United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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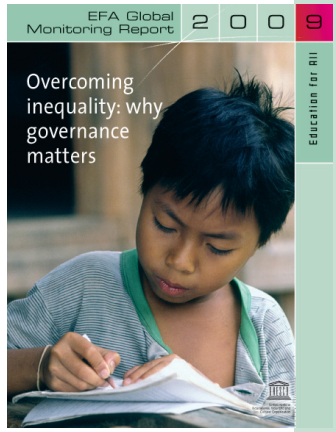
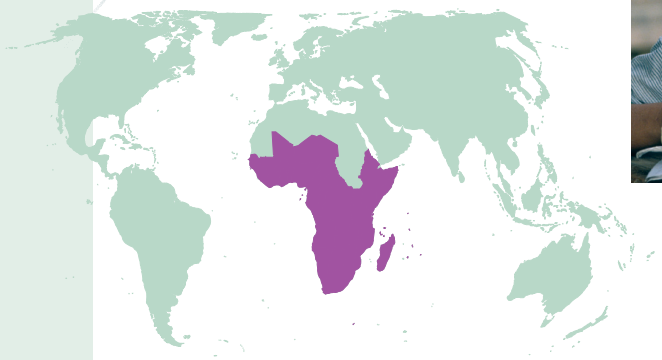


Regional overview: sub-Saharan Africa



Enrolment in sub-Saharan Africa[1] *increased significantly at all education levels between 1999 and 2006. Yet many challenges remain. Overall, sub-Saharan Africa, like the Arab States, and South and West Asia, still lags behind other regions in terms of distance from the EFA goals. The same is true for many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in areas such as child mortality and nutrition. Progress in education could help unlock progress on the MDGs, but will require a strengthened commitment to equity.*

Persistent inequalities are hindering progress towards the EFA goals at global, regional and national levels. The EFA Global Monitoring Report *2009 finds that within countries, disparities based on wealth, location, gender, immigration or minority status or disability deny millions of children a good-quality education. The Report turns the spotlight on the role that education governance can play in overcoming these disparities. It shows that current approaches to education governance reform all too often fail the poor and disadvantaged. This regional overview for sub-Saharan Africa reveals that, while the region as a whole continues to advance in most of the EFA goals, wide disparities within countries are holding back overall progress.*

1. This is according to the EFA classification. See the table at the end for countries in the region.

EFA progress and challenges

Early childhood care and education: a long way to go

What happens during the very early years of a child's life is vital for later success in education and in life. Programmes of early childhood care and education (ECCE) can support health and nutrition, facilitate cognitive development and give children the basic tools they need to learn and to overcome disadvantage. Yet millions of children in sub-Saharan Africa are held back by problems in health and nutrition, and access to pre-school provision remains limited and unequal.

- Child mortality is one of the most sensitive barometers of the well-being of children under 5. Each year 10 million children die around the world before their fifth birthday. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for half of these under-5 deaths and its share is growing. On average, 158 of every 1,000 children born in sub-Saharan Africa will not reach age 5. Between 1990 and 2006, the region as a whole reduced child mortality by one-quarter the rate required to achieve the MDG target of cutting under-5 deaths by two-thirds by 2015, and only three out of forty-six countries are on track to meet the target.

- There are huge differences in the under-5 mortality rates of countries in the region, which range from 17‰ in Mauritius and 29‰ in Cape Verde to well above 200‰ in Angola (231‰) and Sierra Leone (278‰).

- The good news is that indicators for child welfare are improving in some of the region's countries. Ethiopia and Mozambique reduced under-5 mortality by 40% or more between 1990 and 2006. This rate of progress is impressive, showing that strong national policies backed by global initiatives, for example on increased immunization, are making a difference. Vaccination against measles is estimated to have cut deaths worldwide by 60% and in sub-Saharan Africa by 75%.

- Malnutrition is one of the biggest barriers to achieving universal primary education (UPE). The region's progress

in reducing child malnutrition has been limited and in thirteen countries the situation has deteriorated since 1990. One-third of all children in sub-Saharan Africa are affected by stunting. Of the forty countries where the prevalence of moderate and severe stunting among children is about 40% or more, twenty-three are in sub-Saharan Africa. The regional average of 38% masks large differences between countries. While the prevalence is below 20% in Mauritius and Senegal, over 40% of children in some countries, including Angola, Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia and Malawi, will reach primary school entry age having suffered the debilitating effects of stunting. In many countries the situation is deteriorating. Malnutrition rates have increased in twenty-six countries worldwide, half of them in sub-Saharan Africa.

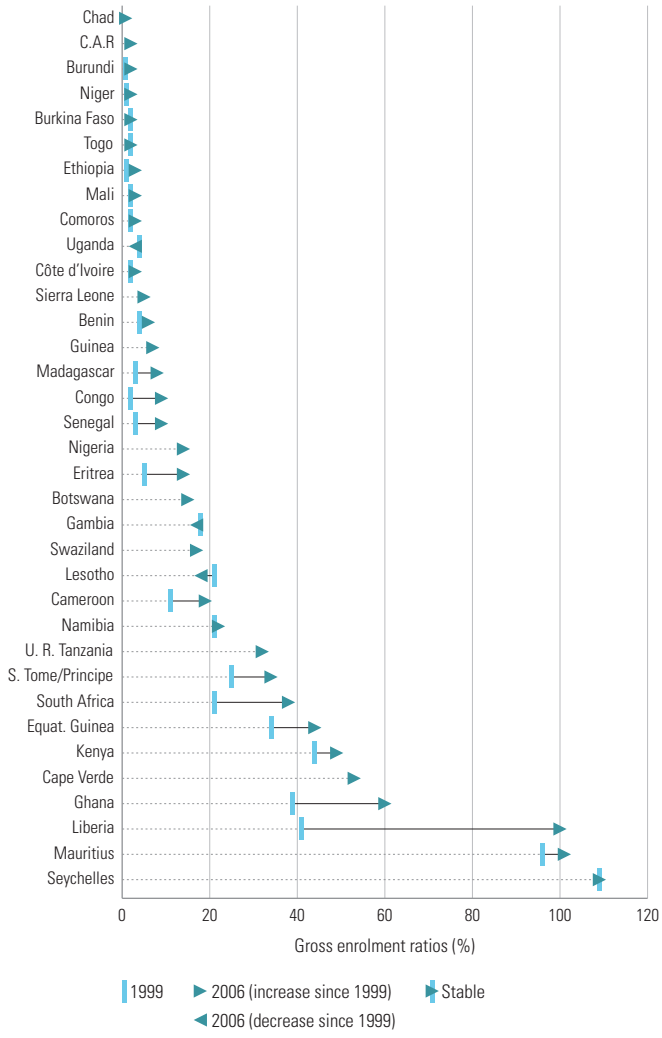
- Some countries have been able to tackle the problem. In rural parts of the United Republic of Tanzania, the incidence of underweight children was reduced by 7% between 1999 and 2004 through integrated maternal and child health interventions, including improved water and sanitation provision, mass immunization and malaria prevention. Ethiopia has embarked on a major programme to extend antenatal care more widely and ensure that essential drugs and vaccines are available at primary health clinics.

- Childhood health and survival are heavily influenced by patterns of inequality. In many countries, being poor and rural dramatically reduces the prospect of surviving to the fifth birthday. In Nigeria, child death rates among the poorest 20% of the population are twice those of the wealthiest 20%. Moreover, the gap between rich and poor in child mortality has widened in Nigeria and also in Uganda. These disparities reflect underlying inequalities in nutrition, vulnerability and access to health services.

- Access to pre-primary education has steadily increased in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2006, nearly 9 million children were enrolled in pre-primary education, up from some 5 million in 1999. Yet the average gross enrolment ratio (GER) remained low at 14% in 2006, with huge regional disparities. Of the thirty-five countries in sub-Saharan Africa with data available for 2006, seventeen had pre-primary GERs below 10%, although Liberia, Mauritius and Seychelles had GERs of around 100% or above. Most countries with data showed increased participation in pre-primary education between 1999 and 2006, with significant improvements in Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Liberia and South Africa (Figure 1).

- There are marked disparities in provision of pre-primary education within countries. Although vulnerable children from poor households stand to benefit most from early childhood programmes, international evidence indicates that they are the least likely to have access to them. Attendance rates for children from poor households fall far below those for children from wealthy households. Rural-urban gaps and other geographic disparities are also marked in many countries. For example, in Côte d'Ivoire attendance rates range from less than 1% in the remote north-east to 19% in Abidjan. Factors such as language, ethnicity and religious association play a part in shaping the distribution as well.

Figure 1: Changes in pre-primary gross enrolment ratios between 1999 and 2006



Universal primary education: nations at the crossroads

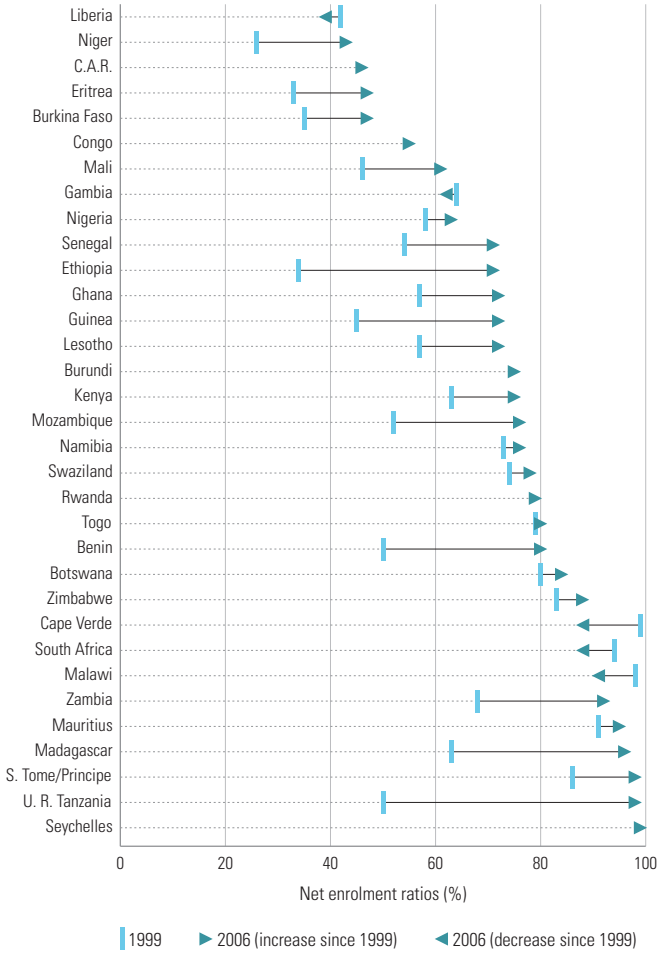
- The numbers of children entering primary school in sub-Saharan Africa have climbed sharply since Dakar. In 2006, more than 23 million of the region's children stepped through a classroom door for the first time – an increase of some 7 million over the level in 1999. Sub-Saharan Africa's gross intake rate (GIR), which registers the number of new entrants regardless of age, recorded the biggest increase in the world between 1999 and 2006, by twenty-two percentage points. As intake has risen, so has overall enrolment in primary education. Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for the world's highest increase in total primary enrolment, which rose by 42% during the period.

- The continued increases in the primary school-age population in the region mean incremental pressure on financial, physical and human resources. The region's primary school-age cohort will grow by 26 million in 2015. One consequence of such demographic pressure is that governments have to work harder to maintain existing gains in enrolment: sub-Saharan Africa has to expand participation by over two percentage points a year just to stand still.

- During the 1990s the region's net enrolment ratio (NER) increased at an annual average of 0.3 percentage points a year to 56% at the end of the decade. Since 1999 it has climbed to 70% – an average annual increase of two percentage points, or six times the rate of the pre-Dakar decade. Some countries have registered particularly impressive progress (Figure 2). For example, Benin, Madagascar, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia moved from NERs of between 50% and 70% in 1999 to levels in excess of 80% in 2006. Starting from an even lower baseline, Ethiopia managed to double its NER from 34% in 1999 to 71% in 2007. While the country still has a long way to go, it has made dramatic advances in improving access and tackling inequalities. An ambitious school construction programme in rural areas has been particularly instrumental in spurring demand for education by reducing distances to school and addressing security concerns for girls. Ethiopia's elimination of school tuition fees has also stimulated increased enrolment, as has been the case in several countries of the region, including Kenya, Lesotho, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. International aid partnerships have played an important role in some of these best-performing countries, notably Ethiopia and the United Republic of Tanzania.

- The level of participation in primary education varied significantly within the region from a 2006 NER below 50% in Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Eritrea, Liberia and the Niger to near UPE in Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Figure 2: Changes in primary net enrolment ratios between 1999 and 2006



Out-of-school children

- With around 19% of the world's primary school-age population in 2006, sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 47% of out-of-school children worldwide – a stark reminder of the scale of global inequalities in the distribution of opportunities for education. The number of primary school-age children not in school in the region has fallen by 10 million since 1999. Encouraging as this trend may be, there is still a long way to go. Some 35 million children were not enrolled in 2006, almost one-third of the school-age population.

- The post-1999 record of countries in sub-Saharan Africa with large out-of-school populations is mixed. Some have failed to make a dent in the numbers. This group includes Nigeria – with more children out of school than any other country – as well as Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger. Trends in Nigeria, which accounts for around one in nine of the world's out-of-school children, are cause for global concern. And there is little evidence to suggest that, on current policies, the country is set for an early breakthrough. In other countries that had large out-of-school populations in 1999 the picture is more encouraging. For example, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania have made rapid progress towards UPE. The performance of the United Republic of Tanzania is particularly striking. In around five years the country reduced its out-of-school population from over 3 million to fewer than 150,000 through policy interventions including the abolition of primary school tuition fees (in 2001), increased public investment and measures to enhance education quality.

- The circumstances of out-of-school children vary. Over four out of five in the region live in rural areas; the vast majority are poor and many are the victims of cross-generational transfer of deprivation. Having a mother with no education doubles the probability of a child being out of school. The characteristics of these 'missing' schoolchildren are also of concern. In sub-Saharan Africa about two-thirds of the

out-of-school population is expected never to enrol, while more than one-quarter may enter school late and about 9% have dropped out. Gender also has a bearing on the profile of out-of-school children. Girls' limited access to school is of particular concern in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2006, they accounted for 54% of primary school-age children not in school in the region and 72% of them have never been enrolled, compared with 55% for boys. Girls' access to school remains a big issue in Nigeria, where 69% of those not in school are unlikely to enrol, compared with 31% for boys. Similar if somewhat smaller gender differences (about twenty percentage points or more) are found in Burundi and Guinea.

- Projections of out-of-school numbers give reason for concern. On current trends Nigeria will continue to have the largest out-of-school population in the region (estimated at 7.6 million in 2015), followed by Burkina Faso and Ethiopia (1.1 million each), Kenya and the Niger (0.9 million each).

Progression through school: repetition, dropout, low survival rates

- Getting children into school is a necessary condition for achieving UPE, but not a sufficient one. What counts is completion of a full primary cycle. Though access to and participation in primary schooling are improving in the region, high repetition and dropout rates mean millions of children fail to complete primary education. In sub-Saharan Africa, the median percentage of repeaters (for all grades) was just above 13% in 2006. However, high repetition levels are endemic in many countries. Of countries in the region with data, eleven had grade 1 and nine had grade 2 repetition rates over 20%. In Burundi, Cameroon and Comoros, the grade 1 rates exceeded 30%.

- Apart from its damaging consequences for UPE, grade repetition is a source of inefficiency and inequity. The financing required to provide additional school places for repeaters can be substantial. Repetition consumes an estimated 16% of the education budget in Burundi and 12% in Mozambique. Grade repetition is inequitable: it increases the direct and opportunity costs of schooling, a burden that is heaviest for the poorest households and may lead to dropout.

- Early and late school entry and grade repetition affect the age distribution of children in school, so only a small proportion of children attend the appropriate class for their age in many developing countries. Household surveys show that in Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania, more than 60% of children in primary school are over the expected age for their grade, with a higher chance of dropping out, especially in the later grades. At the other end, many countries have a large number of under-age children in primary school. In the Niger, more than 20% of primary school pupils are under age and thus more likely to repeat early grades. In Cameroon and Uganda, under-age pupils represent a large share of grade 1 pupils and have high repetition rates. Under-age pupils account for the bulk of repeaters in countries with low repetition rates, including the Niger and Nigeria.

- Large shares of children enrolled in sub-Saharan Africa never complete primary education. The median survival rate to the last grade of primary education was lower than in any other region, at 67% in 2005. Survival rates to the last grade varied from less than 31% in Chad and Uganda to 99% in Mauritius. Many children reaching the last grade prove unable to negotiate this hurdle. In Burundi and Senegal, only about half the children who survive to the last grade of primary education actually complete it. What that means in Senegal is that only 30% of children who enter primary education complete the full cycle.

Disparities within countries

- Disparities within countries related to wealth, gender, race, language and ethnic group can pre-determine opportunities for education and hinder progress towards UPE. When it comes to UPE, rich and poor live in different worlds. In Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Mali and the Niger, children from the richest 20% are three to about four times more likely to attend primary school than children from the poorest quintile (Map 1).

- Patterns of inequality vary among countries. Inequalities tend to be far larger in countries at a considerable distance from UPE. Thus, attendance inequalities are much higher in Côte d'Ivoire, with an overall primary net attendance rate of 51%, than in Uganda, where more primary school-age children attend primary school (84%). However, the relationship is not uniform. To take one example, Nigeria has far wider inequalities in attendance than Senegal, despite having higher average attendance rates. This indicates extreme education marginalization in Nigeria. Household wealth also has a marked bearing on how far children progress in school, particularly in countries with high attendance rates. Thus, in countries including Benin, Malawi and Togo, while children from poor households are often almost as likely to start school as their richer counterparts, they are far more likely to drop out.

- Wealth-based inequalities interact with other inequalities. Where children live often matters. Living in a rural area often limits opportunities for education. In Senegal, urban children are twice as likely to be in school as rural children. Poverty provides part of the explanation, along with child labour and malnutrition. Slums are often characterized by high levels of poverty, poor child health and limited participation in education. In Benin and Nigeria, children who live in slums have attendance rates some twenty percentage points lower than those of other city children. Cultural factors such as religion and ethnicity can also affect both the demand for schooling and the supply.

In north-western Nigeria, some 15% of children between 6 and 16 were not in formal school because their parents preferred them to attend Quranic schools.

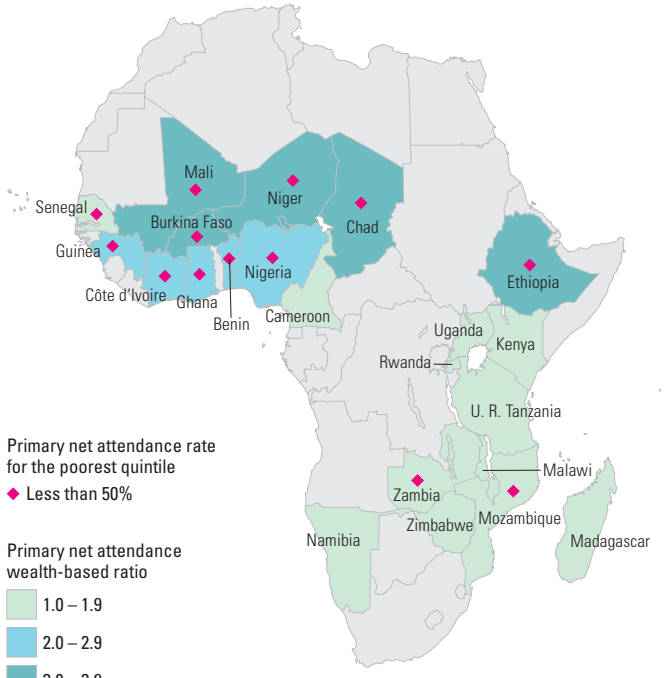
- Every country faces its own distinctive set of challenges in achieving UPE. Three of the most common are:

Child labour: Around one-quarter of 5- to 14-year-olds in sub-Saharan Africa were engaged in child labour in 2004. Because population growth has increased faster than child labour rates have fallen, there were about 1 million more child labourers in 2004 than in 2000. School attendance figures provide stark evidence of the trade-off between child labour and UPE. Working children face an attendance disadvantage of about 30% to 67% in countries including Cameroon, Ghana and Zambia. When schools are unavailable or distant, when the cost of schooling is high and the perceived quality low, children are more likely to work than go to school. In other cases, household poverty and associated labour demand 'pull' children into labour markets. Practical measures are needed first to reduce the pressures that force poor households to augment income or labour supply through child work and, second, to strengthen incentives for sending children to school. In many countries, including Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, abolishing school fees has helped reduce child labour. Other incentives, such as school meal programmes, financial incentives to disadvantaged groups, social protection measures and conditional cash transfer programmes, can also play an important role.

Health barriers: Millions of children in sub-Saharan Africa suffer the consequences of hunger, micronutrient deficiency and infection, all of which undermine educational opportunities. Fewer than one in ten children living in malarial areas in the region have access to insecticide-treated bed nets. Around 1.9 million children under 15 in sub-Saharan Africa live with HIV/AIDS and some 9% of the region's children have lost one or both parents to the disease. Evidence from several countries, including Kenya, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania, show that HIV/AIDS orphans enter school later and are more likely to repeat grades. Linking health and education policies can yield high returns. In Kenya, a school-based mass treatment campaign for intestinal helminthes markedly reduced infection rates and reduced school absenteeism by one-quarter.

Disabled learners: Children with disabilities are still among the most marginalized and least likely to go to school. Evidence from household surveys indicates that the difference in primary school attendance rates between children with disabilities and those with none in Burundi, Chad, Mozambique, South Africa and Zambia ranges from twelve percentage points in Chad to twenty in South Africa and Zambia. Speeding up progress towards UPE will require a far stronger focus on public policy facilitating access for the disabled – and on political leadership to change public attitudes.

Map 1: Ratio of primary net attendance rates of the richest quintile to the poorest quintile, selected countries, most recent year



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by UNESCO. Based on United Nations map.

Post-primary education

Increasing participation in secondary and tertiary education is an explicit part of the Dakar commitment to EFA and of the MDG on gender parity and equality. It also provides further incentives for children to complete primary schooling, expands the supply of qualified teachers, and improves knowledge and skills for the labour market.

- While participation in primary education is expanding, access to secondary and tertiary education remains limited for most young people in sub-Saharan Africa. For the school year ending in 2005, the median transition rate from primary to secondary was 62%. It was lower for girls (57%) than for boys (66%). Very low transition rates, below 50%, were reported in several countries, including Burundi (34%) and Cameroon (33%). On the other hand, most pupils who reach the last primary school grade made the transition to lower secondary in Botswana and Seychelles, with transition rates exceeding 95%.

- Overall, enrolment in secondary education is rising in the region, with over 12 million more students in 2006, up from 20.6 million in 1999. Despite this significant trend, the average secondary NER in sub-Saharan Africa was 25% in 2006. This implies that nearly 78 million of the region's secondary school-age children were not enrolled in secondary school.

- The regional average figure conceals significant differences between countries. Secondary NER levels in 2006 were less than 20% in Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Mozambique, the Niger and Uganda, but over 80% in Mauritius and Seychelles. Participation in secondary education increased between 1999 and 2006 in most of the twenty-nine countries with data, and particularly in Benin, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Guinea and Mauritius secondary GERs rose by thirteen percentage points or more. On the other hand, substantial decreases were recorded in Malawi, where the secondary GER declined from 36% to 29% during the period.

- The transition from lower to upper secondary is a critical dropout point in many sub-Sahara African education systems. In 2006, the regional average GER was higher in lower secondary education (38%) than in upper (24%), with differences in the participation rates between the two levels at or above thirty percentage points in nine[2] of the thirty-five countries with data.

- Within-country inequalities in secondary education are even more marked than inequalities among countries. Secondary education attendance and survival rates to the last grade are marked by disparities related to factors such as household wealth and language. Secondary net attendance rates of richer households are three to about five times those of poorer households in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and the Niger. Speaking an indigenous or non-official language remains a core marker for disadvantage. In Mozambique, 43% of people aged 16 to 49 who speak Portuguese (the language of instruction) have at least one grade of secondary schooling; among speakers of Lomwe, Makhuwa, Sena and Tsonga, the shares range from 6% to 16%.

- Tertiary education has expanded rapidly since 1999. Some 3.7 million students were enrolled in tertiary education in 2006 – nearly 1.6 million more than in 1999. However, the region's tertiary GER was 5% in 2006, still very low compared with the averages for the developing countries (17%) and the world (25%).

Learning needs of young people and adults

Most countries in the region have yet to seriously address the challenge posed by EFA goal 3: meeting the diverse learning needs of young people and adults through lifelong learning programmes and skill acquisition.

- In sub-Saharan Africa the immense unmet need for such programmes reflects the experiences of millions of youth who never attended school or who dropped out and never acquired basic skills, and some 161 million adults who have been denied the right to literacy. Given the understandable pressure to extend the cycle of basic education and expand secondary education, there is a clear risk that the disparity between governments' commitments to formal and non-formal education will be further accentuated in coming years.

- Many governments give too little priority to the learning needs of youth and adults in their education strategies and policies. Inadequate public funding hampers provision and weak monitoring obscures learning deficits among adults. The fact that no quantitative targets were established at Dakar, apart from the main literacy target, contributes to a lack of urgency.

- Adult learning programmes are found in a myriad of formal, informal and non-formal settings. In sub-Saharan Africa non-formal education programmes differ in terms of objectives, target groups, content, pedagogy, scale and types of providers. Many large-scale literacy programmes, often extending to life skills (e.g. in health and civic rights), livelihoods (income generation, farming) and/or equivalency education, are supported by international NGOs and bilateral and multilateral agencies. In Senegal, non-formal provision is seen principally in terms of adult education while Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia largely conceive non formal-education as any structured learning activity outside the formal education system.

- There is a strong case to be made for clarifying the purpose of lifelong learning provision, improving data flows and, critically, strengthening political commitment in this area. As a first step towards more effective monitoring, improved information is needed about how different stakeholders define adult learning needs, which groups are targeted, what types of skills are taught, how programmes are implemented and if they are sustainable given current funding sources.

Adult literacy: still neglected

Reading, writing and calculating are essential skills for living in today's world. Literacy and numeracy enhance self-esteem, contribute to empowerment and educational attainment, improve health outcomes and employment opportunities, and lower child mortality. Despite these advantages for individuals and societies, literacy remains a neglected goal. Multiple barriers restrict the achievement of widespread literacy. They include insufficient access to education of good quality, weak support for young people exiting the school system, poorly funded and administratively fragmented literacy programmes, and limited opportunities for adult learning. Many of these barriers disproportionately affect marginal and vulnerable groups, and exacerbate socio-economic inequalities.

- Adult illiteracy remains an enormous challenge in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2000–2006 an estimated 161 million adults – 38% of the region's adult population – were unable

2. Botswana, Cape Verde, the Congo, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe, and Togo.

to read and/or write, with understanding, a simple statement in a national or official language. Some 62% of the region's illiterate adults were women.

- Progress on literacy is not encouraging. Between 1985–1995 and 2000–2006, the absolute number of adult illiterates increased by 28 million while that of youth illiterates (aged 15 to 24) went up by 7 million, reflecting continued population growth.

- Over the two periods, the region's adult literacy rate rose from 53% to 62% and the youth literacy rate from 64% to 71%. All countries with data improved their adult literacy rates between 1985–1994 and 2000–2006. Increases were most impressive in Burundi, Chad and Malawi, with rises of twenty percentage points or more. Very low adult literacy rates, below 30%, still characterize some countries, including Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea and Mali. By contrast, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe reported adult literacy rates in 2000–2006 of around 90%.

- National literacy rates conceal major disparities within countries. Disparities in adult literacy are especially salient among groups characterized by gender, poverty, place of residence, ethnicity, language and disabilities. Despite some progress, gender disparities to the disadvantage of women are especially marked in sub-Saharan Africa, where the average gender parity index (GPI) of adult literacy was 0.75 in 2000–2006. Striking gender disparities prevailed in several countries, including Chad and the Niger, where women's literacy rates were around one-third of those for men. Gender and poverty often interact in relation to literacy: for example, in the Gambia, literacy rates ranged from 12% among extremely poor women to 53% for non-poor men.

- Evidence from thirty developing countries indicates that literacy levels are substantially lower in the poorest households than in the wealthiest. In seven sub-Saharan African countries with particularly low overall adult literacy rates,[3] the literacy gap between the poorest and wealthiest households is more than forty percentage points. In Ethiopia, literacy rates range from 83% in the Addis Ababa region to 25% in the Amhara region. Pastoralists and nomads have lower literacy levels than other rural populations. In the Afar region of Ethiopia, for example, the literacy rate for adults was 25% in 1999, but in pastoralist areas it was only 8%.

- Achieving EFA implies paying sustained attention to youth and adult literacy needs through diverse and flexible literacy programmes. It also means developing the literate environment – in other words, promoting the availability and use of multilingual written materials and new technology, which encourage literacy acquisition, a reading culture, improved literacy retention and access to information.

3. Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Togo.

Gender parity and equality

The Dakar Framework for Action to achieve the EFA goals sets out a two-part gender equity agenda: first, to achieve gender parity in school participation and second, to improve gender equality in educational opportunities and outcomes.

- Progress towards gender parity in sub-Saharan Africa has been slow and uneven. At the primary level, the mean regional GPI rose from 0.85 in 1999 to 0.89 in 2006 and more than half the countries in the region had yet to achieve gender parity. Important gender disparities in primary GERs are still reported in many countries. The Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and the Niger had fewer than eighty girls enrolled in primary school for every hundred boys in 2006. On the other hand, parity has been achieved in fifteen of the forty-one countries with data.[4] These outcomes demonstrate that gender differences in education can be overcome through public policy action and changes in attitudes. In Lesotho, for instance, parity was achieved through public policies that corrected a bias against boys linked with livestock herding.

- As in other regions, girls in sub-Saharan Africa are often less likely to repeat grades than boys. However, in several countries of the region[5] the percentage of female primary school repeaters was higher than for males in 2006. In most sub-Saharan African countries, girls also have greater chance of reaching the final primary school grade. Yet girls' survival rate to the last grade in 2005 was much lower than boys' in the Central African Republic, Chad and Togo.

- At the secondary level, gender gaps existed in all of the region's countries with data in 2006 except Mauritius and Swaziland, and the mean regional GPI of GER was 0.80, slightly lower than in 1999 (0.82). Overall, sub-Saharan Africa combined low participation in secondary education and low GPIs. In Benin, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali and the Niger, the secondary GERs for girls were less than 70% of those for boys. On the other hand, Cape Verde, Lesotho, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles and South Africa had significant disparities favouring girls.

- In about two-thirds of the countries with data, gender disparities were reduced in secondary education between 1999 and 2006, with improvements of more than 20% in Benin, Chad, the Gambia, Guinea, Togo and Uganda. During the same period, gender disparities increased in several countries, including Cameroon, Eritrea, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Seychelles.

- At tertiary level women and men are at parity only in Botswana and Swaziland (although the tertiary GER remains

4. The countries having achieved gender parity are Botswana, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

5. Chad, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, the Niger, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

low in both at 5% and 4%, respectively). The majority of the other countries with data have enrolment gaps in tertiary education favouring male students, with an average GPI of 0.67. In some countries, including the Central African Republic, Chad, Eritrea, the Gambia and the Niger, fewer than thirty women were enrolled for every hundred men in 2006. On the other hand, more women were enrolled in tertiary education in Cape Verde, Lesotho, Mauritius and South Africa (Figure 3).

- Within countries there is a strong association between poverty and gender inequalities in education. Gender differences in net attendance rates tend to be wider for poorer households in countries with relatively low school attendance. This is the case in countries including Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Mali, the Niger, Senegal and Zambia. In Mali, the GPI of the primary net attendance rate in 2001 was 0.60 for the poorest quintile, whereas many more girls in the richest 20% of households attended primary school (GPI of 0.89). The gap was even more striking at the secondary level, with a GPI of about 0.30 for the bottom quintile compared with 0.63 for the richest group.

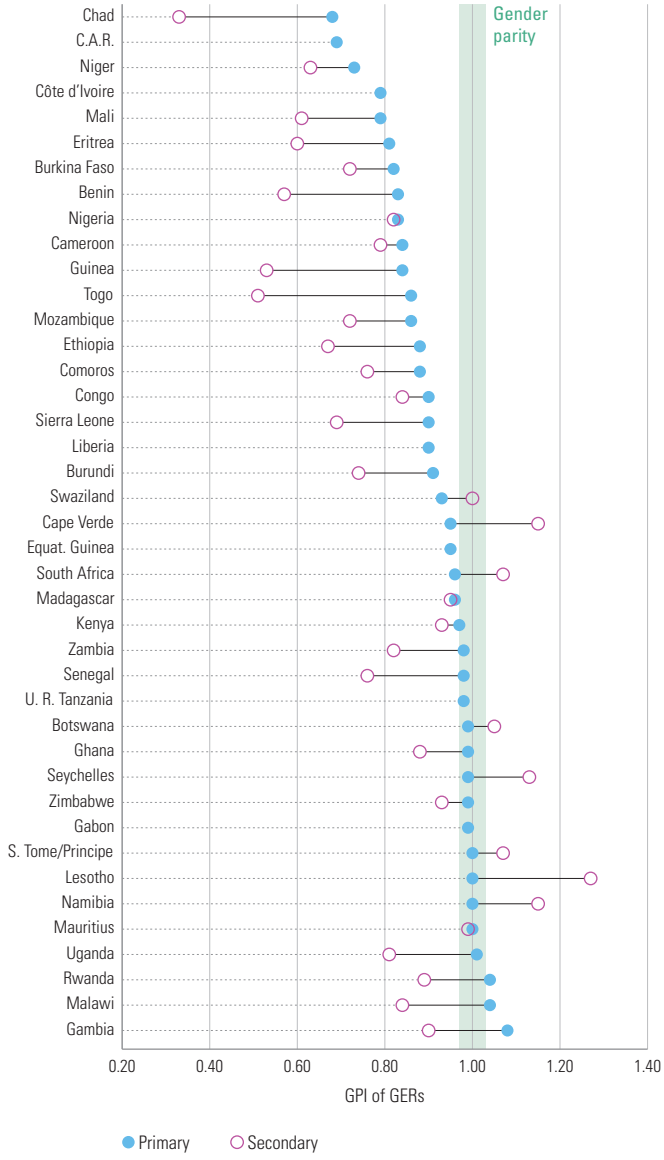
- For school attendance, poverty weighs more heavily on girls than boys – far more so, in some cases. The attendance disparity ratios of the richest to poorest quintile are significantly higher for girls than for boys in Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Mali and the Niger. These ratios say something important about the unequal distribution of opportunity. For example, in Mali girls from the richest households are four times more likely to be attending primary school than the poorest girls, rising to eight times at secondary level.

- Wealth disparities interact with wider social, economic and cultural factors to disadvantage girls. As an important cross-country research exercise shows, being born into a group that is indigenous, a linguistic minority, of low caste or geographically isolated can magnify disadvantage.

- Reducing gender disparities in formal education does not automatically translate into gender equality in educational opportunities and outcomes. Girls and boys achieve very different outcomes in school, not just in overall performance but also by subject. Education systems and classroom practices partly explain these differences, but such school-based factors interact with wider social, cultural and economic forces that structure expectations, aspirations and performance along gender lines. Four distinctive themes emerge from a compilation of recent research and assessments:

- *Girls continue to outperform boys in reading literacy and language arts.* This effect holds across a diverse group of countries, including those with significant gender disparities in school participation, such as Burkina Faso.

Figure 3: Changes in gender disparities in primary and secondary gross enrolment ratios, 2006



Historically, boys have outperformed girls in mathematics in all grades of primary and secondary education – but that picture is changing. Girls increasingly perform at levels equal to or better than those of boys. For example, in Francophone Africa, among students tested in the assessments carried out by the Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN (PASEC), there were no appreciable gender differences in mathematics achievement at second-grade level; in the fifth grade, small gender differences in favour of boys were reported in half the eight participating countries. Among sixth graders tested in fourteen countries or territories by the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), significant male advantages in mathematics were present in Kenya, Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zanzibar.

On the other hand, girls outperformed boys in mathematics in a number of countries, including Seychelles.

Though boys are still doing better than girls in science, more often than not the difference is statistically insignificant.

In tertiary education, subject choice is still marked by strong gender selection effects, with male dominance in science and engineering, and higher shares of female enrolment in fields such as education, health and welfare. In the few countries with data available, the share of females enrolled in science was below 20% in 2006 in countries including Botswana, the Gambia, Guinea and Nigeria (4%). Their proportion was also quite low in engineering, below 10% in Ghana and Swaziland. By contrast, women are overrepresented in fields long considered 'feminine', such as education (up to 72% in South Africa). Recent studies indicate complex socialization processes influence gender differences in choice of subject areas. These include poor career counselling, lack of role models, negative attitudes from families, fear of mathematics and fear of being in the minority.

- Recent research underlines a strong association between the degree of gender equality in society at large and the size of gender gaps in mathematics achievement. Teacher attitudes and practices that translate into different treatment of boys and girls can also affect cognitive development and reinforce gender stereotyping. So can gender bias in textbooks.

- Female teachers can serve as role models for young girls, potentially countering gender stereotypes. In sub-Saharan Africa, as elsewhere, female teachers tend to be more represented in lower levels of education while the reverse is true at higher levels. They also tend to be clustered in urban schools. A recent survey in eleven middle-income countries shows that pupils in rural primary schools are more likely than urban pupils to be taught by male teachers. Rural girls thus have less chance of contact with female role models who might raise their expectations and self-confidence.

Quality of education

The ultimate aim of EFA is that children receive the basic skills they need to enrich their lives, expand their opportunities and participate in society. The quality of the education they receive – in terms of what they learn, under what conditions and the crucial role of teachers – is key.

Learning outcomes

- Evidence from many countries suggests that improving learning outcomes remains an enormous challenge. Results from SACMEQ II (2000–2002) indicate that fewer than 25% of grade 6 children reached the 'desirable' level of reading literacy in Botswana, Kenya, South Africa and Swaziland, and fewer than 10% in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Uganda and Zambia. The deep learning deficits in the region are also confirmed by international assessments. The Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2006 showed that only 22% of grade 4 students in South Africa demonstrated basic reading ability – i.e. reaching level 1, the lowest international benchmark – compared with 95% in most North American and Western European countries.

- International assessments tend to understate the divide between developed and developing countries since they assess learning outcomes only among schooled children. The exclusion of out-of-school children in such assessments can distort national learning profiles. In Ghana, tests of language and mathematics among out-of-school youth found lower achievement levels than among enrolled students.

- Disparities in learning outcomes are most pronounced within countries, often linked to poverty and other forms of disadvantage. Inequality exists at every level: between regions, communities, schools and classrooms. Results from PIRLS 2006 indicated that the top 5% of students in South Africa scored five times higher than the bottom 5%.

- Disparities in learning achievements within a given country can be explained by three factors: student background, the education system and school context.

Student background: Apart from inherent ability, how well a student does in school is the product of social, economic and cultural circumstances, such as gender, home language and parental education. Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds generally obtain lower scores than students from more advantaged backgrounds.

Education system: The way an education system is organized – including promotion policies, school leaving exams, ability grouping and multigrade teaching – can have a significant impact on learning outcomes. Practices such as extended ECCE provision can increase equity, while others, such as selective academic streams, can lead to greater disparities.

School context: Sufficiently resourced schools, effective teachers and dynamic classrooms are crucial for learning. Research in recent years has underlined the importance of the school environment. Learning assessments in Madagascar and the Niger found that having electricity in the classroom or school significantly improved outcomes. In Guinea access to books significantly improved learning. Poor and unequal provision of school resources is widespread in sub-Saharan Africa. SACMEQ II found that over half the grade 6 students in Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia attended classrooms that did not have a single book. In these and other countries, 25% to 40% of teachers did not possess a manual in the subjects they taught. Significant percentages of Nigerian students in grades 4 and 6 reported lacking textbooks: 30% in English, 50% in mathematics, 65% in social studies and 75% in science.

- In many developing countries key school resources are unequally distributed between urban and rural areas. Poor children are more likely to attend inadequately equipped schools, which exacerbates other inequalities. Clearly, governance decisions concerning school infrastructure, classroom processes and the recruitment, deployment and effectiveness of teachers, as well as the student body composition, matter a great deal for learning.

Teachers

Teachers are the front line providers of quality education. The ways they are recruited, trained and deployed across schools play a key role in learning outcomes and in reducing inequalities.

- More than 2.5 million teachers worked in primary education institutions in sub-Saharan Africa in 2006, an increase of 29% since 1999. The 42% increase in the number of secondary school teachers, to 1.2 million, was even more impressive. Despite these positive trends, 1.6 million additional primary school teachers will have to be recruited in the region by 2015 if UPE is to be achieved.[6]

- There is a broad consensus that a pupil/teacher ratio (PTR) of 40:1 is an approximate ceiling for a primary school learning environment of good quality. Sub-Saharan Africa is characterized by marked teacher shortages, with an average PTR of 45:1 in 2006, up from 41:1 in 1999. The situation is worrying in some countries: in Chad, Mozambique and Rwanda, national primary PTRs exceeded 60:1 in 2006. Overall, the supply of new teachers in the region has failed to keep pace with increases in primary school enrolment. Particularly sharp increases in PTRs are evident in Kenya, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

- Trained teachers are in short supply in many countries. In primary education, the median share of trained primary school teachers was 85% in sub-Saharan Africa in 2006, although with large variations across countries. The share of trained primary school teachers varied from below 40% in Chad, Madagascar and Togo to around 100% in Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania. Several of the few countries with data increased the percentage of trained primary school teachers between 1999 and 2006. In particular, Namibia and Rwanda raised the proportion of trained primary teachers by about 50% or more. However, countries including Ghana, Lesotho and the Niger moved in the opposite direction, with percentages of trained primary teachers declining.

- Excessive PTRs, shortages of trained teachers and questions about teachers' skills point to wide-ranging governance problems. Teacher shortages often result from inadequate investment in education and questionable incentive structures for teacher recruitment and retention. At primary level in particular, teacher training is often fragmented and incomplete – in some cases, non-existent.

- National PTRs often mask large disparities within countries, again influenced by location, wealth and type of school. In Nigeria, PTRs in the state of Bayelsa were five times higher than in Lagos. PTRs can also vary according to whether the school is publicly funded. Public-sector school teachers in Rwanda work in classes that on average are more than two and a half times the size of classes in private schools. Distribution of trained teachers is also unequal. In Ghana untrained teachers are concentrated in the north, which has the lowest economic development and the most out-of-school children. In 2004/05, the percentage of trained teachers was a third lower in the forty most deprived districts of the country than in other districts.

- Excessive PTRs and shortages of trained teachers are one part of the problem. Other factors affecting the quality of teaching and learning include:

Teacher absenteeism: In a recent study, teacher absenteeism rates in primary schools averaged 27% in Uganda. Data for Ghana, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania suggest that teacher absenteeism is more pronounced in public-sector schools, in schools with poorer infrastructure, in rural areas, in poorer states and in schools serving children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. In countries participating in SACMEQ II, teacher absenteeism was shown to have significant negative effects on mathematics tests. In Uganda, the economic costs of teacher absenteeism represent 24% of current expenditure in primary education.

HIV/AIDS: Although teacher mortality rates due to HIV/AIDS are decreasing or are reasonably stable, the epidemic continues to damage lives and education systems. In South Africa, HIV prevalence among teachers was 12.7% in 2004; projections show it declining slightly by 2015. In Kenya, where 14,500 teachers are estimated to be HIV-positive, between four and six teachers die each day due to AIDS. In Mozambique, HIV/AIDS kills 1,000 teachers a year: it is estimated that 19,200 teachers and 100 education officials will have died during the current decade. Teachers suffering from HIV/AIDS are more likely to be absent or transferred (particularly in rural areas further from medical facilities) as a result of opportunistic infections.

Low teacher morale: Teacher retention and absenteeism, and the quality of teaching are heavily influenced by whether teachers are motivated and how much job satisfaction they feel. Evidence suggests many countries face a crisis in teacher morale that is mostly related to poor salaries, working conditions and limited opportunities for professional development.

6. These estimates do not take into account of additional investments for teacher recruitment and training. Projections in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, Uganda and Zambia show that over 321,000 new lower secondary teachers would be needed between 2006 and 2015 to reduce dropout and repetition at all levels by 25% and increase primary to lower secondary transition rates by 25%. Kenya and Malawi, for example, would have to double teacher numbers to meet these goals.

The EFA Development Index

While each EFA goal is important in its own right, what ultimately matters is progress on all fronts. The EFA Development Index (EDI) helps capture overall EFA progress. Ideally, it should include all six EFA goals, but due to serious data constraints, it currently focuses on the four most easily quantifiable EFA goals, attaching equal weight to each: universal primary education, adult literacy, gender parity and equality, and education quality.[7]

For the school year ending in 2006, it was possible to calculate EDI values for twenty-seven countries in sub-Saharan Africa with data on all four goals, out of a total of forty-five. Among the many countries excluded are mostly fragile states, including those in conflict or post-conflict situations (Table 1).

- Seychelles has achieved all four of the most quantifiable EFA goals.
- Nine countries are midway to achieving EFA as a whole, with EDI values between 0.80 and 0.94. Most show uneven progress. Participation in primary education is often high, with deficits in other areas, such as adult literacy (Kenya, Swaziland and Zambia), education quality as measured by survival rate to grade 5 (Sao Tome and Principe, South Africa), or both (South Africa).
- Seventeen countries, more than 60% of the twenty-seven in the EDI sample, are far from achieving the EFA goals, with EDI scores below 0.80. Except in a few cases where participation of primary school-age children is relatively high (e.g. Madagascar and Malawi), these low EDI countries face multiple challenges: low education participation, widespread adult illiteracy, gender disparities and inequalities, and poor education quality. For these countries, major improvements are needed on all four components.
- Changes in the EDI between 1999 and 2006 could be analysed for ten of the twenty-seven countries covered. Almost all recorded increases – significant ones in some cases. Though absolute EDI values remained low in Ethiopia and Mozambique, they increased by more than 25% over the period. Chad was the only country in the region where the EDI decreased – and its fall was the world's largest. Chad ranked last in the EDI list of 129 countries worldwide in 2006, well behind all others.
- Increased school participation was the primary driver of progress in the EDI. In Ethiopia, the level of participation more than doubled. The country also experienced gains in adult literacy (+35%) and school retention (+14%).

7. UPE is proxied by the total primary NER (the ratio of the number of children of primary school-going age enrolled in either primary or secondary education to the total number of children of primary school-going age); adult literacy by the literacy rate of persons aged 15 and above; gender parity and equality by a gender-specific EFA index (GEI) an average of the GPIs for primary and secondary GERs and for the adult literacy rate; and education quality by the survival rate to grade 5. The EDI value for a given country is an arithmetic mean of these four indicators. It falls between 0 and 1, with 1 representing achievement of EFA.

Table 1: Mean distance from the four EFA goals

EFA achieved *(EDI between 0.97 and 1.00)*	Close to EFA *(EDI between 0.95 and 0.96)*
Seychelles (1)	None
Intermediate position *(EDI between 0.80 and 0.94)*	**Far from EFA** *(EDI below 0.80)*
Botswana, Cape Verde, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia (9)	Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo (17)

Overall EFA achievement: inequalities within counties remain the rule

The EDI provides a snapshot based on national averages. But progress towards EFA, as the word 'all' implies, should be shared equally across the whole of society. One drawback of the standard EDI is that it does not capture variation based on wealth and others indicators of disadvantage. To address this shortcoming, an EFA Inequality Index for Income Groups (EIIIG) was constructed for thirty-five developing countries, including twenty-two in sub-Saharan Africa, using household survey data.[8] The EIIIG reveals that:

- There are large disparities in overall EFA achievement between wealth groups in almost all of the twenty-one countries covered in sub-Saharan Africa. Wealth disparities are particularly wide in Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique and the Niger, where the EIIIG for the richest wealth group is more than twice that of the poorest group. In Ethiopia, which had the widest inequality in overall EFA achievement, the EIIIG for the highest wealth quintile was 0.873 in 2003, compared with 0.344 for the lowest quintile. Disparities within wealth groups were less pronounced in the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.
- Progress towards overall EFA achievement has benefited the poorest in most countries. In Benin and Ethiopia the difference between richest and poorest decreased by 15%. On the other hand, inequalities in overall EFA achievement between the poorest and richest households increased particularly in Kenya and Nigeria.
- Overall EFA achievement is greater in urban than in rural areas, whatever the wealth group. Rural residents are particularly disadvantaged in Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia and Mali, where the urban EIIIG is at least twice the level registered in rural areas.

8. The EIIIG uses a different set of indicators to provide a measure similar to the EDI, showing distribution of overall EFA achievement within countries by wealth and by rural/urban location. The EIIIG differs from the EDI in three main ways. The total primary net attendance rate is used rather than the total primary NER. As many household surveys do not include literacy rates, this EIIIG component is based on the proportion of 15- to 25-year-olds with five or more years of education. Finally, the survival rate for the EIIIG is defined as the proportion of 17- to 27-year-olds who report having at least five years of education among those who reported having at least one year of education.

Raising quality and strengthening equity: why governance matters

Education governance is not an abstract concept. It affects whether children have access to well-resourced schools that are responsive to local needs. It is also concerned with ensuring that teachers are trained and motivated, and that teachers and schools are accountable to parents and communities for improving learning outcomes. Education governance is about how policies are formulated, priorities identified, resources allocated, and reforms implemented and monitored.

Governance reform is a prominent part of the EFA agenda. The Dakar Framework for Action set out broad principles, which include creating responsive, accountable and participatory education systems. There is a widely held conviction that moving decision-making away from remote government agencies and making it more local and transparent will help education service providers be more responsive to the needs and concerns of the poor. However, experience in both developed and developing countries points to highly variable results. Two key findings emerge. First, there is no blueprint for good governance; each country has to develop its own national and local solutions. Second, governments have attached insufficient weight to equity when designing governance reforms. There is an urgent need to ensure that the interests of the poor, marginalized and vulnerable are placed firmly at the centre of the governance agenda.

The Report focuses on four areas that highlight some of the most important currents in governance reform:

Financing education for equity

Additional funding is needed if the world is to achieve the Dakar goals. But increasing funding is part of a broader set of education policy challenges. Countries also need to improve efficiency and develop strategies addressing inequalities in education finance if EFA is to be achieved.

- In many countries, corruption is a major source of inefficiency and inequity – the former because it means more public money provides fewer inputs and the latter because the costs of corruption invariably fall most heavily on the poor. Monitoring the use of funds through the *tracking of public expenditure* can help reduce corruption.

- Public spending on education has the potential to redress inequalities, but often reinforces them instead. Several governments in sub-Saharan Africa, including those of Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, have developed various approaches aimed at making spending more equitable. Among these are provision of *school grants* and the elaboration of *funding formulas* in which allocations are adjusted according to need. However, outcomes have been mixed. In Kenya, the government established a school grant of US$14 per student to enable schools to cover losses from the withdrawal of tuition fees and to increase spending on materials, maintenance and operations. The grants have improved availability of textbooks and other materials. They have also been used to fund boarding schools to improve access for children living in sparsely populated areas.

- *Financial decentralization* can exacerbate the gaps between rich and poor areas. Unless central governments retain a strong role in redistributing financial resources from richer to poorer areas, the financing gaps in education are likely to widen. Recent experiences from Nigeria highlight the risks involved. The wealthiest states and regions with the highest education participation received the lion's share of the country's federal resources, in some cases up to five times more than poorer areas. The situation has been exacerbated by low local revenue-raising in poorer regions. This system has reinforced Nigeria's large disparities in education funding. On the other hand, South Africa's formula for financial decentralization has a strong redistributive component aimed at overcoming inequalities inherited from the apartheid era. The largest component, known as an equitable share transfer, is weighted to reflect levels of poverty and the costs of achieving minimum national norms in areas such as health and education. As a result, resource allocation to schools in South Africa has become more equitable.

Choice, competition and voice: school governance reform and EFA

School governance reform aims to strengthen the voice of the poor and increase their choices by transferring responsibility to communities, parents and private providers. An overarching lesson from experience is that such reform is not a substitute for government ensuring that the public education system is of good quality.

- *School-based management* describes a range of reforms that aim to give teachers, parents and communities more autonomy over decision-making in schools. In some cases these reforms have improved learning achievements and strengthened equity. More widely, though, there is limited evidence of improvement in either learning outcomes or teaching practices.

- Encouraging *participation by parents and communities in decision-making* can make schools more responsive to local needs. However, local power structures associated with poverty and social inequality can still limit the influence of the poor and marginalized. For instance, one study reviewing parental participation in the management of rural schools in South Africa found that the language employed, the use of technical jargon, ways of addressing the parents and

perceptions all affected participation. This might explain why a survey in Gauteng province found that, despite a general view that parental participation had increased, real participation remained limited: only 10% of parents had voted in elections for school boards.

- Expanding school choice is widely viewed as an incentive for schools to improve their performance. Some governments use *vouchers* and other instruments to facilitate transfers from public to private providers of education, or *contract out the management of government schools* to non-state providers. However, these reforms have not unambiguously raised academic achievement standards. And often they have actually widened inequalities.

- *Low-fee private schools* are changing the education landscape in some parts of the world. In Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria, the number of low-fee private primary schools has grown rapidly in recent years. This growth is a symptom of failure in the availability or quality of government schools. For example, residents of some slums in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, cannot choose to send their children to government schools for the simple reason that there are none. However, low-fee private schools risk widening the gap between those who can and cannot afford to pay. There are also questions about the quality of the education they provide.

Strengthening teacher governance and monitoring

Many school systems fail to provide an education that meets even the most basic standards for quality and equity. To address this, attention needs to be paid to teacher recruitment, deployment and motivation, together with effective use of information from learning assessments and school supervision.

- From one perspective, *teacher salaries* are viewed as crowding out spending on learning materials and other aspects of education provision. From an alternative perspective, they are seen as too low, with obvious implications for teacher motivation and standards. In sub-Saharan Africa, teacher pay levels are perilously near, or even below, the poverty line. In some cases salaries have fallen precipitously. In Malawi, average teacher salaries were 30% lower in real terms in 2004 than in 1992. At the equivalent of just US$3.50 per day, a teacher's average pay is below the amount needed to cover the most immediate household needs.

- Hiring *contract teachers* can help address teacher shortages at lower cost. This is particularly the case in West Africa. Over a third of teachers in Guinea, the Niger and Togo are contract teachers. The increase in the supply of contract teachers has enabled governments to reduce PTRs in several countries. However, relying on contract teachers can weaken quality by lowering the standard of the teaching staff or reducing overall teacher morale. For example, contract teachers in Togo appear to provide lower-quality education. An analysis of data from the PASEC learning assessment finds that, controlling for student background and for teacher education and experience, students in classes taught by contract teachers performed worse than those taught by civil service teachers.

- Teacher deployment is often inequitable within countries, which can exacerbate inequality in learning. Urban bias is a systemic problem. In Namibia, 40% of teachers in rural schools in the north are qualified, compared with 92% in the capital. Two-thirds of urban teachers in Uganda are qualified overall, but only half of rural teachers are. Prioritizing *training of teachers from under-represented groups*, together with *local recruitment*, can make a difference.

- Some governments see *performance-related pay* as a strategy to improve teacher performance, including by reducing teacher absenteeism. But there is little evidence that it produces positive results – and some evidence that it has perverse effects, such as leading teachers to focus on the best-performing students.

- Using information from *learning assessments to monitor* quality standards and equity is one of the keys to improving learning outcomes. Increasingly, information from learning assessments is being used to identify problems and inform policy, with encouraging results.

- *School supervision* is an essential aspect of monitoring, not only to oversee teacher and school performance but also to identify and support needed quality improvements. Uganda has made efforts to foster more cooperative approaches aimed at raising learning achievement and to tailor its supervision service to what is feasible with limited resources. This supervision reform drew on experience in Masindi, one of the country's poorest districts. An extensive district-based programme of school improvement, combining internal school evaluation and external district-based supervision, produced remarkable results: Masindi went from one of the poorest-performing districts in 2000 to one of the top five in 2007 in the national primary-school leaving exam.

An integrated approach to education and poverty reduction

Sustained progress towards EFA depends on the effective integration of education planning within wider poverty reduction strategies, for an obvious reason: poverty, poor nutrition and ill health are formidable barriers to success in education.

- *Poverty reduction strategy papers* (PRSPs) have failed to make the link between education and poverty reduction, with a weak link to the EFA agenda, limited consideration

for equity in target-setting, a disconnect with broader governance reform and poor integration of cross-sectoral approaches. Twenty-eight low-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa now have operational PRSPs. Despite the difficulties, some countries have succeeded in articulating a more integrated approach to education planning. For example, the United Republic of Tanzania has steadily strengthened its institutional capacity, resulting in better integration of education within the national poverty reduction framework.

- *Social protection programmes* are making a strong contribution to education by addressing problems in health, nutrition and child labour.

- Political commitment together with *consultation processes* that provide opportunities for civil society organizations to participate in policy discussions are crucial. The challenge is to extend participation to make sure the voices of the poor and vulnerable are heard.

Financing education

National financing

- Low-income countries tend to invest the smallest proportion of GNP in education. In sub-Saharan Africa, about half of all low-income countries (eleven of the twenty-one with relevant data) spent less than 4% of their national income on education in 2006. For all countries in the region, the median education expenditure as a share of GNP was 4.4% in 2006. However, the share of GNP devoted to education varied greatly by country, with particularly low shares in the Central African Republic and Equatorial Guinea (1.4% each) and high shares in Botswana (9.3%) and Lesotho (10.8%).

- The priority given to education in overall government expenditure was relatively high in 2006, with education's share in total government expenditure at or above 17% in more than half of the region's countries with data. Lesotho devoted 30% and Senegal 26% of total government expenditure to education in 2006. By contrast, the shares were modest in Chad (10%), Congo (8%) and Equatorial Guinea (4%). Among the few countries with data available, the shares have increased in Benin, Cameroon and Lesotho, but fallen in the Congo, Mauritius and South Africa.

- In 2006, the median per-student expenditure in primary school was US$167 in sub-Saharan Africa compared with over US$5,000 in most developed countries (in constant 2005 dollars at purchasing power parity). Sub-Saharan Africa was home to 15% of the world's 5-to 25-year-olds but accounted for just 2% of global spending on education.

- Spending on teachers dominates education budgets, especially in the poorest countries. For example, in Zambia the share of primary-school teachers' compensation in current expenditure on primary education was 93% in 2006 in public institutions, while less than 4% went to textbooks, and other teaching and learning materials. The large share of teacher remuneration in education financing is not, as is sometimes assumed, an indicator that teachers are overpaid: many have salary levels close to the poverty line. Rather, it is an indication that the primary education sector is under-resourced.

International aid

- While the main responsibility for financing basic education lies with governments, external aid can make a difference. In Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, increases in international aid have facilitated the abolition of primary school tuition fees, leading to a large expansion of primary school enrolment.
- External aid to education is an important source of finance for EFA in most countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Countries in the region received an annual average of US$3.3 billion in aid to education over 2005 and 2006, of which US$1.8 billion was allocated to the basic education level.
- The share of sub-Saharan Africa in total aid to education has remained constant since 1999, with about one-third of the total. The region's share of total aid to basic education has decreased slightly since 1999, to just over 40%.
- On average, aid to basic education per primary school-age child in sub-Saharan Africa amounted to US$15 in 2005–2006. Aid allocations to individual low-income countries varied considerably among countries in the region, partly because of historical and political factors. While Chad, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Togo and Zimbabwe received less than US$5 of aid to basic education per primary school-age child in 2005–2006, the share was above US$70 in Cape Verde, Eritrea, Mali, and Sao Tome and Principe.
- How aid is delivered is as important as how much aid is delivered. Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa have seen a shift in recent years from numerous individual aid projects to national sector or subsector programmes. While the shift has been far from easy, it has yielded some positive results. These include greater sector coherence, better oversight of donor activities and increased financial flexibility. In Burkina Faso, channelling aid through government management structures has led to more effective budgeting and financial reporting from the Ministry of Basic Education, more predictable funds and, over time, an increase in the number of donors accepting the common funding arrangement.

Acronyms and definitions

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.

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.

GIR: gross intake rate. Total number of new entrants to a given grade of primary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population at the official school entrance age for that grade.

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.

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: Sub-Saharan Africa, selected education indicators

Country or territory	Total population (000) 2006	Compulsory education (age group)	EFA Development Index (EDI) 2006	Adult literacy rate (15 and over) 1985–1994[1] Total (%)	Adult literacy rate (15 and over) 1985–1994[1] GPI (F/M)	Adult literacy rate (15 and over) 2000–2006[1] Total (%)	Adult literacy rate (15 and over) 2000–2006[1] GPI (F/M)	Early childhood care and education: Child survival and well-being: Under-5 mortality rate (‰) 2005–2010	Early childhood care and education: Child survival and well-being: Moderate and severe stunting (%) 1996–2006[1]	Early childhood care and education: Pre-primary education: GER 1999 Total (%)	Early childhood care and education: Pre-primary education: GER 2006 Total (%)
Angola	16 557	6-9	…	…	…	67	0.65	231	45	…	…
Benin[4]	8 760	6-11	0.643	27	0.42	40	0.52	146	38	4	6
Botswana	1 858	6-15	0.867	69	1.09	82	1.00	68	23	…	***15***
Burkina Faso[4]	14 359	6-16	0.538	14	0.42	26	0.52	181	35	2	2
Burundi	8 173	7-12	0.757	37	0.57	59	0.78	169	53	0.8	2
Cameroon[4]	18 175	6-11	…	…	…	68	0.78	144	30	11	19
Cape Verde	519	6-11	0.883	63	0.71	83	0.88	29	…	…	53
Central African Republic	4 265	6-15	…	34	0.42	49	0.52	163	38	…	*2*
Chad	10 468	6-11	0.408	12	…	26	0.31	189	41	…	***0.8***
Comoros	818	6-13	…	…	…	…	…	63	44	2	***3***
Congo	3 689	6-16	…	74	0.79	86	0.88	102	26	2	9
Côte d'Ivoire	18 914	6-15	…	34	0.53	49	0.63	183	34	2	3
D. R. Congo	60 644	6-13	…	…	…	67	0.67	196	38	…	…
Equatorial Guinea	496	7-11	…	…	…	87	0.86	155	39	34	***44***
Eritrea	4 692	7-14	0.621	…	…	…	…	77	38	5	14
Ethiopia[4]	81 021	7-12	0.598	27	0.51	36	0.46	145	47	1	**3**
Gabon	1 311	6-16	…	72	0.82	85	0.91	86	21	…	…
Gambia[4]	1 663	7-12	…	…	…	…	…	128	22	18	*17*
Ghana[4]	23 008	6-14	…	…	…	64	0.80	90	22	39	**60**
Guinea[4]	9 181	7-12	0.608	…	…	29	0.43	156	35	…	7
Guinea-Bissau	1 646	7-12	…	…	…	…	…	195	…	3	…
Kenya[4]	36 553	6-13	0.816	…	…	74	0.90	104	30	44	49
Lesotho[4]	1 995	6-12	0.788	…	…	82	1.23	98	38	21	18
Liberia[4]	3 579	5-11	…	41	0.57	54	0.83	205	39	41	100
Madagascar[4]	19 159	6-10	0.737	…	…	71	0.85	106	48	3	8
Malawi	13 571	6-13	0.735	49	0.51	71	0.80	132	46	…	…
Mali[4]	11 968	7-15	0.570	…	…	23	0.50	200	38	2	3
Mauritius	1 252	6-11	0.946	80	0.88	87	0.94	17	10	96	101
Mozambique[4]	20 971	6-12	0.622	…	…	44	0.56	164	41	…	…
Namibia	2 047	6-15	0.865	76	0.95	88	0.98	66	24	21	22
Niger[4]	13 737	7-12	0.470	…	…	30	0.36	188	50	1	2
Nigeria	144 720	6-14	0.725	55	0.65	71	0.79	187	38	…	*14*
Rwanda[4]	9 464	7-12	0.712	58	…	65	0.84	188	45	…	…
Sao Tome and Principe[4]	155	7-12	0.857	73	0.73	87	0.88	95	23	25	**34**
Senegal[4]	12 072	7-12	0.643	27	0.48	42	0.60	115	16	3	9
Seychelles	86	6-15	0.974	88	1.02	92	1.01	…	…	109	**109**
Sierra Leone[4]	5 743	6-12	…	…	…	37	0.52	278	40	…	**5**
Somalia	8 445	…	…	…	…	…	…	193	38	…	…
South Africa	48 282	7-15	0.898	…	…	88	0.98	66	25	21	*38*
Swaziland	1 134	6-12	0.847	67	0.94	80	0.97	114	30	…	***17***
Togo	6 410	6-15	0.686	…	…	53	0.56	126	24	2	*2*
Uganda	29 899	6-12	…	56	0.66	73	0.79	127	32	4	3
U. R. Tanzania	39 459	7-13	…	59	0.67	72	0.83	118	38	…	**32**
Zambia	11 696	7-13	0.842	65	0.79	68	0.78	157	50	…	…
Zimbabwe	13 228	6-12	…	84	0.88	91	0.94	94	29	41	…
	Sum			Weighted average				Weighted average		Weighted average	
Sub-Saharan Africa	745 842	…	…	53	0.71	62	0.75	158	38	9	14
Developing countries	5 284 165	…	…	68	0.77	79	0.85	81	32	27	36
World	6 578 149	…	…	76	0.85	84	0.89	74	31	33	41

Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009, statistical tables; UNESCO Institute for Statistics; CRS online database (OECD-DAC, 2008).

Primary education										
NER total (%)		GPI of GER (F/M)		Out-of-school children[2]	Survival rate to last grade total (%)		% of trained teachers	Pupil/teacher ratio[3]		
1999	2006	1999	2006	2006 (000)	1999	2005	2006	1999	2006	Country or territory
…	…	0.86	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	Angola
50	80	0.67	0.83	244	…	65	72	53	44	Benin [4]
80	***84***	1.00	***0.99***	***49***	82	*75*	***87***	27	***24***	Botswana
35	47	0.70	0.82	1 215	61	64	87	49	46	Burkina Faso [4]
…	75	0.80	0.91	324	…	78	***88***	57	54	Burundi
…	…	0.82	0.84	…	78	…	62	52	45	Cameroon [4]
99	88	0.96	0.95	9	…	89	81	29	25	Cape Verde
…	46	…	0.69	375	…	39	…	…	…	Central African Republic
51	…	0.58	***0.68***	…	47	*26*	***27***	68	***63***	Chad
49	…	0.85	***0.88***	…	…	*72*	…	35	***35***	Comoros
…	55	0.95	0.90	243	…	…	89	61	55	Congo
52	…	0.74	0.79	…	62	…	…	43	46	Côte d'Ivoire
…	…	0.90	…	…	…	…	…	26	…	D. R. Congo
89	…	0.79	***0.95***	…	…	…	…	57	…	Equatorial Guinea
33	47	0.82	0.81	308	95	74	88	47	47	Eritrea
34	**71**	0.61	**0.88**	**3 721**	51	**58**	…	46	…	Ethiopia [4]
…	…	1.00	*0.99*	…	…	…	…	44	*36*	Gabon
64	62	0.87	1.08	90	…	…	76	33	35	Gambia [4]
57	**72**	0.92	**0.99**	**967**	…	…	**59**	30	**35**	Ghana [4]
45	72	0.64	0.84	389	…	76	68	47	44	Guinea [4]
45	…	0.67	…	…	…	…	…	44	…	Guinea-Bissau
63	75	0.97	0.97	1 371	…	*84*	*99*	32	***40***	Kenya [4]
57	72	1.08	1.00	101	58	62	66	44	40	Lesotho [4]
42	39	0.74	0.90	356	…	…	…	39	19	Liberia [4]
63	96	0.97	0.96	106	51	36	***36***	47	48	Madagascar [4]
98	91	0.96	1.04	202	37	36	…	…	…	Malawi
46	61	0.70	0.79	793	66	73	…	62	56	Mali [4]
91	95	1.00	1.00	6	99	99	100	26	22	Mauritius
52	76	0.74	0.86	954	28	40	65	61	67	Mozambique [4]
73	76	1.01	1.00	89	82	77	***92***	32	31	Namibia
26	43	0.68	0.73	1 245	…	53	92	41	40	Niger [4]
58	***63***	0.79	***0.83***	***8 097***	…	63	***50***	41	***37***	Nigeria
…	***79***	0.98	1.04	***303***	30	31	98	54	66	Rwanda [4]
86	**98**	0.97	**1.00**	**0.6**	…	**61**	…	36	31	Sao Tome and Principe [4]
54	71	0.86	0.98	513	…	53	***100***	49	39	Senegal [4]
…	*99*	0.99	**0.99**	*0.04*	99	…	…	15	**12**	Seychelles
…	…	…	**0.90**	…	…	…	**49**	…	**44**	Sierra Leone [4]
…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	Somalia
94	*88*	0.97	*0.96*	*469*	57	77	…	35	*36*	South Africa
74	***78***	0.95	***0.93***	***45***	64	*71*	***91***	33	***33***	Swaziland
79	80	0.75	0.86	176	…	*68*	***37***	41	38	Togo
…	…	0.92	1.01	…	…	*25*	***85***	57	49	Uganda
50	98	1.00	**0.98**	143	…	**83**	**100**	40	**53**	U. R. Tanzania
68	92	0.92	0.98	150	66	76	…	47	51	Zambia
83	88	0.97	0.99	281	…	…	…	41	38	Zimbabwe
Weighted average		Weighted average		Sum	Median			Weighted average		
56	70	0.85	0.89	35 156	…	67	85	41	45	Sub-Saharan Africa
81	85	0.91	0.94	71 911	…	81	85	27	28	Developing countries
82	86	0.92	0.95	75 177	…	88	…	25	25	World

Data underlined are for 2003.
Data in italics are for 2004.
Data in bold italics are for 2005.
Data in bold are for 2007 or 2006 for survival rate to last grade.

1. Data are for the most recent year available during the period specified.
2. Data reflect the actual number of children not enrolled at all, derived from the age-specific enrolment ratios of primary school age children, which measure the proportion of those who are enrolled in either primary or secondary school (total primary NER).
3. Based on headcounts of pupils and teachers.
4. Fast Track Initiativte (FTI): countries with endorsed sector plans.

Table (continued)

Country or territory	Secondary education: GER in lower secondary 2006 Total (%)	GER in lower secondary 2006 GPI (F/M)	GER in upper secondary 2006 Total (%)	GER in upper secondary 2006 GPI (F/M)	GER in total secondary 1999 Total (%)	GER in total secondary 1999 GPI (F/M)	GER in total secondary 2006 Total (%)	GER in total secondary 2006 GPI (F/M)	Tertiary education GER 2006 Total (%)	Tertiary education GER 2006 GPI (F/M)
Angola	…	…	…	…	13	0.76	…	…	***3***	…
Benin[4]	***41***	***0.58***	***20***	***0.52***	19	0.47	***32***	***0.57***	5	…
Botswana	***89***	***1.07***	***58***	***1.00***	74	1.07	***76***	***1.05***	***5***	***1.00***
Burkina Faso[4]	19	0.75	7	0.61	10	0.62	15	0.72	2	0.46
Burundi	19	0.77	7	0.64	…	…	14	0.74	2	0.43
Cameroon[4]	30	0.80	15	0.78	25	0.83	24	0.79	7	0.72
Cape Verde	99	1.11	61	1.22	…	…	80	1.15	8	1.09
Central African Republic	15	0.68	…	…	…	…	…	…	1	0.28
Chad	***19***	***0.36***	***10***	***0.26***	10	0.26	***15***	***0.33***	***1***	***0.14***
Comoros	***41***	***0.75***	***27***	***0.78***	25	0.81	***35***	***0.76***	*2*	*0.77*
Congo	*57*	*0.88*	*23*	*0.69*	…	…	*43*	*0.84*	…	…
Côte d'Ivoire	…	…	…	…	22	0.54	…	…	…	…
D. R. Congo	…	…	…	…	18	0.52	…	…	…	…
Equatorial Guinea	…	…	…	…	33	0.37	…	…	…	…
Eritrea	46	0.63	19	0.54	21	0.69	31	0.60	*1*	*0.15*
Ethiopia[4]	**39**	**0.67**	**11**	**0.64**	12	0.68	**30**	**0.67**	**3**	**0.34**
Gabon	…	…	…	…	49	0.86	…	…	…	…
Gambia[4]	60	0.95	28	0.80	32	0.66	45	0.90	*1*	*0.24*
Ghana[4]	**69**	**0.91**	**28**	**0.82**	37	0.80	**49**	**0.88**	**6**	**0.54**
Guinea[4]	43	0.58	23	0.42	14	0.37	35	0.53	5	0.28
Guinea-Bissau	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
Kenya[4]	89	0.96	31	0.91	38	0.96	50	0.93	*3*	*0.60*
Lesotho[4]	45	1.29	24	1.22	31	1.35	37	1.27	4	1.19
Liberia[4]	…	…	…	…	29	0.65	…	…	…	…
Madagascar[4]	32	0.96	11	0.89	…	…	24	0.95	3	0.87
Malawi	39	0.87	17	0.77	36	0.70	29	0.84	*0.4*	*0.55*
Mali[4]	39	0.63	17	0.56	16	0.52	28	0.61	***3***	***0.45***
Mauritius	***99***	***1.02***	***80***	***0.96***	76	0.98	***88***	***0.99***	17	1.15
Mozambique[4]	22	0.72	5	0.66	5	0.69	16	0.72	***1***	***0.49***
Namibia	74	1.16	30	1.12	55	1.12	57	1.15	6	0.88
Niger[4]	15	0.65	5	0.61	7	0.60	11	0.63	1	0.29
Nigeria	***35***	***0.84***	***30***	***0.79***	23	0.89	***32***	***0.82***	***10***	***0.69***
Rwanda[4]	***18***	***0.89***	***10***	***0.89***	9	0.99	***13***	***0.89***	***3***	***0.62***
Sao Tome and Principe[4]	70	1.13	28	0.97	…	…	46	1.07	.	.
Senegal[4]	32	0.78	12	0.67	15	0.64	24	0.76	***6***	…
Seychelles	**116**	**1.09**	**106**	**1.21**	113	1.04	**112**	**1.13**	.	.
Sierra Leone[4]	**46**	**0.69**	**17**	**0.69**	…	…	**32**	**0.69**	…	…
Somalia	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
South Africa	*98*	*1.05*	*92*	*1.08*	89	1.13	*95*	*1.07*	15	1.24
Swaziland	***56***	***1.02***	***33***	***0.94***	45	1.00	***47***	***1.00***	4	0.98
Togo	***54***	***0.57***	***20***	***0.31***	28	0.40	***40***	***0.51***	…	…
Uganda	***22***	***0.84***	***10***	***0.68***	10	0.66	***18***	***0.81***	*3*	*0.62*
U. R. Tanzania	…	…	…	…	6	0.82	…	…	**1**	**0.48**
Zambia	***47***	***0.87***	***18***	***0.73***	20	0.77	***30***	***0.82***	…	…
Zimbabwe	58	0.99	31	0.87	43	0.88	40	0.93	…	…
	Weighted average				Weighted average				Weighted average	
Sub-Saharan Africa	38	0.79	24	0.80	24	0.82	32	0.80	5	0.67
Developing countries	75	0.94	46	0.93	52	0.89	60	0.94	17	0.93
World	78	0.95	53	0.95	60	0.92	66	0.95	25	1.06

Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009, statistical tables; UNESCO Institute for Statistics; CRS online database (OECD-DAC, 2008).

Education finance				
Total public expenditure on education as % of GNP		Total aid to basic education (constant 2006 US$ millions)	Total aid to basic education per primary school-age child (constant 2006 US$)	
1999	2006	2005–2006 annual average	2005–2006 annual average	Country or territory
3.4	***2.7***	40	21	Angola
3.0	*4.4*	35	25	Benin [4]
…	**9.3**	17	54	Botswana
…	4.2	118	51	Burkina Faso [4]
3.5	***5.2***	18	14	Burundi
2.1	3.3	30	11	Cameroon [4]
…	6.6	6	78	Cape Verde
…	1.4	10	14	Central African Republic
1.7	***2.3***	7	4	Chad
…	…	6	47	Comoros
6.0	***2.5***	4	7	Congo
5.6	…	9	3	Côte d'Ivoire
…	…	20	2	D. R. Congo
…	1.4	4	69	Equatorial Guinea
5.3	2.4	42	73	Eritrea
3.6	6.0	169	13	Ethiopia [4]
3.5	…	4	20	Gabon
3.1	*2.1*	5	21	Gambia [4]
4.2	***5.5***	121	36	Ghana [4]
2.1	***1.7***	17	12	Guinea [4]
5.6	…	4	17	Guinea-Bissau
5.4	6.9	81	14	Kenya [4]
10.2	10.8	5	14	Lesotho [4]
…	…	6	10	Liberia [4]
2.5	3.1	67	26	Madagascar [4]
4.7	5.9	36	15	Malawi
3.0	4.4	147	74	Mali [4]
4.2	3.9	2	13	Mauritius
2.5	***5.3***	153	39	Mozambique [4]
7.9	6.8	4	10	Namibia
…	3.3	38	17	Niger [4]
…	…	12	1	Nigeria
…	***3.8***	38	26	Rwanda [4]
…	…	2	86	Sao Tome and Principe [4]
3.5	5.0	78	42	Senegal [4]
5.5	6.8	0	24	Seychelles
…	***3.9***	12	15	Sierra Leone [4]
…	…	9	6	Somalia
6.2	5.5	60	8	South Africa
5.7	***6.9***	13	62	Swaziland
4.3	…	5	5	Togo
…	*5.3*	64	10	Uganda
2.2	…	133	19	U. R. Tanzania
2.0	***2.1***	111	49	Zambia
…	…	2	0.7	Zimbabwe
Median		Sum	Weighted average	
3.6	4.4	1 772	15	Sub-Saharan Africa
4.5	4.4	3 595	6	Developing countries
4.5	4.9	4 376	8	World

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Regional overview: sub-Saharan Africa

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