

Fact Sheet

October 2012

Education in Ghana

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

Indicator	Ghana		Sub-Saharan Africa	World
	1999	2010	2010	2010
Goal 1 Pre-primary gross enrolment ratio (%)	31	69	17	48
Goal 2 Primary net enrolment ratio (%)	61	84	77	91
Out of school children (million)	1.14	0.57	30.6	60.7
Goal 3 Lower secondary gross enrolment ratio (%)	60	83	47	82
Out of school adolescents (million)	0.51	0.42	21.7	70.6
Goal 4 Adult literacy rate* (%)	..	67	63	84
Youth literacy rate* (%)	..	81	72	90
Goal 5 Primary gender parity index	0.97	0.98	0.93	0.97
Secondary gender parity index	0.96	0.90	0.82	0.97
Goal 6 Primary pupil-teacher ratio	30	31	43	24

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

Source: UIS Database

While there has been progress in access to school, not all are completing.

- Today, there are 50% fewer out of school children in Ghana than there were in 1999.
- However, 87% of the poorest enter primary school, but only 72% complete, compared to 100% enrolment of the richest, of which 80% complete.
- Meanwhile, from 2005-10, 53% new first grade pupils were at least two years older than the official age. Between 2003 and 2008 the decline in the number of over-age new entrants in Ghana was twice as large among the richest quintile compared with the poorest quintile. Latest data shows 60% of the poorest fifth enter primary school at least two years late, compared to 32% of the richest fifth
- Going to school is also only half the battle. In 2008, over half of women and over one-third of men aged 15 to 29 could not read a sentence at all even after six years of school. Not even secondary school is enough to guarantee literacy in the country; among those who completed nine years of school in 2008, 21% were illiterate, and about a quarter were only partially literate
- Adult illiteracy rate in Ghana was 42% in 1998-2001, which is projected to reduce to 29% by 2015, while the target for the EFA goal was to reduce rates to 21%

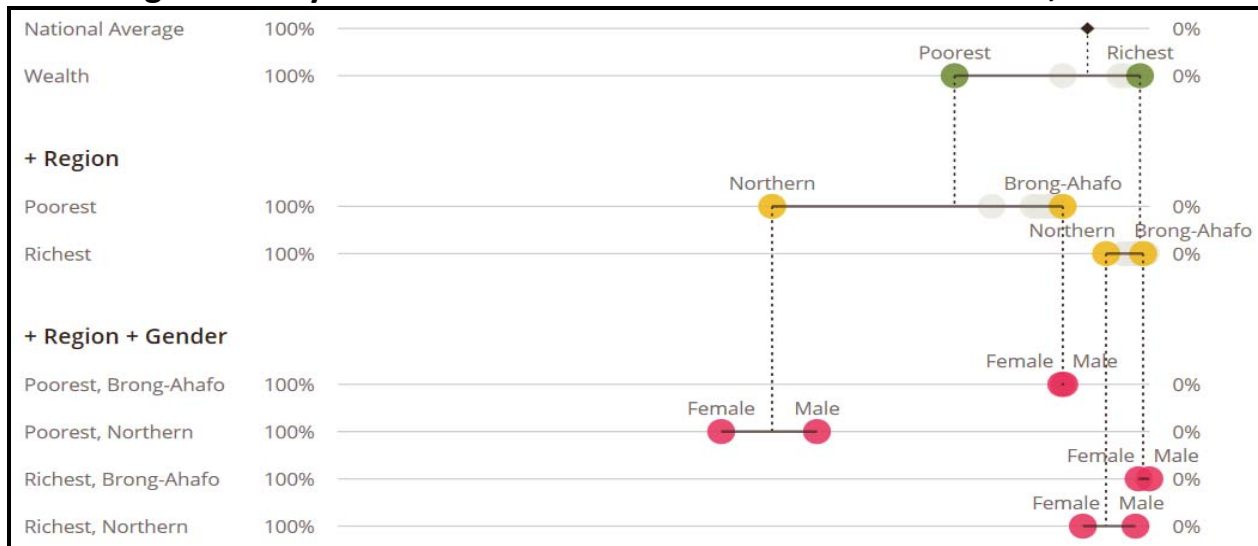
Progress in Education is not always reaching the marginalised

- Rural: After Ghana introduced a diversified secondary curriculum, numbers in vocational courses rose by about 50% but the cost of delivering the new courses was as much as twenty times more in rural schools than in urban schools even though quality in rural areas was poor. If it is not possible to train and supply teachers for technical and vocational subjects and distribute resources equitably, students in rural areas may end up with low quality training.
- Girls: On the other hand, Ghana has made such progress getting more girls into school that there is now a slight gender disparity at the expense of boys

Ghana's spending on education

- The economic downturn has not affected education spending. 5.6% of Ghana's GNP was spent on education in 2010, an increase of over a percentage point from the 4.2% spent in 1999.
- Primary education is being squeezed in budgets: Ghana has increased the share of the education budget earmarked for tertiary education which now makes up 23% of public expenditure on education; the shares for both primary and secondary education, on the other hand, have decreased since 1999.

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



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

A history of neglecting children's education has left a skills deficit among young people now facing the world of work:

- Almost a fifth of 15-24 year olds (17%) never completed primary school and almost a third of 15-19 year olds have less than a lower secondary education. These young people lack the skills they need to find decent work

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are least likely to have skills to find decent jobs

- **Poverty:** 8 in 10 of poor 17-22 year old women in Northern Ghana had less than four years of education in 2008. Meanwhile, only 11% of the poorest quintile of young people had been through an apprenticeship in 2008 as opposed to 47% of the wealthiest.
- **Gender:** 48% of young women aged 15-24 have less than a lower secondary education, compared to 40% of young men. Currently, apprenticeships are often in trades more accessible to male workers and so disadvantage women.
- **Location:** Only 9% of urban richest with less than a lower secondary education, compared with over half of the rural poorest (54%), and 49% of the urban poorest

This lack of skills will affect the lives of these young people and the country's growth forever.

- Comparing Ghana with the Republic of Korea, the report shows that both started at equal points in the 1970s but, while Korea expanded its secondary system rapidly in the 1970s and went from a poor to a rich country in 30 years, Ghana's secondary education gross enrolment ratio stagnated at around 40% for another thirty years.

Contact: k.redman@unesco.org / 0033671786234 / Website: www.efareport.unesco.org