

# Regional overview: Arab States



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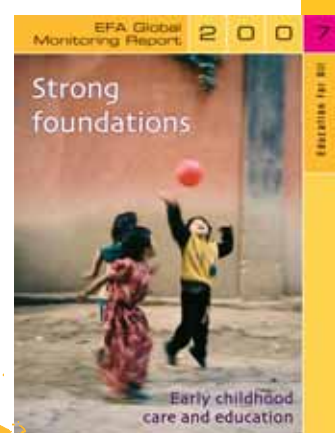
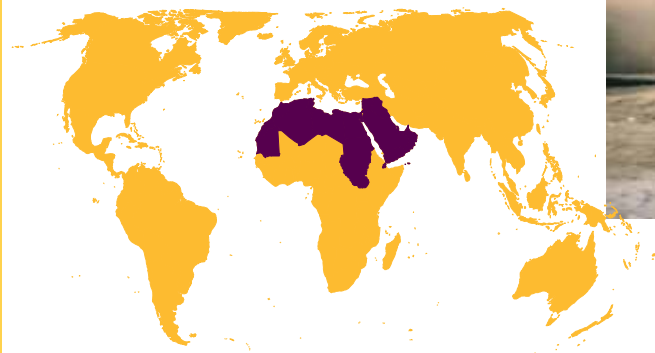
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ED/2007/EFA/MRT/PI/AS/1

# Regional overview: Arab States

EFA remains a challenge in the region<sup>1</sup>. Enrolment in primary education has increased since Dakar – although more slowly than in South and West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa – and there are still more than 6 million children not in school. Poor school progression and completion are concerns in some countries. The rest of the EFA agenda is lagging, in particular with regard to gender parity, education quality, adult literacy and early childhood care and education (ECCE). ECCE, the main theme of the 2007 *EFA Global Monitoring Report*, has the potential to offset disadvantage caused by poverty or marginalization, provided it takes the form of a holistic package that includes nutrition and health along with care and education. But programmes for young children are still few and far between, although several countries are establishing national early childhood policies.



## ECCE: a strong foundation, but participation still low

ECCE, like EFA more generally, is first of all a right as recognized by the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, which focuses on guaranteeing the rights of young children to survive, develop and be protected. Good programmes can significantly enhance young children's well-being in the formative years of childhood and complement the **care** received at home. Yet, despite growing demand for more organized ECCE programmes, linked to increasing migration, urbanization and women's participation in the labour market, millions of children in Arab States still lack access to care programmes, basic immunization, clean water, adequate food, and the early stimulation they need for survival, growth and development.

On average, 65 of every 1,000 children born in recent years will not reach age 5, and child mortality rates are well above 100 per 1,000 live births in Djibouti, Iraq, Mauritania and Sudan.<sup>2</sup> In the majority of Arab States, about 20% or more of children under age 5 suffer from moderate or severe stunting, with negative repercussions on their school performance. Studies show that stunted children (those short for their age) are less likely to enrol in school and more likely to enrol later and to drop out.

### The benefits of ECCE

Taking measures to reduce mortality and morbidity are a first step towards establishing comprehensive care and education programmes for young children. **Education** should be considered an integral dimension of programmes designed to address young children's health and nutrition problems. Good-quality ECCE, while it enhances children's physical well-being, cognitive and language skills and social and emotional development, also contributes to the realization of the other EFA goals by laying the foundations for subsequent education.

Studies in several developing countries point to links between participation in early childhood programmes, primary school enrolment and better results over at least three to four years, particularly for disadvantaged children. The benefits of ECCE

1. This is according to the EFA classification. See the tables for countries in the region.

2. Countries including Egypt, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Syrian Arab Republic have made great strides since 1990, reducing under-5 mortality by around half or more.

are also economic. Analyses in Egypt found a benefit/cost ratio of 3:1, and the benefits could be as high as 5.8:1 if ECCE programmes are targeted to children most at risk.

### Provision for children under 3

Programmes for the youngest children are much less developed than for older ones: education of under-3s tends to be seen as the responsibility of parents, private bodies or non-governmental institutions. Only 35% of the twenty Arab States have programmes for this age group. Information is limited regarding the duration (in hours per day/week) of programmes targeting under-3s. Some are full time; others accommodate children on flexible hours. In Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, for example, programmes for children below age 3 are available for four hours or less per day.

There is a need to develop more comprehensive ECCE programmes for the youngest children, covering not only custodial care but also parent education and children's health needs, physical development and learning potential.

### Provision for children aged 3 and older

Governments play a more active role in providing and supervising programmes for children aged 3 or older. Since the 1970s, the Arab States region has registered a steady increase of enrolment in **pre-primary education**, with an 11% rise between 1999 and 2004. However, due to continuing high population growth, this change in the absolute number was not matched by an increase in the average gross enrolment ratio (GER). Participation in pre-primary education remains low: the regional GER was only 16% in 2004, a mere one percentage point higher than in 1999 (15%).

#### Obstacles to access

**Costs** are a key factor impeding wider participation of children in ECCE programmes. In the Arab States region, private institutions are prominent, accounting for more than three-quarters of total enrolment in the majority of countries. All pre-primary institutions are private in Bahrain, Morocco,<sup>3</sup> Oman and the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, which suggests serious problems of access for society's poorest children.

**Poverty.** While research has shown that children from the poorest backgrounds benefit most from ECCE provision in terms of care, health and education, data indicate that they are also more likely to be excluded from it. Attendance rates in pre-primary programmes are considerably higher for urban children and those from better-off households. The mother's education,<sup>4</sup> possession of a birth certificate and,

to a lesser extent, vaccination records also increase the likelihood of a child's attendance in ECCE programmes.

#### Regional disparities

Considerable regional disparities exist in pre-primary education coverage. Among the countries with 2004 data available, GERs were above 50% in Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates, but under 5% in Algeria, Djibouti, Mauritania and Yemen. In Yemen, where the pre-primary age group is 3 to 5, very few children are enrolled in each year within the age group.

#### Change since 1999

Most of the countries with data in the region have experienced increases in pre-primary GERs since 1999, with rises of seven percentage points or more in Bahrain, Lebanon, Qatar and Tunisia. On the other hand, participation declined by more than eight percentage points in Kuwait, Morocco and the Palestinian Autonomous Territories.

#### Gender disparities

Considerable progress towards gender parity in pre-primary education has occurred in the Arab States, with the average gender parity index (GPI) rising from 0.76 in 1999 to 0.87 in 2004. Even so, gender disparities at pre-primary level are higher in this region than in any other. Disparities are even higher in pre-primary education than at other levels – the opposite of what is observed elsewhere. The gender disparity in pre-primary education is particularly high in Morocco, despite the situation having improved (albeit through a decrease in boys' enrolment rather than any increase in girls' participation).

### ECCE quality issues: too few and poorly trained teachers in some countries

While ECCE programmes are still rare in the region, those that exist often suffer from poor quality. For example, pre-primary pupil/teacher ratios (PTRs) were about 20:1 or more in the majority of the Arab States in 2004. Such overcrowding makes it nearly impossible to provide the individual care and attention required at this age. Although the situation has improved in most countries since 1999 – with PTRs decreasing by more than five percentage points in Djibouti and Qatar – it has worsened in several others, including Sudan, where the ratio was well above 30:1 in 2004.

Another ECCE constraint stems from the poor quality of teaching staff in some countries. Many pre-primary teachers are employed on a contract basis, receive a low salary and have limited or no professional training. Formal entry requirements are often not respected.<sup>5</sup> Teachers at this level receive little training – almost always less than their primary school counterparts. In 2004, the percentage of trained pre-primary teachers was between 10% and 22% in Lebanon, Sudan and Tunisia.

3. In 2002, **Morocco** separated pre-school for 4- and 5-year-olds from the national education system and left it in the hands of the private sector, without regulating fees. The government now focuses on regulations, training and pedagogical innovations (e.g. the curriculum).

4. For example, in **Iraq, Egypt** and northern **Sudan** the difference between the pre-primary attendance rates of urban and rural children are four, eleven and about twenty percentage points, respectively.

5. For example, in **Lebanon**, where the minimum academic qualification required for pre-primary teaching is post-secondary non-tertiary education, only 52% of teachers meet the formal requirement.

In contrast, all teachers in pre-primary had received some pedagogical training in Iraq, Kuwait, Mauritania, Oman and the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, indicating efforts towards achieving good quality of care, health, education and development of young children.

### Some encouraging signs

If children in the Arab States are to enjoy the benefits derived from learning opportunities in early childhood, there is a pressing need to increase access to ECCE programmes and improve their quality. Some promising signs are evident:

- Early childhood is becoming a national priority, with quite ambitious targets in country education plans in Sudan and Tunisia.
- There is high-level political endorsement in Jordan.<sup>6</sup>
- Policies to target vulnerable and disadvantaged children are being implemented in Jordan.<sup>7</sup>

### Improving quality

Governments must ensure that minimum acceptable standards are met for all children. Regulations on quality should apply to all providers, public and private. Most governments regulate ECCE programmes using easy-to-measure structural indicators of quality, such as class size, child/staff ratios, availability of materials and staff training. But equally important, if not more so, are the quality of carer-child relationships, family involvement and responsiveness to cultural and language diversity, and to children with special needs.

#### Recruiting and training ECCE personnel

A key issue in improving the quality of ECCE programmes is how to recruit and retain large numbers of trained personnel. To draw more candidates to the field, some countries are developing flexible entry routes into higher education and teacher training. For example, in the Syrian Arab Republic, students can take early childhood training over the Internet. The Early Childhood Development Virtual University is a training and capacity-building initiative to help meet the need for leadership and development in this field in the Middle East. Five Arab States participated in a one-year graduate programme in 2003.

### Challenging gender stereotypes

Training should help teachers challenge gender stereotypes in their own practice and in curricula. This is particularly important because early childhood is the period when perceptions of what is masculine and what is feminine take

6. The **Jordanian** government has pledged to support the National Plan of Action for Children (2004-13) whose strategy calls for holistic development of the child focusing on five components: securing a healthy life; developing and strengthening capabilities of children; protecting children in difficult circumstances; expanding the role of the media; and monitoring and evaluation. The main objectives of the plan are to increase enrolment of 4-years-olds from 28% to 50% and of 5-years-olds from 47% to 70% by 2013.

7. In the framework of the **Jordanian** National Plan of Action for Children (2004-13), Ministry of Education policy focuses on opening kindergartens in remote and disadvantaged areas, and plans call for a daily meal and warm clothes for disadvantaged children.

hold. Encouraging more men to work in early childhood programmes (women accounted for 95% to 100% of pre-primary teaching staff in almost all Arab States in 2004) can also help challenge assumptions of the woman as sole carer and encourage fathers to be more involved in their children's upbringing.

### Smoothing the transition to primary school

Finally, if ECCE is to prepare children for school in terms of their physical, social and cognitive development, school itself should be ready to welcome them and facilitate the transition to primary education. Possible actions to this end include:

- integrating ECCE more closely with primary school by forging stronger links among the health, care and education components of ECCE;
- assuring continuity in the curriculum;
- engaging parents in school activities;
- assuring professional continuity between the two levels through measures such as joint training, emphasis on active learning approaches and according equal professional status to ECCE and primary school teachers.

### Better coordination through shared vision

In general, ECCE involves multiple sectors, programmes and actors, making coordination a frequent challenge. The involvement of multiple players can bring together agencies with different areas of expertise.<sup>8</sup> It can also lead to friction between ministries.

In a majority of countries, administrative responsibility for early childhood is divided by age group. Since the late 1980s, however, a growing number of countries have designated education as the lead ministry for children from birth. Regardless of who takes the lead, coordination among the institutions and sectors involved is needed. Coordination mechanisms provide a forum for potentially achieving a common vision encompassing resources, standards, regulations, training and staffing.

### Participation in primary education and beyond: expanding, but still far from universal

#### Primary education

There has been progress towards **universal primary education** (UPE) in the Arab States since Dakar, but slower than that in other EFA regions. The number of children enrolled in primary schools rose by 6% between 1999 and 2004, well below the increases in sub-Saharan Africa (27%) and South and West Asia (19%). The increase in primary school participation in the Arab States region mainly reflects

8. In **Jordan**, for instance, the Ministry of Social Development is responsible for parenting education programmes and supervises centre-based child care programmes. The Ministry of Education supervises all pre-schools and provides kindergartens.

rises in the number of new entrants in grade 1 (9% over the period), with Yemen standing out with a sharp 57% increase.

The result of this overall slow progress was a modest rise of four percentage points in the regional net enrolment ratio (NER), from 77% to 81%. However, increases in NERs were impressive (more than twelve percentage points) in some countries, including Mauritania, Morocco and Yemen, while significant declines were registered in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories and the United Arab Emirates.

Despite the expansion, the UPE challenge is great. Overall, more than 6 million primary school age children were still out of school across the Arab States in 2004, 59% of them girls. The greatest challenge remains in the countries with low NERs, such as Djibouti and Saudi Arabia – whose NERs are under 60% – and/or with a high number of primary school age children not in school. More than half a million children were out of school in Iraq (0.51 million), Morocco (0.53 million), Saudi Arabia (1.42 million) and Yemen (0.86 million).

### **Who are the out-of-school children?**

For governments to formulate effective policies to reduce the number of out-of-school children, it is necessary to understand better who they are. Looking at the education experiences of these children as well as at their background characteristics provides valuable guidance for designing differentiated programmes that effectively redress the various dimensions of disadvantage.

Nearly two-thirds of the 6.6 million children in the Arab States region who are out of school have never been enrolled and may never go to school without additional incentives. The percentage is up to 96% in Djibouti.

Thirteen percent of out-of-school children in the region had dropped out (about 60% in the United Arab Emirates) while one-fifth are likely to enter school late. The contribution of late entrants to the total number of out-of-school children varies significantly: in Mauritania they account for more than 50%, raising the general issue of over-aged enrolment in this country, as in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

Data from household surveys show that, in addition to gender, factors including place of residence, household wealth and mother's education significantly affect the likelihood of children being out of school.

- About 70% of the children not enrolled in the region live in rural areas.
- Children from the poorest income group are more than three times as likely to be out of school than those from the wealthiest category, the ratio gap being particularly large in Algeria (6.4) and Sudan (5.5).
- On average, a child whose mother has no education is twice as likely to be out of school as one with an educated mother. The ratio is close to 2.8 in Iraq.

### **School retention and completion**

School retention is generally high across the region, with more than 94% of pupils reaching the last grade of primary education in the majority of Arab States with 2003 data. Yet dropout remains high in Mauritania, Morocco and Yemen, with survival rates to the last grade of 69%, 76% and 67%, respectively.

Not all children who reach the last primary grade necessarily complete it: while more than 90% of primary school pupils reached the last grade in Saudi Arabia, only 48% actually completed primary education.

The same factors behind being out of school also influence school retention and completion. Therefore, for UPE to be achieved in the region, governments should address factors that still exclude certain children from school. Possible measures include reducing the costs of schooling,<sup>9</sup> reducing the need for child labour, designing second-chance education programmes and, more generally, improving the quality of education and the school environment.

### **Secondary education**

With many Arab States promoting the universalization of basic education – which combines primary with lower secondary – pressures to expand secondary education and participation are mounting rapidly.

In 2004, some 27 million students were enrolled in secondary schools across the region, an increase of about 23% over 1999. Beyond the absolute numbers, however, participation at this level remains low in some countries. While the region's average GER was 66% in 2004, secondary education is much less developed in Djibouti, Iraq, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan and Yemen, with secondary GERs below 50%. In contrast, the level of participation is about 90% or more in several other states.<sup>10</sup>

Between 1999 and 2004, secondary GERs increased in most of the twenty Arab States, with gains above 25% in Djibouti, Iraq, Morocco, Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic. On the other hand, some countries recorded decreases, including the United Arab Emirates, where the GER declined by 19%.

The overall GER in secondary education masks disparities between its two stages. The level of participation in lower secondary is much higher than in upper secondary (79% and 52%, respectively). The participation gaps between the two are particularly high in Algeria, the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia (above forty percentage points).

Despite countries' commitment, universal participation is still far away. The average GER in basic education was 88% in 2004 in the Arab States region, with levels below 70% in Djibouti, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia and Sudan.

9. There is no legal guarantee of free education in Djibouti.

10. These include Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Palestinian Autonomous Territories and Qatar.

## Tertiary education: expanding, but access still limited

Despite increases in enrolment of 26% since 1999, only a limited share of the relevant age group has access to this level of education, with a GER of 21% in 2004. Tertiary education is more developed in Jordan, Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, where the GERs are 40% or above.

Participation at this level rose in almost all countries of the region between 1999 and 2004, with increases of more than ten percentage points in Bahrain, Lebanon, Tunisia and the Palestinian Autonomous Territories.

## Literacy

On average, only two-thirds of adults across the Arab States can read and write with understanding, one of the lowest adult literacy rates in the world. The rate increased by sixteen percentage points between 1990 and 2000-2004, and the absolute number of adult illiterates declined from about 64 million to around 58 million. This trend is expected to continue, although more slowly, with the number of illiterates remaining as high as 55 million by 2015.

Adult literacy rates vary within the region, from below 60% in Mauritania, Morocco and Yemen to above 90% in Kuwait and the Palestinian Autonomous Territories. Although most countries with low adult literacy have improved their situation since 1990, they will still find it difficult to meet the EFA literacy target by 2015 unless governments significantly expand adult literacy programmes.

## Gender disparities

Progress towards gender parity in primary education was registered between 1999 and 2004 in most of the Arab States. Increases in GPIs were particularly rapid in Djibouti, Morocco and Yemen.

Despite these positive trends, disparities in education detrimental to girls remain pervasive in the region. On average, ninety girls were enrolled in primary schools for every hundred boys in 2004, up from eighty-seven in 1999. Gender parity in primary education has been achieved in only 40% of the Arab States.

Disparities between the sexes are even worse at higher levels: only 15% of countries with 2004 data have achieved gender parity in secondary education and none in tertiary education. At tertiary level, many more females than males are enrolled in most countries of the region. More than two-thirds of the adult illiterates in the Arab States are women. The average GPI for adult literacy is 0.72, with a value below 0.50 in Yemen.

Overall, gender disparities in education and literacy are higher in countries with low enrolment and literacy rates. Many obstacles hinder access to and participation in education, among them poverty and the related issue of direct and indirect costs, as well as distance to school, social exclusion and an insecure school environment. The challenge is to implement policies tailored to overcoming multiple sources of exclusion and to giving girls, particularly at primary and secondary levels, the educational support and physical safety they need to gain access to education.

## Quality of education: still neglected

Expansion of schooling in the region often occurs at the expense of quality. If school retention is high in general, national and international learning assessments<sup>11</sup> continue to reveal poor literacy and numeracy skills, particularly for students from poorer and culturally excluded families.

## High grade repetition in some countries

The high incidence of grade repetition in some countries indicates that students are not mastering the curriculum.

- While the percentage of repeaters in primary education was less than 5% in the majority of the Arab States with data available for 2004, the figures were above 10% in Algeria, Djibouti, Lebanon, Mauritania and Morocco.
- Repetition rates vary by grade, with rates much higher in grade 1 in some countries, such as Morocco (17%). Such high repetition rates raise the issue of school transition and readiness. For most countries having high repetition rates in the first years of primary school, a link can be made between these rates and low participation levels in pre-primary education.

## Not enough teachers in some countries

While PTRs were about 20:1 in half the Arab States with 2004 data available, the number of teachers remains problematic in certain countries, including Djibouti (34:1) and Mauritania (45:1). Teacher shortages in these countries are a major obstacle to achieving EFA. It is projected that Mauritania will need to recruit an average of 5% more primary school teachers each year in order to achieve UPE while reducing PTRs to 40:1, a great challenge.

Overall, PTRs declined between 1999 and 2004 in almost all the countries with data, and were down sharply in Oman, Qatar and the Syrian Arab Republic.

11. Since 1990 more and more governments (including those of Bahrain, Djibouti, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Qatar, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia) have taken measures to assess student learning and gauge progress in learning outcomes over time. National learning assessments give governments potentially useful information on the efficiency and quality of their education systems. They generally assess student learning against nationally defined standards in selected school subjects. Although their quality can vary considerably, they clearly are an important new development in national efforts to monitor education quality.

## Teacher training and qualification

In the few countries with 2004 data available, the percentage of trained primary school teachers was generally very high, with all teachers trained in Algeria, Iraq, Kuwait, Mauritania and Oman. In contrast, only 60% of primary teachers had received some pedagogical training in the United Arab Emirates. The percentage was even lower in Lebanon: 13%. This country is also where the proportion of teachers meeting the national minimum academic qualification for primary teaching (post-secondary non-tertiary education) is the lowest: 60%, compared with above 90% in Algeria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Teachers are critical to EFA. There is an urgent and obvious need to recruit more of them in some of the Arab States, and to improve their quality as well as their status and working conditions – particularly in disadvantaged areas – if the goals are to be met.

## National expenditure and external aid: more resources are needed

### National investment in education

Effective national policies can enhance both access and quality, especially by shifting more public expenditure to basic education. Investment in education is increasing in the region:

- Between 1999 and 2004, public spending on education as a share of GNP increased in all the few countries with data available, with increases of 10% or more in Lebanon and Oman.
- Despite this upward trend, the share of national income spent on education is still below 4% in countries including Lebanon and Mauritania, although well above 6% in Kuwait, Morocco and Tunisia.
- The priority given to education in government budgets is relatively high in the few countries with data: about 20% or more in Djibouti, Morocco, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. Lebanon devotes only 12.7% of government expenditure to education.

National public spending on ECCE is even lower. For example, while the share of pre-primary education in total public current expenditure on education was about 10% in Kuwait in 2004, this represented half the percentage accorded to primary.

## External aid to education

Even with country efforts to invest more in education in general, external aid is required to achieve EFA, especially in the least developed Arab States with the lowest education indicators.<sup>12</sup> The region has benefited from large increases in Official Development Assistance, and became the world's number two recipient of aid in 2004. This was mainly due to increased assistance from bilateral donors, notably to Iraq. The average share devoted to education across the nine countries with data was 24% of total aid received, the highest percentage for any EFA region.

The proportion of aid to education that goes to the basic level is very low: less than 5%. This level, far below the 50% accorded in South and West Asia, raises important questions for donors about targeting aid to the countries and education levels most in need. Of the twenty developing countries that received the highest amount of aid to education in 2003–04, three were Arab States, and not necessarily those farthest from the EFA goals.<sup>13</sup> In addition, several donors have given priority to higher levels of education, even in countries where UPE has not yet been achieved.

### *Aid commitments: increasing, but still far short*

Overall, total aid commitments for basic education (including estimates of budget support and the portion of aid to education whose level is not specified) to all the world's developing countries increased from US\$2.6 billion in 2000 to US\$4.4 billion in 2004. This positive trend, however, masks the fact that basic education accounted for less than 3% of total aid – and within this, the amount for pre-primary education was minuscule: the majority of donors allocated less than 0.5% of their education aid to this level.

Various recent donor pledges will likely increase the amount of annual aid to basic education to US\$5.4 billion by 2010 – still short of the estimated US\$11 billion per year in external aid needed to achieve EFA.

Given the likely shortage of resources, there is a particular need to ensure that aid is used as effectively as possible. In 2005 more than 100 donors and developing countries signed a declaration on aid effectiveness. The Fast Track Initiative (FTI)<sup>14</sup>, now involving over thirty donors and increasingly seen as the principal education aid vehicle, is consistent with the declaration's objectives of tightening coordination and harmonizing requirements. ■

12. While there is no doubt that countries in need should be supported, the risk of their becoming overdependent on external education aid is a concern. Dependence can make countries vulnerable to aid's volatility and lack of predictability.

13. The three are Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

14. Of the 23 FTI countries with an endorsed sector plan, three are Arab States – Djibouti, Mauritania and Yemen.

## The Education for All Development Index (EDI)

The EFA Development Index (EDI) is a composite measure of a country's situation with regard to attainment of the EFA agenda. It was introduced in the 2003/4 *EFA Global Monitoring Report* and is updated annually. Ideally, it should include measures of all six EFA goals; but for now it focuses on the four most easily quantified: UPE, adult literacy, gender parity and equality, and education quality, each proxied by one indicator.\* The EDI for 2004 could be calculated for sixteen of the twenty Arab States. Among these countries:

- None has yet achieved the four most quantifiable EFA goals, and only one (Bahrain) is close to doing so, with an EDI value of 0.953.
- Eleven rank in an intermediate position, with EDI value between 0.80 and 0.94. In most of these countries, low adult literacy rates pull down the overall EDI.
- Four countries are far from achieving the EFA goals, with EDI scores below 0.80. For countries in this low EDI category, significant improvement is needed on all four components.
- More than two-thirds improved their EDI values from 2003 to 2004, with increases of up to 7% in Egypt and 14% in Mauritania. The change was mainly due to improvement in adult literacy in Egypt and to both GEI and survival rate to grade 5 in Mauritania.

### Mean distance from the four EFA goals

- EFA achieved (EDI between 0.98 and 1.00): None.
- Close to EFA (EDI between 0.95 and 0.97) (1): Bahrain.
- Intermediate position (EDI between 0.80 and 0.94) (11): Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestinian Autonomous Territories, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates.
- Far from EFA (EDI below 0.80) (4): Djibouti, Mauritania, Morocco, Yemen.

\* Universal primary education (goal 2) is proxied by the total NER (includes children of primary school age who are enrolled in either primary or in secondary education); adult literacy (goal 4) is proxied by the literacy rate of those aged 15 and above; gender parity and equality (goal 5) is proxied by the gender-specific EFA index, which is an average of the GPIs for primary and secondary GER and the adult literacy rate; and quality of education (goal 6) is proxied by the survival rate to grade 5. The EDI gives equal weight to the four proxy measures of the four goals. Since each measure is expressed as a percentage, the EDI for a country ranges from 0% to 100% or, when expressed as a ratio, from 0 to 1, where 1 would represent the full achievement of EFA as summarized by the EDI.

## Abbreviations

**ECCE: early childhood care and education.** Programmes that, in addition to providing children with care, offer a structured and purposeful set of learning activities either in a formal institution (pre-primary or ISCED 0) or as part of a non formal child development programme. ECCE programmes are normally designed for children from age 3 and include organized learning activities that constitute, on average, the equivalent of at least 2 hours per day and 100 days per year.

**GER: gross enrolment ratio.** Total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education. For the tertiary level, the population used is that of the five-year age group following on from the secondary-school leaving age. The GER can exceed 100% due to late entry or/and repetition.

**GNP: gross national product.** Gross domestic product plus net receipts of income from abroad. As these receipts may be positive or negative, GNP may be greater or smaller than GDP. This latter indicator is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy, including distributive trades and transport, plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products.

**GPI: gender parity index.** Ratio of female to male values (or male to female, in certain cases) of a given indicator. A GPI of 1 indicates parity between sexes; a GPI above or below 1 indicates a disparity in favour of one sex over the other.

**NER: net enrolment ratio.** Enrolment of the official age group for a given level of education, expressed as a percentage of the population in that age group.

**PTR: pupil/teacher ratio.** Average number of pupils per teacher at a specific level of education, based on headcounts for both pupils and teachers.



Table 1: Arab States: selected early childhood care and education (ECCE) indicators

Countries or territories	Child survival and well-being		Women's employment and leave status		Provision for under-3s	
	Under-5 mortality rate (‰)	Moderate and severe stunting (%)	Female labour force participation rate, age 15 and above (%) <sup>2</sup>	Statutory duration of maternity leave (weeks)	Official programmes targeting children under age 3	Youngest age group targeted in programmes (years)
	2000-2005	1996-2004 <sup>1</sup>	2003	2000-2005 <sup>1</sup>	2005	c. 2005
<b>Arab States</b>						
Algeria	41	19	34	14	...	...
Bahrain	17	10	29	0	yes	0-2
Djibouti <sup>6</sup>	140	26	53	...	...	...
Egypt	43	16	21	12	yes	2-3
Iraq	124	22	20	10	...	...
Jordan	27	9	26	0	yes	0-3
Kuwait	12	24	45	0	no	.
Lebanon	26	12	30	...	yes	0-2
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	21	15	28	12	...	...
Mauritania	156	35	54	14	...	...
Morocco <sup>6</sup>	46	24	27	12	no	.
Oman	18	23	20	0	no	.
Palestinian Autonomous Territories	24	9	...	...	yes	0-4
Qatar	14	8	36	...	...	...
Saudi Arabia	27	20	17	...	...	...
Sudan <sup>7, 8</sup>	119	...	23	0	yes	0-6
Syrian Arab Republic	21	18	37	0	yes	0-2
Tunisia	25	12	27	0	no	.
United Arab Emirates <sup>6</sup>	10	17	36	...	no	.
Yemen	95	53	29	...	no	.
	<b>Weighted average</b>		<b>Median</b>			
Arab States	65	21	29	0	...	...
Developing countries	95	31	52	12	...	...
World	86	31	52	13	...	...

Data in italics are for 2002. Data in bold are for 2003.

1. Data are for the most recent year available during the period specified.

2. Share of employed plus unemployed women in comparison with the working age population, including women with a job but temporarily not at work (e.g. on maternity leave), home employment for the production of goods and services for own household consumption, and domestic and personal services produced by employing paid domestic staff. Data exclude women occupied solely in domestic duties in their own households.

3. Attendance rates, indicated in parentheses, are from DHS, LSMS and MICS2 household surveys and were collected in c. 2000.

4. ASER trends in certain countries are related to the beginning of primary schooling, for which the official entry age is found in Table 2.

Provision for age 3 and older											Countries or territories
Pre-primary education											
Official pre-primary entry age (years)	Gross enrolment ratio (GER)			Age specific enrolment ratio (ASER) <sup>3,4</sup>			Private enrolment as % of total enrolment	% of trained teachers	Pupil/teacher ratio <sup>5</sup>		
	Total (%)	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	age 3 (%)	age 4 (%)	age 5 (%)					
2004	1999	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004		
<b>Arab States</b>											
4	3	5	0.97	...	6	4	.	...	26	Algeria	
3	35	45	0.96	21	50	63	99	...	22	Bahrain	
4	0.4	1.8	0.99	0.8	1.0	1.7	77	87	21	Djibouti <sup>6</sup>	
4	11	14	0.95	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	37	...	24	Egypt	
4	5	6	1.00	...	6	6	.	100	16	Iraq	
4	29	30	0.94	5	22	32	95	...	<b>20</b>	Jordan	
4	79	71	0.98	23	67	50	33	100	13	Kuwait	
3	67	74	0.98	51	88	77	76	10	16	Lebanon	
4	5	<b>8</b>	<b>0.96</b>	...	...	...	<b>15</b>	...	<b>10</b>	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	
3	...	2	...	...	...	...	78	100	19	Mauritania	
4	62	53	0.63	8	46	47	100	...	17	Morocco <sup>6</sup>	
4	6	6	0.91	2	6	4	100	100	21	Oman	
4	40	30	0.96	...	...	...	100	100	27	Palestinian Autonomous Territories	
3	25	32	0.99	15	41	40	93	...	15	Qatar	
3	5	5	...	0.3	5	11	46	72	10	Saudi Arabia	
4 (4)	20	23	1.03	(16)	(25)	(12)	74	10	33	Sudan <sup>7,8</sup>	
3	8	10	0.91	...	...	...	73	22	22	Syrian Arab Republic	
3	14	<b>22</b>	<b>0.99</b>	...	...	...	<b>86</b>	...	<b>19</b>	Tunisia	
4	63	64	0.99	34	61	28	72	50	18	United Arab Emirates <sup>6</sup>	
3	0.7	0.8	0.87	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.7</b>	45	...	15	Yemen	
<b>Weighted average</b>							<b>Median</b>				
...	15	16	0.87	...	...	...	76	87	19	Arab States	
...	28	32	0.97	...	...	...	54	...	21	Developing countries	
...	33	37	0.97	...	...	...	39	...	18	World	

5. Based on headcounts of pupils and teachers.

6. Pre-primary education is compulsory at the age shown in parentheses.

7. Change in pre-primary age group between 1999 and 2004.

8. Age-specific enrolment ratios are for northern Sudan only.

Sources: Carr-Hill (2006); Education Policy and Data Center (2006); EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007, statistical tables; ILO (2006); Kamerman (2005); Nonoyama et al. (2006); UNESCO-IBE (2006); UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Table 2: The Arab States: selected education indicators

Countries or territories	Total population (000)	Compulsory education (age group)	EFA Development Index (EDI)	Adult literacy rate 2000-2004 <sup>1</sup>		Primary education						
						Age group	NER Total (%)		GER's GPI (F/M)		Survival rate to last grade Total (%)	% of female teachers
							2004	1999	2004	1999		
<b>Arab States</b>												
Algeria	32 358	6-16	0.880	70	0.76	6-11	91	97	0.91	0.93	93	50
Bahrain	716	...	0.953	87	0.94	6-11	96	97	1.01	1.00	100	76
Djibouti <sup>3</sup>	779	6-15	0.665	...	...	6-11	28	33	0.71	0.79	...	30
Egypt	72 642	6-13	0.887	71	0.71	6-10	93	95	0.91	0.96	99	55
Iraq	28 057	6-11	...	74	0.76	6-11	85	88	0.82	0.83	...	72
Jordan	5 561	6-16	0.948	90	0.89	6-11	92	91	1.00	1.01	98	64
Kuwait	2 606	6-14	0.946	93	0.96	6-9	87	86	1.01	1.00	97	86
Lebanon	3 540	6-12	0.934	...	...	6-11	94	93	0.95	0.96	96	84
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	5 740	6-15	...	...	...	6-11	...	...	0.98	<b>1.00</b>	...	...
Mauritania <sup>3</sup>	2 980	6-14	0.730	51	0.73	6-11	63	74	0.94	0.98	69	28
Morocco	31 020	6-14	0.746	52	0.60	6-11	72	86	0.81	0.90	76	45
Oman	2 534	...	0.880	81	0.85	6-11	80	78	0.97	1.00	97	62
Palestinian Autonomous Territories	3 587	6-15	0.942	92	0.91	6-9	97	86	1.01	1.00	98	61
Qatar	777	6-14	...	89	0.99	6-11	94	96	0.96	0.98	...	85
Saudi Arabia	23 950	6-11	0.802	79	0.80	6-11	58	59	0.96	0.96	92	52
Sudan <sup>4</sup>	35 523	6-13	...	61	0.73	6-11	...	...	0.85	0.87	88	<b>62</b>
Syrian Arab Republic	18 582	6-12	0.902	80	0.86	6-9	92	92	0.92	0.95	92	62
Tunisia	9 995	6-16	0.901	74	0.78	6-11	94	97	0.95	0.97	93	51
United Arab Emirates	4 284	6-15	0.852	...	...	6-10	79	71	0.97	0.97	95	83
Yemen <sup>3</sup>	20 329	6-14	0.642	53	0.46	6-11	57	75	0.56	0.71	67	...
	<b>Sum</b>			<b>Weighted average</b>			<b>Weighted average</b>				<b>Median</b>	
Arab States	305 562	...	...	66	0.72	...	77	81	0.87	0.90	94	62
Developing countries	5 094 073	...	...	77	0.84	...	81	85	0.91	0.94	80	64
World	6 374 924	...	...	82	0.89	...	83	86	0.92	0.94	87	74

Data in italics are for 2001. Data in bold are for 2003.

1. Data are for the most recent year available during the period specified.

2. Based on headcounts of pupils and teachers.

3. Fast-Track Initiative (FTI): countries with endorsed sector plans.

4. Literacy data do not include some geographic regions.

Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007, statistical tables; CRS online database, Table 2; UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Primary education		Gross enrolment ratio (GER) in secondary education						Tertiary education		Education finance		Countries or territories
% of trained teachers	Pupil/teacher ratio <sup>2</sup>	Lower secondary 2004		Upper secondary 2004		Total secondary 2004		GER 2004		Total public expenditure on education as % of GNP	Aid to education per capita (constant 2003 US\$)	
		Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)	Total (%)	GPI (F/M)			
2004	2004											
<b>Arab States</b>												
98	27	105	0.94	57	1.37	81	1.07	20	1.08	...	4	Algeria
...	76	102	1.01	95	1.12	99	1.06	34	1.84	...	0.5	Bahrain
...	34	26	0.71	15	0.64	22	0.69	2	0.82	5.6	29	Djibouti <sup>3</sup>
...	22	98	0.96	76	0.95	87	0.95	33	...	...	1	Egypt
100	21	57	0.64	31	0.70	45	0.66	15	0.59	...	3	Iraq
...	20	93	1.00	75	1.05	87	1.01	39	1.10	...	6	Jordan
100	13	90	1.00	90	1.14	90	1.06	22	2.72	7.6	...	Kuwait
13	14	100	1.09	77	1.09	89	1.09	48	1.12	2.5	12	Lebanon
...	...	<b>122</b>	<b>0.99</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>1.15</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>1.06</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>1.09</b>	...	-	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
100	45	20	0.82	21	0.84	20	0.83	3	0.31	3.7	7	Mauritania <sup>3</sup>
...	28	61	0.82	34	0.87	48	0.84	11	0.87	6.4	9	Morocco
100	19	93	0.92	79	1.02	86	0.96	13	1.37	4.8	0.2	Oman
...	27	102	1.04	65	1.12	94	1.05	38	1.04	...	12	Palestinian Autonomous Territories
...	9	101	0.93	92	1.02	97	0.97	18	3.05	...	...	Qatar
...	12	69	0.87	66	0.90	68	0.88	28	1.50	...	0.1	Saudi Arabia
...	29	47	0.88	23	1.00	33	0.93	...	...	...	0.6	Sudan <sup>4</sup>
...	18	84	0.92	30	0.96	63	0.93	...	...	...	3	Syrian Arab Republic
...	21	102	0.89	66	1.20	81	1.02	29	1.36	<b>8.5</b>	12	Tunisia
61	15	72	0.96	59	1.21	66	1.06	<b>22</b>	<b>3.24</b>	...	...	United Arab Emirates
...	...	54	0.50	41	0.45	48	0.48	9	0.38	...	5	Yemen <sup>3</sup>
<b>Median</b>		<b>Weighted average</b>						<b>Median</b>	<b>Weighted average</b>			
...	20	79	0.88	52	0.96	66	0.91	21	0.95	...	4	Arab States
...	27	74	0.93	44	0.92	59	0.92	16	0.87	4.7	1	Developing countries
...	21	78	0.94	51	0.94	65	0.94	24	1.03	4.8	...	World