



## **Introduction**

Ethiopia is one of the countries which enrolment ratios were not calculated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) due to inconsistencies between enrolment figures provided by the country and the United Nations population data from the 2012 population revision. In order to assess progress made by Ethiopia since 1999 across some of the EFA goals, the EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) Team used data from national sources, including the Ministry of Education,<sup>1</sup> UIS data published in the 2013/14 EFA GMR, as well as the country EFA 2015 review report

It is important to note that the use of data from different sources meant using school age-groups that are different from the ones agreed upon in the International standard classification of education system (ISCED) framework. This was particularly the case of primary education where the age-group agreed upon in ISCED and used by UIS is 7-12, while the nationally defined primary education age-group is 7-10.

## **Pre-primary education**

In Ethiopia, the pre-primary gross enrolment ratio (GER) increased considerably, from 2% in 2000 to almost 22% in 2011. More recently the GER reached nearly 34% for the school year ending in 2014. This latest increase has brought Ethiopia, from a very low level in pre-primary participation (GER<30%) to a low level category (GER of 30-69%).

## **Primary education**

The 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report showed that the country also achieved large increases in its primary enrolment rates between 1999 and 2011, with its GER going from 50% to 106% and its net enrolment ratio (NER) from 37% to 87%. Most recent data from the Ethiopia Ministry of education and referring to the 7-10 age group indicates a primary GER and NER of 123% and 92% in 2012, respectively. While the use of a different age group inflates a bit the increases in both the GER and NER, data from both clearly reveal that Ethiopia has made substantial progress and it is well on its way to the target of universal primary enrolment.

Access to school is an important step to universal primary education, but it is equally important to ensure that all children, who enrol in primary education, complete it. However, in Ethiopia, early dropouts remain an important issue, with only 37% of children who entered primary school reaching the last grade in 2011. The situation has deteriorated significantly since 1999 when survival rate to last grade was 51%, making universal primary education goal still out of reach.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Education of Ethiopia. (2001). Education Statistics Annual Abstract 1993 E.C. / 2000-01. Available at: <http://www.moe.gov.et/English/Resources/Documents/eab93.pdf> (Accessed 10th April 2015).

## **Gender Parity**

According to data published in the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report, gender parity in primary education also improved: the gender parity index (GPI) of the GER went from about 0.61 to 0.91 between 1999 and 2011. The important reduction of gender disparities is also confirmed by the data from the Ethiopia Ministry of education that indicate an increase in the primary GPI from 0.65 in 2000 to 0.93 in 2012. However, girls in Ethiopia are still underrepresented in primary school. Gender disparity appears in a different light if one considers survival rates to the last grade of primary. In 1999, the survival rate to last grade for girls was 54%, compared to 49% for boys, which translates to a GPI at 1.09. By 2011, rates for both had declined substantially to less than 40% and 34%, respectively, corresponding to an increased GPI of 1.16. This indicates that the situation of school retention of boys has deteriorated, and girls are still more likely to reach the last grade than boys. These results show that in Ethiopia, as in other countries, the predominant barriers for girls are starting school at all, rather than completing school once they have begun.

## **Conclusion**

The analysis of education data of Ethiopia demonstrates that the country has made great strides in pre-primary and primary school participation as well as in reducing gender disparities. Nevertheless, much still needs to be done. Indeed, it is important for the country to improve strategies that focus on making early childhood education available for all children in the country. Furthermore, the countries must improve school retention dramatically, ensuring that all children who enter primary school, girls and boys alike, reach the last grade and finally complete. Finally, gender disparities must definitively be eliminated, enabling more girls to have access to primary education, and both sexes to complete school.