international partners. The purpose of the meetings is to build a common understanding on the out-of-school children issue and reconfirm the commitment of the government and other partners together. All relevant line ministries should be involved, including MoE, MoLSP, MoH and MoF. National launch of the out-of-school children country study would be a good starting point.

The existing and potential partnerships should also be further strengthened with partners who share the common interest of out-of-school children in the country (for example, USAID – Dropout Prevention project). This should be effective not only to enhance the impact and coverage of the out-of-school children initiative in the country but also help mobilize additional financial resources. Other partnerships and/or collaboration should be also sought within the UNDAF, where UNICEF could possibly collaborate with other United Nations partners to achieve a shared thematic goal (for example, UNHCR on refugees and ILO on working children).

The above initiatives should be further strengthened by a nationwide communication campaign through different communication channels (radio, television, newspapers and other printed materials), which would help build and increase public awareness on the demands for tackling out-of-school children issues. This should link with other relevant on-going initiatives, including the Girls Education project implemented by UNICEF and the MoE.

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For more information:

Visit our Website: www.unicef.tj

Or contact:

United Nations Children's Fund
37/1, Bokhtar st., Dushanbe
Tajikistan, 734025
dushanbe@unicef.org

