



GLOBAL EDUCATION MONITORING REPORT

2019

GENDER REPORT

# Building bridges for gender equality



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Global  
Education  
Monitoring  
Report

**UNGEI!**  
United Nations Girls'  
Education Initiative

GLOBAL EDUCATION MONITORING REPORT



2019

# Gender report

BUILDING BRIDGES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

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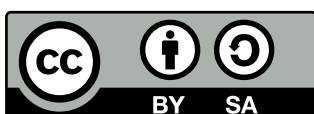
MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN  
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**Gender Report of the Global Education Monitoring Report series**

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 2019 | <i>Building bridges for gender equality</i>                                  |
| 2018 | <i>Meeting our commitments to gender equality in education</i>               |
| 2016 | <i>Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all</i> |

**Previous Gender Reviews of the EFA Global Monitoring Report series**

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| 2015   | <i>Gender and the EFA 2000–2015: Achievements and challenges</i> |
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| 2011   | <i>The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education</i>           |

Cover photo: Biju Boro/UNICEF

Caption: Hutmura Harimati Girls High School, India.

This publication and all related materials are available for download here: [bitly.com/2019gemreport](http://bitly.com/2019gemreport).



# Foreword

Access to a sustainable and quality education is one of the greatest challenges facing the world today and tomorrow. By working to ensure that every child can go to school and also that we can all continue to learn throughout our lives, our goal must be to give everyone the necessary skills to contribute to the development of their societies.

Education is at the heart of the goals that the international community set itself to achieve by 2030. This is why UNESCO is **prioritising gender equality in and through education**. The stakes are twofold: The education of girls and women is, first, a fundamental human right and it is also an essential lever for sustainable development and peace.

For a long time, this issue has been seen through a single prism, that of, achieving parity in schools, which was considered the criteria to measure the success or failure of efforts to integrate girls and young women into education systems. From this point of view, the last twenty years have witnessed a remarkable evolution.

But reality remains more complex: Disparities persist between countries, of course, but the fact today is that, even though some may enjoy greater access to education in parts of the world, gender inequality persists in education. Girls and young women continue to be discriminated against, especially with regard to the opportunities they are offered upon leaving school.

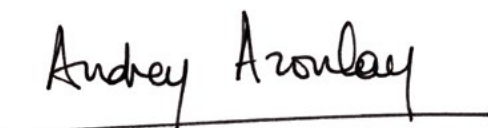
This is why this global Report stresses the need for broader thinking and action to achieve more than just gender parity in education, because, if access to education remains an absolutely vital issue for sustainable development, and we must continue to work to promote it especially when it is not achieved, we must also consider more than just parity in numbers.

To fully achieve gender equality in and through education, we must ensure that girls, once they enter school, remain in school and benefit from opportunities similar to those of boys in their educational journey and at the end of school. This includes making schools a place where gender stereotypes are deconstructed and fought. This is the ambition of the programmes supported by UNESCO to ensure that girls in school not only complete their studies, but also have access to study areas - especially science and technology - where they are still largely a minority.

This Report invites readers to explore all the factors that perpetuate gender inequalities in schools. It provides tools to enable governments to analyse the situation in their own countries and to develop strategies for change. For the first time, this Report also provides a study of national education plans, focusing on countries with the greatest gender disparities in education.

UNESCO stands ready to support governments in developing education policies and plans that support this real inclusion, and to work with all development partners whose major contribution this report highlights, to achieve real equality in our societies, as a necessary condition for development and peace.

Audrey Azoulay  
Director-General of UNESCO

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Audrey Azoulay", is written over a horizontal line.



# Key messages

- Despite progress, just two in three countries have achieved parity in primary, one in two in lower secondary, and one in four in upper secondary education enrolment. A quarter of countries have a large disparity against boys in upper secondary education, with no change since 2000.
- Some regions are progressing faster than others, including Central and Southern Asia, mostly thanks to change in India. But sub-Saharan Africa remains far from parity at all education levels.
- In countries with low primary and secondary completion rates, the relative disadvantage of girls worsens with poverty.
- Parents tend to read more often to girls, one of the factors associated with them outperforming boys in reading in primary school assessments.
- Technical and vocational programmes remain a male bastion, while the opposite is true for tertiary education. Subject choice is also gender segregated. Only just over a quarter of those enrolled in engineering, manufacturing and construction programmes, and in information and communications technology programmes are women.
- Harmful social norms can prevent change from happening in education with women still frequently seen as being wives and caregivers; over a quarter of people think that 'a university education is more important for a boy'. In most countries, girls are also more than twice as likely to be involved in child domestic work than boys.
- Achieving gender equality will not occur without strong political commitment. Laws should ban child marriage and enable pregnant students to go to school. At least 117 countries and territories still allow children to marry.
- Social institutions can be discriminatory and hold back progress for girls and women. One in four countries had a high or very high discrimination level in 2019.
- More commitment is needed to protect girls' right to go back to school after pregnancy in laws and policies. In sub-Saharan Africa, four countries enforce a total ban against their return.
- School-related gender-based violence impacts on school attendance and learning. One in four students in mostly high-income countries and one in three in mostly low- and middle-income countries reported having been bullied in the previous 12 months. Violence is exacerbated in displacement settings.
- Comprehensive sexuality education expands education opportunities, challenges gender norms and promotes gender equality, resulting in more responsible sexual behaviour and fewer early pregnancies.
- Too many schools lack sanitation facilities essential for menstrual hygiene management. Only half of schools in 2016 had access to handwashing facilities with soap and water.
- Teaching is frequently a female profession with men in charge. Nearly 94% of teachers in pre-primary education, but only about half of those in upper secondary education, are female. Many countries struggle to deploy female teachers where they are most needed, as in displacement settings, and there is little training in gender-sensitive teaching, which reinforces gender stereotypes in the classroom.
- Donor aid to gender equality in education needs to lead to sustainable results that are effective, scalable, replicable and participatory. Across OECD DAC member countries, 55% of direct aid to education was gender-targeted, ranging from 6% in Japan to 92% in Canada.
- Many sector plans ignore key priorities for gender equality. Analysis of 20 countries showed that cash and in-kind transfers are the most popular policy, featuring in three in four plans. Curriculum and textbook reform, girls' participation in STEM courses and safe access to schools were the least popular, appearing in only a fifth of countries' plans.
- The plans of Angola, the Central African Republic, Djibouti and Mauritania made scant references to gender inequalities in education, but those of Niger, Guinea and Somalia are strong roadmaps for change.

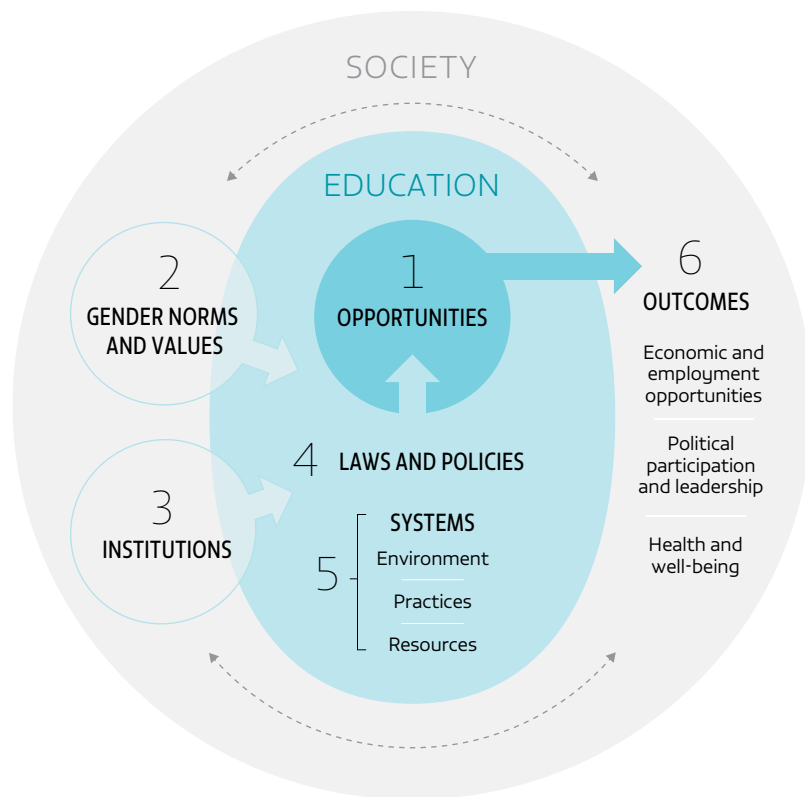


# Introduction

Achieving gender equality in education participation, in the teaching and learning process and in access to social and economic opportunities that education can facilitate are key interlinked ambitions in two of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: SDG 4 on education and SDG 5 on gender equality. These aims are also key to the Education 2030 Framework for Action, which calls on countries to adopt strategies that not only cover access to education for all but also address substantive gender equality issues: ‘supporting gender-sensitive policies, planning and learning environments; mainstreaming gender issues in teacher training and curricula; and eliminating gender-based discrimination and violence in schools’.

The 2019 *Gender Report* is based on a monitoring framework first introduced in the 2016 *Global Education Monitoring Report*. In addition to focusing on gender parity in education participation, attainment and learning achievement, the framework examines broad social and economic contexts (gender norms and institutions) and key education system characteristics (laws and policies, teaching and learning practices, learning environments, and resources). The framework also looks at the relationship between education and selected social and economic outcomes. For instance, a move towards parity in education attainment may increase women’s labour force participation rates, but low levels of labour force participation feed into existing norms and may constrain expansion of education opportunities for women (**Figure 1**).

**FIGURE 1:**  
A broad framework is used to monitor gender equality in education



Source: GEM Report team.

Analysis of the domains of the report's monitoring framework for gender equality in education is further informed by a discussion of intersections between gender, education, migration and displacement. This discussion is based on the theme of the 2019 *Global Education Monitoring Report* (**Box 1**).

Finally, the report outlines a range of approaches that bilateral donors, multilateral donors and non-government organizations (NGOs) have taken in recent years to address selected priority areas in girls' education. It also explores the extent to which education sector plans in 20 education systems with wide disparity at girls' expense envisage adopting and scaling up such approaches. This analysis feeds into the recent debate, spurred by the 2019 G7 French Presidency, on the need to strengthen gender-responsive education sector planning.

### BOX 1:

#### Intersections between education, migration and displacement are not gender-neutral

Being on the move, whether as a migrant or a forcibly displaced person, has gender-specific implications for education responses and outcomes alike. In a few cases, movement creates opportunities to break free from social moulds, but generally it exacerbates gender-based vulnerability. Moreover, the education and skills women have or gain can affect their ability to exercise agency or mitigate vulnerability in migration and displacement contexts. Thus a gender lens should be used in education analyses (North, 2019).

An analysis of internal migration patterns in 58 countries between 1970 and 2011 showed that the share of women did not change much over the decades (Abel and Muttarak, 2017). Exceptions included China, where the gender ratio, formerly skewed towards males, equalized among younger migrant workers (Chiang et al., 2015). Between 1990 and 2017, the share of females in the total international migrant population remained stable at 50%. Looking beyond averages, some countries are major hubs of gender-specific emigration, such as the Philippines for women and Nepal for men (UNDESA, 2017).

However, although the share of women who migrate has not changed radically, the share of women who migrate independently

or for work, rather than as accompanying family members, has increased. This phenomenon has been termed the feminization of migration. Research shows how demand for and supply of migrant women's labour are affected by unequal gender norms in the labour market (Hochschild, 2000; Yeates, 2012).

Among displaced populations, women and girls again account for roughly half of the total (Liebig and Tronstad, 2018). Their condition is particularly vulnerable because of the lack of privacy, protection and security in conflict contexts (ILO, 2017b; O'Neil et al., 2016).

Two compacts endorsed in December 2018 recognized the importance of education for migrants and displaced persons. The Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration, endorsed by 152 of the 193 United Nations member states, outlines a range of non-binding commitments on education in areas including access, content and the need for gender-responsive interventions in non-formal and vocational education (United Nations, 2018a). The Global Compact for Refugees, which espouses the principle of refugee inclusion in national education systems, makes explicit references to the need for flexible programmes for girls (United Nations, 2018b).

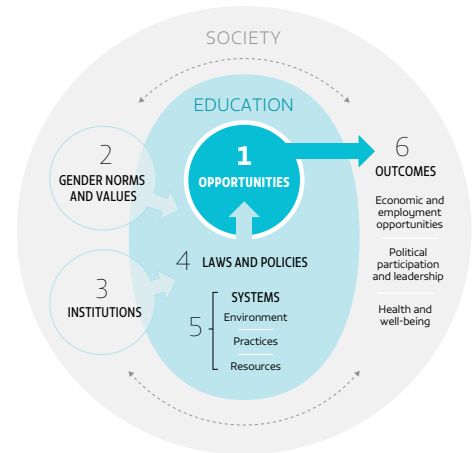


Monyrath, 7, at school in Kampong Cham, Cambodia.

CREDIT: Hanna Adcock/Save the Children

# Despite progress, significant challenges to achieving parity in education opportunities remain

Over the past 25 years, substantial progress has been made towards achieving gender parity thanks to sustained efforts to improve girls' education, including policies and programmes aimed at changing social attitudes, providing financial support to female students and making schools more accessible (UNESCO, 2015). The fifth goal of the Education for All programme envisaged achieving parity by 2005, a target that was missed; however, continuous progress was made throughout the 1990s and 2000s, with the result that parity was reached in 2009 in primary and secondary education and had almost been achieved in youth literacy by 2016. Nevertheless, gender disparity to the disadvantage of females remained in adult literacy, where 63% of illiterate adults are female. And in tertiary education, gender disparity flipped to the disadvantage of males: As early as 2004, men became less likely than women to participate at the tertiary level (Figure 2).



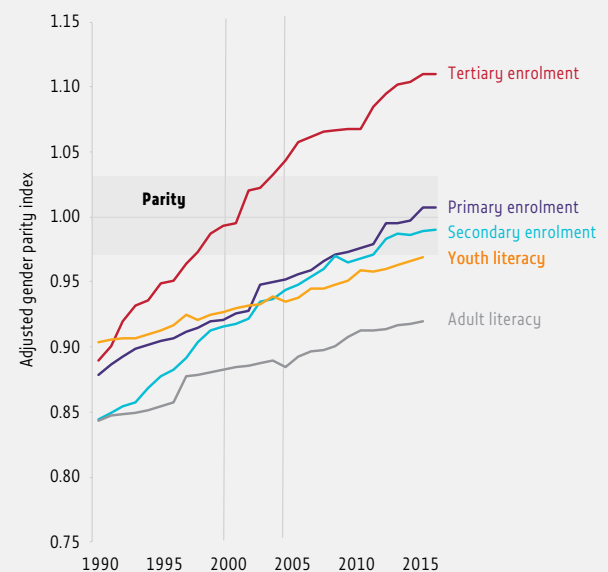
While gender parity has been achieved globally, on average, the situation varies by region. The gender parity index for Central and Southern Asia, dominated by progress in India, has improved rapidly at all three levels. By contrast, sub-Saharan Africa is far from parity at all levels, especially in upper secondary education, where progress has been very slow. Northern Africa and Western Asia, which has experienced stagnation due to conflict, is now the region furthest from parity in primary education (Figure 3).

Likewise, achieving gender parity on average obscures the fact that many individual countries remain far from reaching it. The number of countries that have achieved gender parity in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education enrolment has increased since 2000. Yet just two in three countries have achieved it in primary, one in two in lower secondary and one in four in upper secondary education. The share of countries with a large disparity to the disadvantage of girls (an adjusted gender parity index less than 0.9) has halved since 2000, but remains 7% in primary, 12% in lower secondary and 16% in upper secondary education. The opposite phenomenon, a large disparity to the disadvantage of boys (an adjusted gender parity index above 1.1) is less common in primary and lower secondary but very common in upper secondary education (25%), where no change has been seen since 2000 (Figure 4).

Overall, girls are more disadvantaged in low-income countries, in some cases even from the point of entry to

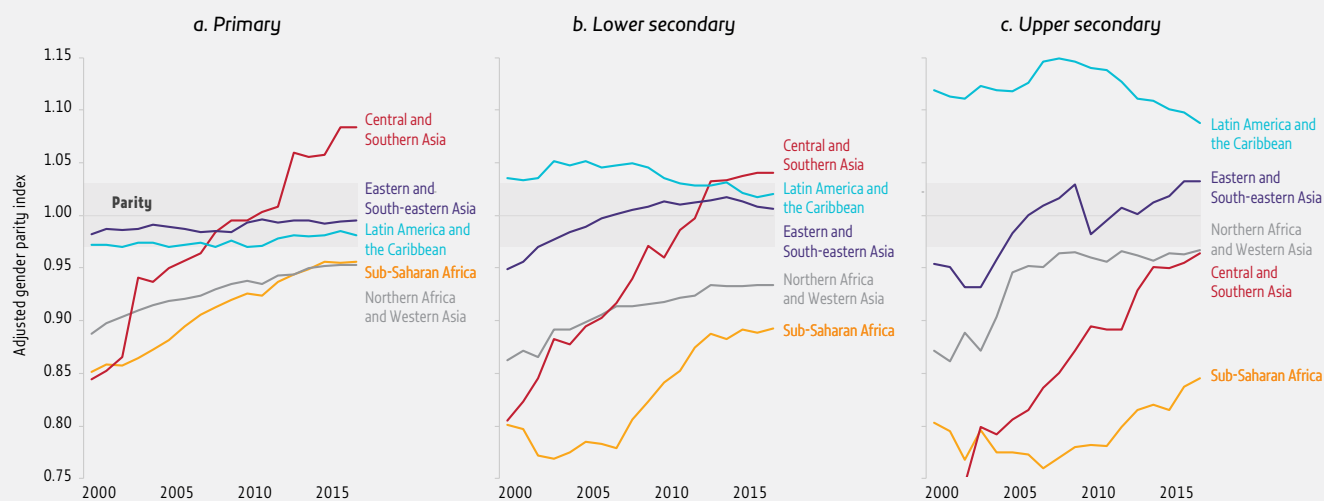
**FIGURE 2:**  
There has been steady movement towards gender parity for more than 25 years

Adjusted gender parity index for selected gross enrolment ratios and literacy rates, 1990–2017



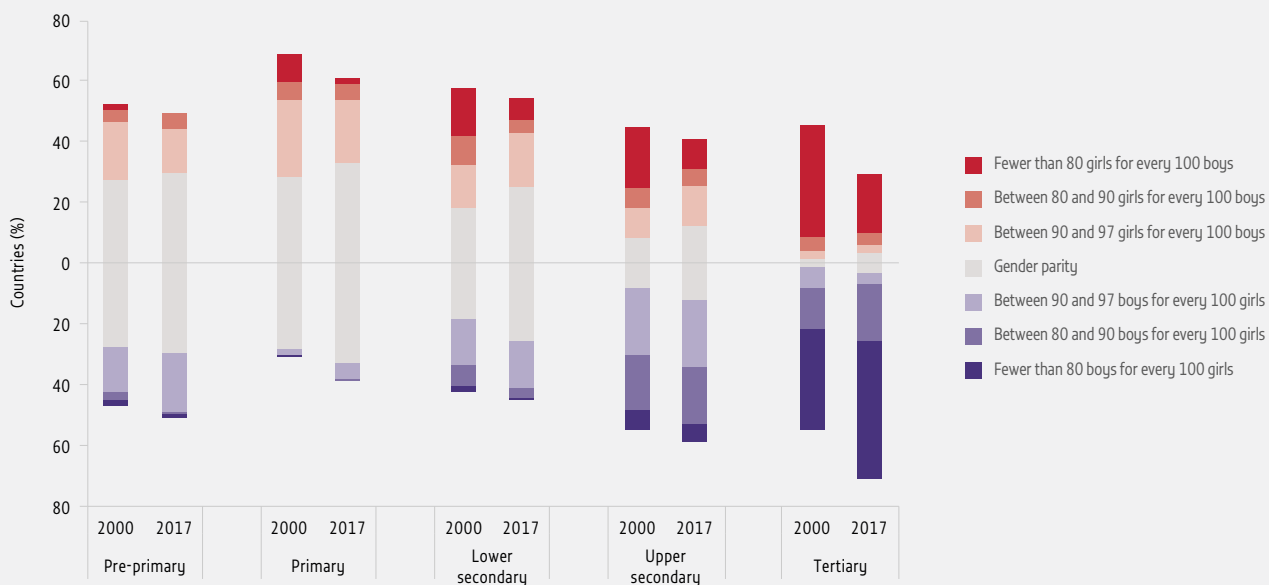
Source: UIS database.

**FIGURE 3:**  
**Progress towards gender parity has varied by region**  
 Adjusted gender parity index for selected gross enrolment ratios and regions, 2000–2017



Source: UIS database.

**FIGURE 4:**  
**Many countries have yet to achieve parity in secondary education**  
 Percentage of countries that have achieved gender parity in the gross enrolment ratio, by education level, 2000 and 2017



Source: GEM Report team analysis based on UIS data.

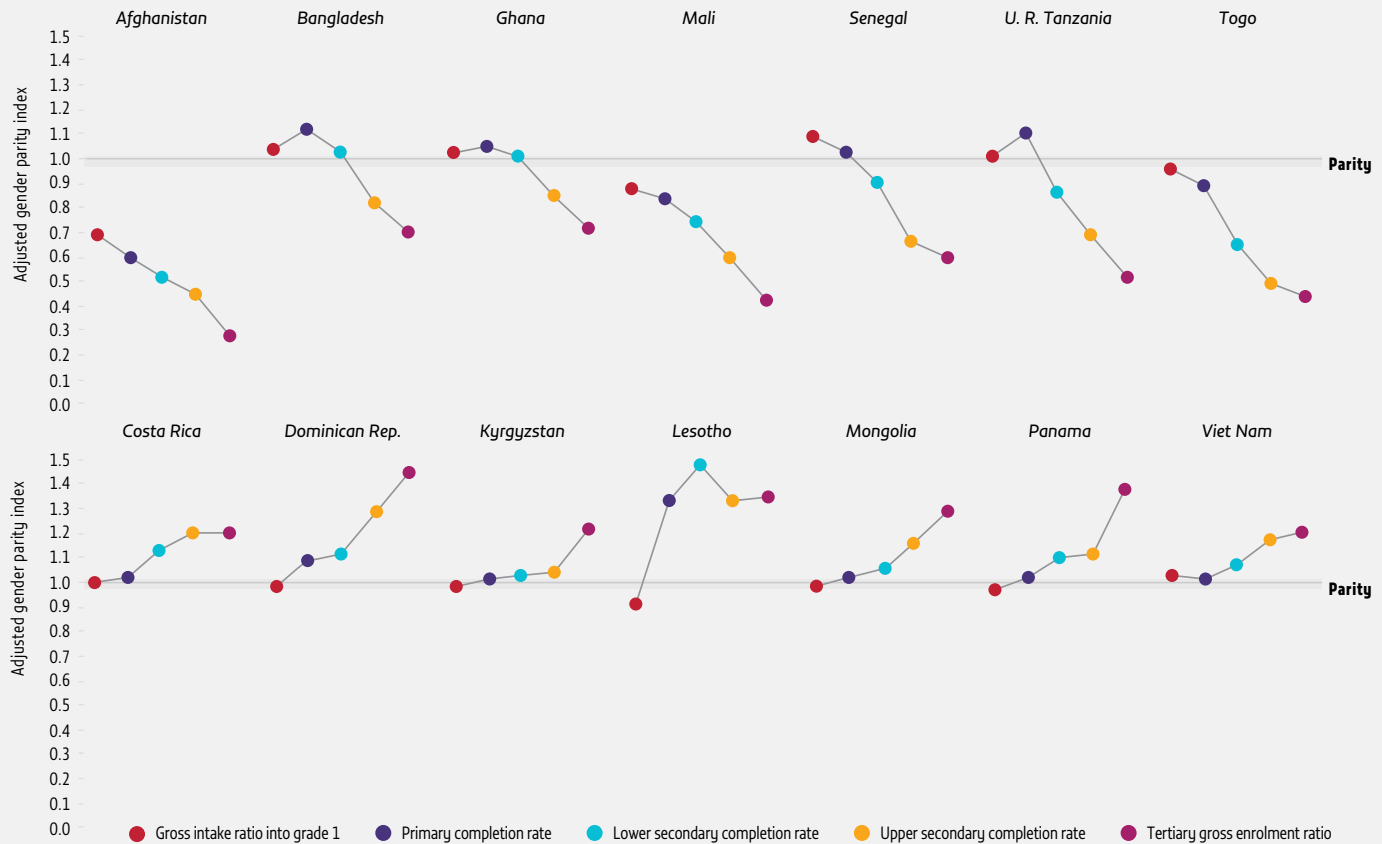
school, as in Afghanistan and Mali. More commonly, while boys and girls start primary school on an equal footing, disparity increases progressively. In Togo, for instance, only 4 young women are enrolled in tertiary education for every 10 young men. Boys are more disadvantaged in upper-middle-income countries. In many middle-income countries, gender disparity increases at each level of education to the disadvantage of young men, as in the Dominican Republic (Figure 5).

### GENDER, POVERTY AND LOCATION INTERACT TO EXACERBATE INEQUALITY

Patterns of growing disparity are often linked to underlying unequal gender norms and institutions, which may affect vulnerable boys and girls differently in differing contexts. Just as gender parity has been achieved on average globally but large gaps remain between countries, the same is true within countries. In general, the interaction of gender with poverty or location tends to work to the disadvantage of girls in poorer countries with low completion rates and social expectations that they marry early, and to the disadvantage of boys in richer countries with high completion rates but social expectations that they enter the labour force early.

At the primary education level, most countries with a completion rate below 60% exhibit gender disparity at girls' expense, particularly poor and rural girls. In Mauritania, the adjusted gender parity index is 0.86 on average, but only 0.63 for the poorest 20%, while there is parity among the richest 20%. In countries with completion rates

**FIGURE 5:**  
Gender gaps tend to grow over the education trajectory in many countries  
Adjusted gender parity index at five key transition points, 2017 or latest year



Note: Countries are those with data for all indicators. Countries are ordered by income level.  
Source: UIS database.

between 60% and 80%, gender disparity is generally smaller, but disparity at the expense of poor girls is especially marked in Cameroon, Nigeria and Yemen. Exceptions in the opposite direction are observed in countries with pastoralist economies that rely on boys' labour, such as the Kingdom of Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (**Figure 6a**).

At the secondary education level, too, the interaction of gender with poverty or location worsens disparity. In Burundi and Malawi, there is gender disparity in lower secondary completion at the expense of girls among poor and rural populations and at the expense of boys among rich and urban populations (**Figure 6b**). Practically no poor girls graduate from upper secondary school in several sub-Saharan African countries with completion rates below 20%, including Chad, Côte d'Ivoire and the United Republic of Tanzania. By contrast, in most countries with completion rates above 45%, there is disparity at the expense of boys, on average, and it is worse among poor boys in countries including Belize, Mongolia, the Philippines and Viet Nam (**Figure 6c**).

There is nothing predetermined about the speed at which countries close the gender gap. New analysis of completion rates by the *Global Education Monitoring Report* ("GEM Report") team shows that some countries have been more successful than others. For example, with respect to primary completion, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire were at the same level of gender disparity in 2000, but while Burkina Faso managed to close the gender gap and achieve parity, Côte d'Ivoire stagnated. At the lower secondary level, Nepal overtook Pakistan, Mali moved ahead of Senegal and Afghanistan progressed much faster than South Sudan, which now has the worst gender disparity record (**Figure 7**). This suggests that political will to address disparity, along with effective policies, can make a difference.

### *Gender dimensions of migration and displacement affect children's education opportunities*

Just as location and socio-economic status can affect boys' and girls' education opportunities differently, gender-related aspects of migration and displacement phenomena can also be linked with variable effects on education trajectories. For instance, education attainment and achievement of boys can follow a different path than that of girls when one or both parents migrate (**Box 2**). When parents and other family members send remittances home, the extent to which these are used to finance education can differ by gender (**Box 3**). And the impact of displacement on access to education has a distinct gender dimension in many contexts (**Box 4**).

## **IN TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL AND TERTIARY EDUCATION, GENDER GAPS PERSIST IN ACCESS AND SUBJECT CHOICE**

Technical and vocational programmes account for 22% of upper secondary education enrolment and are disproportionately male. Globally, the share of females enrolled in upper secondary technical and vocational programmes is 43%, with regional shares ranging from 32% in Central and Southern Asia to 50% in Latin America and the Caribbean. Female students in such programmes are often predominantly enrolled in fields such as food and nutrition, cosmetology and sewing. Gender norms, which often translate into segmented employment opportunities, determine to a large extent what education opportunities are open to boys and girls.

In tertiary education, 111 young women are enrolled for every 100 young men. But there are wide differences between regions: Women in sub-Saharan Africa are far less likely to enrol than men (72 women for every 100 men), while the opposite is observed in Oceania (70 men for every 100 women) and in Latin America and the Caribbean (76 men for every 100 women).

Despite being the majority of university graduates, women are under-represented in certain programmes. Across more than 120 countries, the share of female students in tertiary engineering, manufacturing and construction programmes and in information and communication technology (ICT) is just over 25%. Countries closer to parity include Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. The countries with the lowest shares in both types of programme are largely in western Africa (Benin, Ghana, Mali) and western Europe (Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland) (**Figure 8**).

The choice of field of study is linked to future job aspirations. In countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 15-year-old boys are more than twice as likely as girls that age to expect to work as engineers, scientists or architects. Only 0.4% of 15-year-old girls want to work as ICT professionals, compared with 5% of boys. In Finland, 6.2% of boys expect to work as engineers, scientists or

architects, four times higher than the percentage of girls with similar aspirations (1.4%). Women account for less than 20% of entrants to tertiary computer science programmes in OECD countries and about 18% of engineering entrants, on average (OECD, 2017).

## DISPARITY IN READING SKILLS HAS ROOTS IN THE HOME

The most recent cross-national assessment providing results on literacy is the 2016 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), which assessed the reading skills of grade 4 students in more than 50 education systems in middle- and high-income countries. The results show girls doing better than boys, a reminder that gender gaps in literacy skills begin in early grades. The gap is small but significant in high-income countries in Europe, becoming larger in countries throughout Northern Africa and Western Asia (**Figure 9**). In South Africa, the score gap of 52 points is equivalent to more than a year of schooling.

In the 18 mostly high-income countries that took part in all four PIRLS rounds between 2001 and 2016, there is evidence that the gap is slowly closing. The trend is more evident in some countries, including Bulgaria, Slovakia and the United States.

There are significant differences in how parents approach early reading activities at home with their daughters and sons. In most countries, parents were more likely to read books often at home to girls than to boys. The largest gap was observed in Italy, where 54% of girls but only 46% of boys experienced frequent reading activities at home (**Figure 10**).

Students' reading abilities in grade 4 differ according to the frequency of early literacy activities. Students who were exposed to more of these activities in early childhood had higher reading scores in PIRLS in nearly all countries. However, gender seemed to play a role in the relationship between early reading activities and reading abilities. In most participating countries, a lack of early reading activities affected boys more than girls. On average, the reading score difference of boys whose parents read books to them often in early childhood, compared with those whose parents hardly ever read to books to them, was 64 score points, compared with 55 points for girls – a gender gap of 9 points (IEA and UNESCO, 2017).

### BOX 2:

#### Gender factors influence the education of children left behind by migrating parents

Being left behind as a child can disrupt education in ways that differ by gender. In Cambodia, left-behind children were more likely to drop out of school, and the effect was worse for girls: Three-quarters of 600 household heads suggested that, if necessary, they would take a girl out of school instead of a boy (Vutha et al., 2014). A study of 400 children in 10 rural communities in China who did not live with their parents found that they experienced increased stress and workload, which often led to depression. Left-behind girls were particularly vulnerable, since they faced a greater psychological burden as a result of heavier workloads (Jingzhong and Lu, 2011). In Kyrgyzstan, girls disproportionately had to take on unpaid family work in migrant households (Dávalos et al., 2017). In Mexico, parental migration had a negative effect on school attendance of 16- to 18-year-old girls, who had to take on more household chores (McKenzie and Rapoport, 2011).

Regarding internal migration, the gender of the migrating parent is important. Analysis for the 2019 *Global Education Monitoring Report* based on the China Education Panel Survey showed that children with absent mothers scored substantially lower in mathematics, Chinese, English and cognitive tests

than children with both parents present (Hannum et al., 2018). Analysis using Indonesian data from 1993–2014 found that when the mother migrated, education spending dropped by up to 30% and children were more likely to be absent from school and achieve lower grades (Berbé, 2017). In Thailand, adults perceive mothers' migration as affecting children's well-being worse than fathers' migration (Jampaklay et al., 2012).

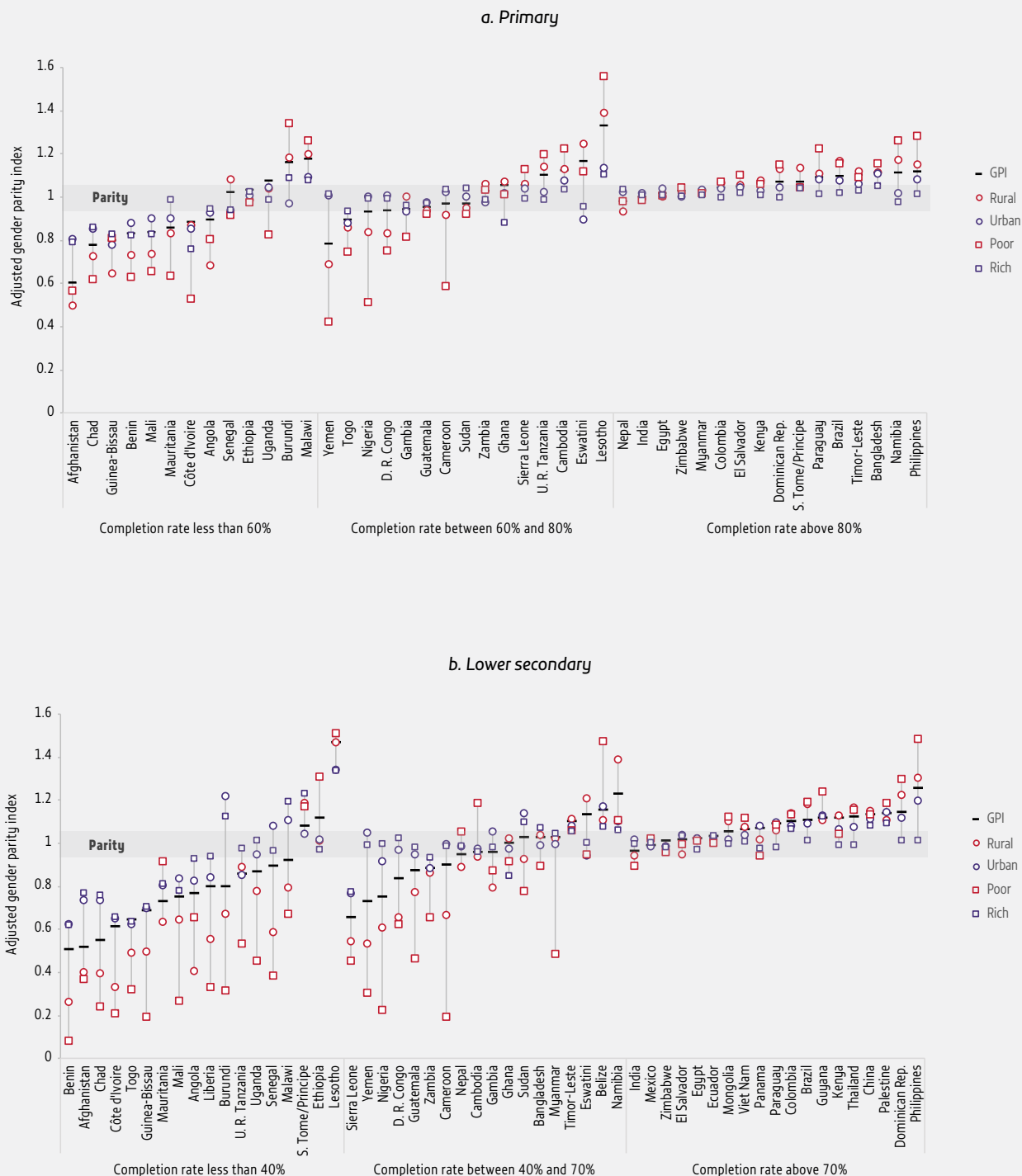
Concerning international migration, variable effects according to the migrating parent's gender have been observed. In some cases, maternal emigration can have a worse effect than paternal emigration. In Nigeria, when mothers emigrated and the father was the caregiver, the effect on child well-being was negative (Mazzucato et al., 2015). Children of migrant mothers from the Philippines were about 5 percentage points more likely to be behind in school than children of migrant fathers (Cortes, 2015). Yet in other cases, the education of children with a migrating father suffers more (Vanore et al., 2015). In Guatemala, the probability of enrolment in school was 37 percentage points lower if fathers migrated internationally (Davis and Brazil, 2016).



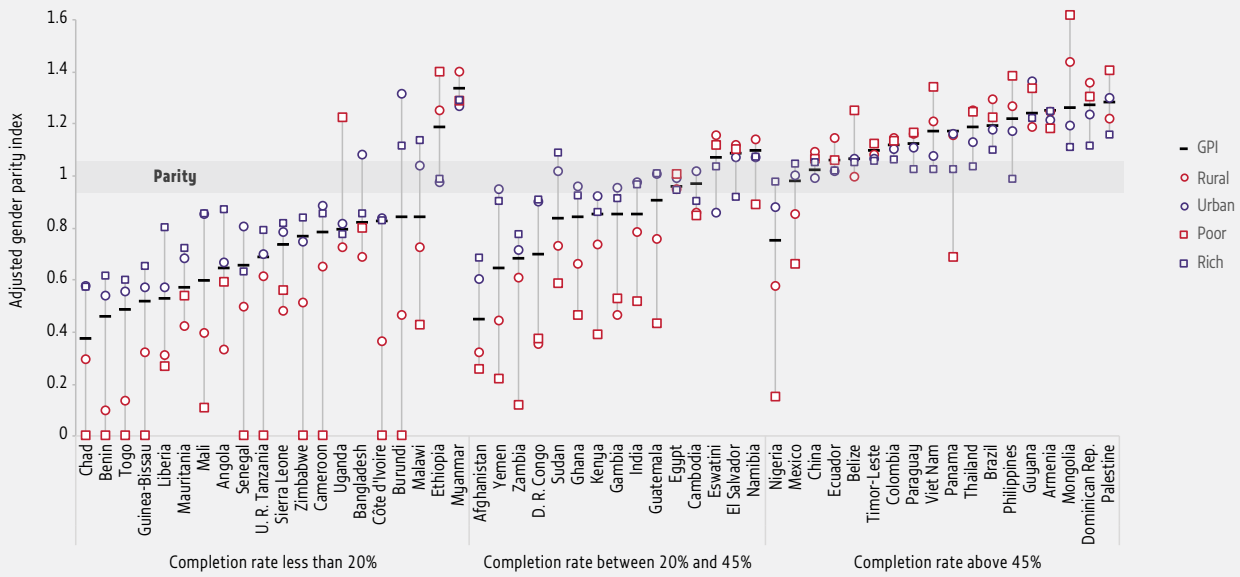
**FIGURE 6:**

**In countries with low completion rates, the relative disadvantage of girls worsens with poverty**

Adjusted gender parity index (GPI) of the completion rate, national average, rural areas, urban areas, poorest 20% and richest 20%, selected countries, 2013–2017



c. Upper secondary

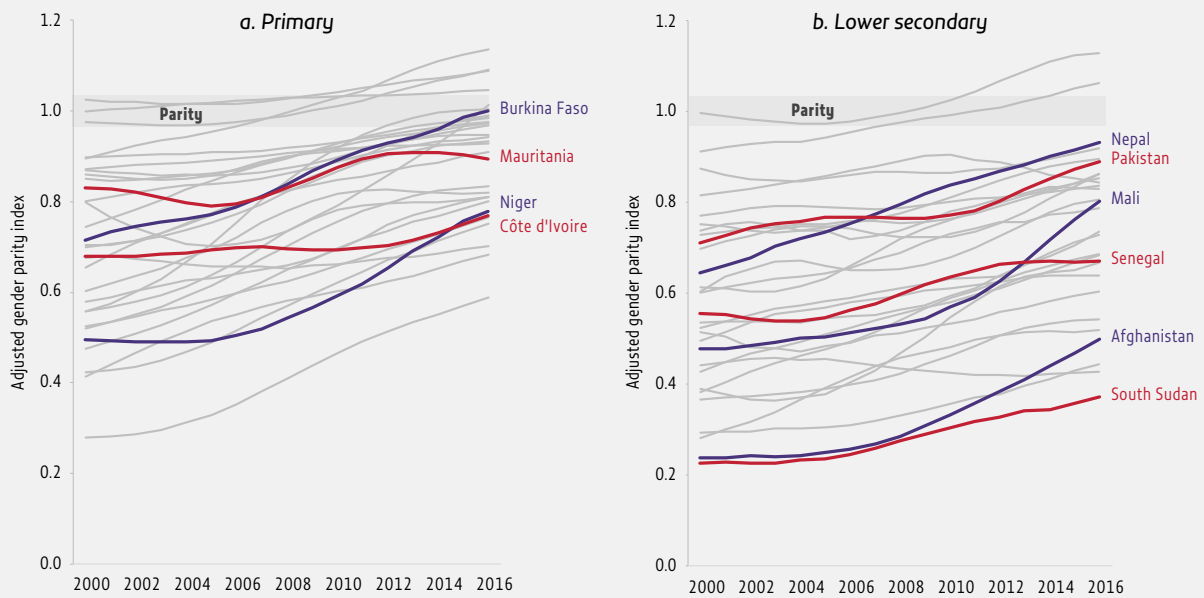


Source: GEM Report team analysis using household survey data.

**FIGURE 7:**

**Countries follow different paths on the way to gender parity**

Adjusted gender parity index of the completion rate, selected countries, 2000–2016



Source: GEM Report team analysis using household survey data.

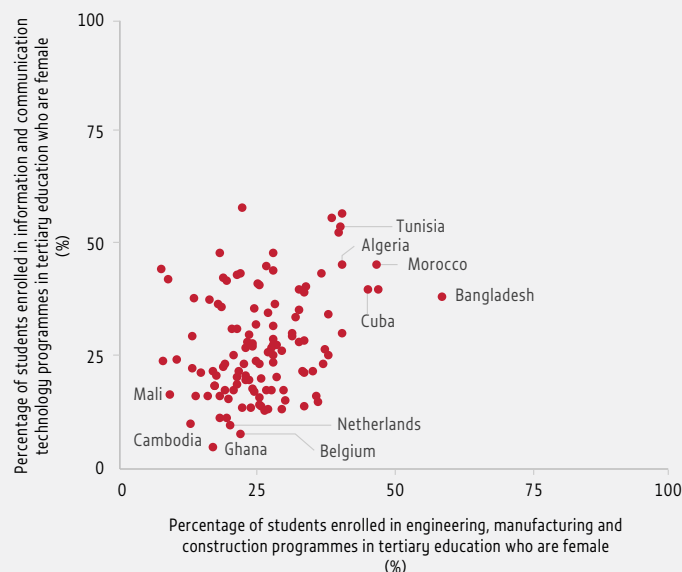
**BOX 3:****Gender aspects of migrant remittances have an impact on education**

Remittances from migrant family members ease financial constraints and can open up opportunities for girls' schooling (Ratha, 2013). However, migration also changes household composition, which may have a negative effect on girls' schooling if they have to do additional household chores. Remittances may also foster a 'culture of migration', whereby the prospect of low- or semi-skilled migration generating high returns can prompt early school leaving (Kandel and Massey, 2002). In practice, remittances' impact differs by migration context and by the gender of senders and recipients. In Jordan, remittances had a larger positive impact on men's education attainment than on women's (Mansour et al., 2011).

Globally, remittance-receiving households headed by women tend to spend more on education (Pickbourn, 2016; Ratha et al., 2011). In Albania, parental migration led to decision-making power shifting to grandfathers, who attached less value to girls' education than to boys', and the probability of dropout increased among girls (Giannelli and Mangiavacchi, 2010). But in Mexico, when men migrated and left women with a greater role in household decision-making and resource allocation, there was a positive effect on girls' education (Antman, 2015).

**FIGURE 8:****Young women are under-represented in engineering and ICT programmes in tertiary education**

Percentage of students who are female in (a) engineering, manufacturing and construction and (b) information and communication technology programmes in tertiary education, 2017 or latest year



Source: UIS database.

**BOX 4:****Displacement exacerbates gender imbalances in education**

In many contexts, the education effects of displacement are not gender-neutral. Greater attention needs to be paid to vulnerabilities specific to displaced men and women and to how gender relations in communities of origin and of refuge influence displacement experiences.

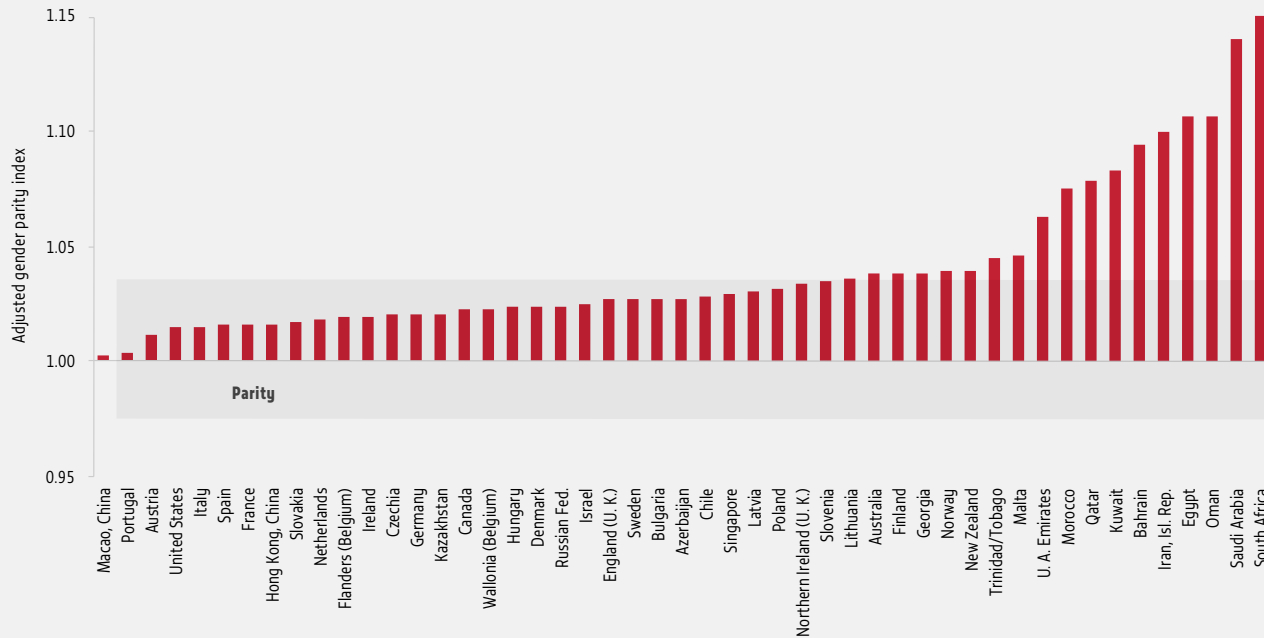
Refugees experience gender gaps in access to school in many contexts. Barriers to refugee girls' education include lack of safe transport, affordability issues and inadequate gender-responsive teacher training. In Myanmar, focus group participants reported that internally displaced girls were dropping out of school in adolescence to avoid mixing with men and to support families at home (Plan International and REACH, 2015).

In Ethiopia and Kenya, for every 10 boys, 7 refugee girls are enrolled in primary school and 4 in secondary school (UNHCR, 2018). In Dadaab camp, Kenya, enrolment rate gaps exist all levels: Preschool (48% of girls and 62% of boys among 3- to 5-year-olds), primary (47% of girls and 76% of

boys among 6- to 13-year-olds) and secondary (7% of girls and 22% of boys among 14- to 17-year-olds) (Women Educational Researchers of Kenya, 2017). An accelerated learning programme condensing Kenya's eight-year curriculum into four years increased access more for refugee boys than for girls (Shah, 2015). In Somalia, an analysis of 486 settlements in 17 districts of Mogadishu found that only 22% of internally displaced girls over age 5 had ever attended school, compared with 37% of boys (JIPS, 2016).

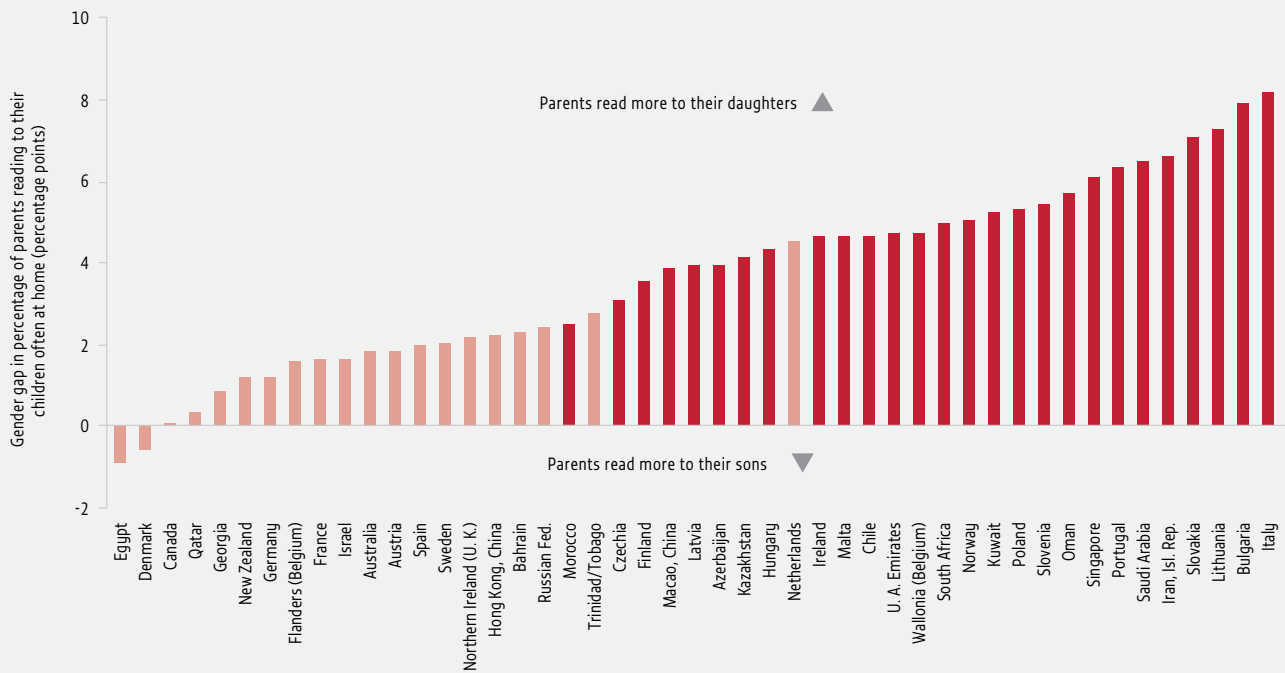
Norms and education development in host communities also affect access. For Afghan refugees in Pakistan, the primary net enrolment rate for girls was half that of boys in 2011. While social and cultural norms demanded that adolescent girls only be taught by women, there were few female teachers. By contrast, Afghan refugee girls in the Islamic Republic of Iran have enjoyed higher levels of access to education as a result of more positive attitudes towards girls' education (Nicolle, 2018).

**FIGURE 9:**  
**Girls outperform boys in primary school assessments of reading skills**  
 Adjusted gender parity index of the reading scale score among grade 4 students, PIRLS 2016



Source: Mullis et al. (2017).

**FIGURE 10:**  
**Parents tend to read more often to girls than to boys at home**  
 Gender gap in incidence of parents reading, PIRLS 2016



Note: Dark bars indicate that the gap is statistically significant.  
 Source: IEA and UNESCO (2017).

## DESPITE PROGRESS, DISPARITY PERSISTS IN YOUTH AND ADULT SKILLS

International assessments, which show girls having an advantage in reading skills, are mostly administered in upper-middle- or high-income countries, where gender parity in school participation has long been achieved. In low- and lower-middle-income countries, where girls have had a disadvantage in school participation, the gender parity index of the youth literacy rate, which started from a baseline of 0.93 in 2000, was still just short of 0.97 in 2016, meaning that the gender gap is yet to be eliminated.

In 2016, the global literacy rate was 86%, equivalent to 750 million illiterate adults. The gender parity index of the adult literacy rate increased from 0.88 in 2000 to 0.92. In low-income countries, women's average literacy rate still trails that of men by some 16 percentage points, which corresponds to a gender parity index of 0.77. A combination of slower progress in education access and adverse demographic trends means that, between 2000 and 2016, the number of adult illiterate women decreased by 42 million in upper-middle-income countries but increased by 20 million in low-income countries.

Women who lack literacy skills are particularly vulnerable in displacement settings, which disproportionately affect poorer countries. Programmes focusing on developing the literacy skills of refugee women receive little priority and need to overcome difficult cultural obstacles but can have a large impact on these women's lives (**Box 5**).

There is gender parity in adult literacy skills in high-income countries. However, women are at a disadvantage in terms of numeracy skills. Among 30 countries that took part in the OECD's Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), the median gap in the gender parity index between literacy and numeracy skills was about 5 points. The contrast was particularly stark in countries such as Greece and Italy, where adult women were more likely than men to have a minimum level of literacy skills proficiency but less likely to have a minimum level of numeracy skills proficiency (**Figure 11**). Past and current inequality in labour market opportunities, which prevents women from using their numeracy skills, is one cause of such disparity.

### BOX 5:

#### Teaching resilience and life skills to adult displaced populations has important gender dimensions

Adult education is often overlooked in humanitarian settings and, where it is considered, often focuses on formal education rather than non-formal resilience or life skills training. For instance, just one literacy and language class for adults and youth was planned in Djibouti, at a cost of US\$70,000 out of a US\$60 million budget (Hanemann, 2018). The omission needs to be addressed, as education can play a major role in building resilience and creating new opportunities for women. For Dinka women from South Sudan who fled to Kakuma camp in Kenya, displacement increased opportunities to study and improved the possibility of working outside the home when they returned to South Sudan and gaining access to positions customarily reserved for men (Chrostowsky and Long, 2013).

Language and literacy barriers impede displaced people's access to information, which can be a particularly severe challenge for women. An analysis of understanding of questionnaires on access to services in north-eastern Nigeria found that while 66% of internally displaced men understood written material, only 9% of women did (Kemp, 2018). In Mali, 68% of internally displaced women could not read or write, compared with 32% of men (JIPS, 2013).

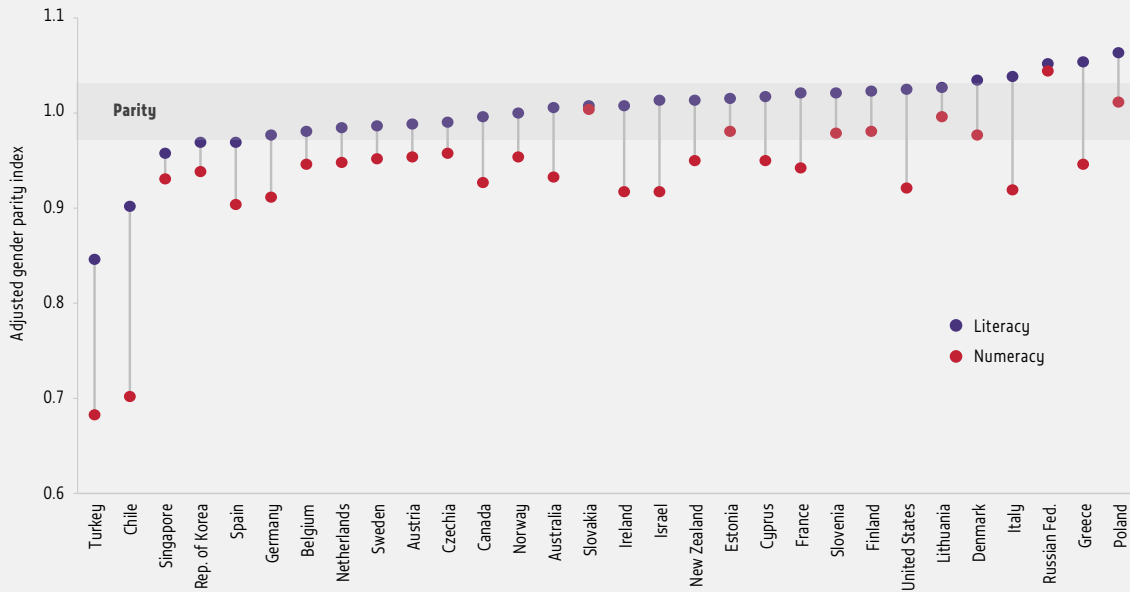
Where programmes exist, barriers often prevent adult women from participating. An analysis of internally displaced adults in Medellín, Colombia, revealed that lack of participation in education was linked to factors such as family obligations, low literacy levels and lack of confidence (Carrillo, 2009; Cooper, 2018). South Sudanese female refugees seeking access to education and other services in Cairo, Egypt, were exposed to sexual harassment and violence on the way to class.

However, experiences of refugee women in non-formal education settings suggest that such interventions support their agency and resilience, even when they do not fully help them realize their aspirations for economic opportunity and freedom from violence (North, 2019). Refugee women from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iraq and Somalia attending English language classes in a community centre in London appreciated the contribution these classes made to their family well-being and social networks (Klenk, 2017).

**FIGURE 11:**

**Men maintain an advantage over women in numeracy skills**

*Adjusted gender parity index of the proportion of adults achieving a minimum level of proficiency in functional literacy and numeracy skills, 2015 or latest available year*



Source: GEM Report team analysis based on PIAAC data.

**CONCLUSION**

Despite the achievement of parity on average in school participation globally, many gender gaps remain in education attainment and achievement. There are differences between regions: Sub-Saharan Africa is far behind in gender parity at all education levels, while Southern and Central Asia has made rapid progress. There are differences between countries, three-quarters of which have not achieved parity in upper secondary completion, with disparity at the expense of both boys and girls. There are differences within countries: More vulnerable girls and boys, whether as a result of poverty or location, migration or displacement, are most at risk of falling behind. And there are differences between generations, with older women still suffering from past and current inequality and discrimination in norms, socio-economic opportunities and education systems, all feeding into one another. The next two sections speak to those forms of inequality.



Mohammad, 6, in his kindergarten class in Za'atari Refugee Camp, in Jordan, says, "When I grow up I want to become a policeman and I am going to drive their beautiful cars with all the lights and sirens."

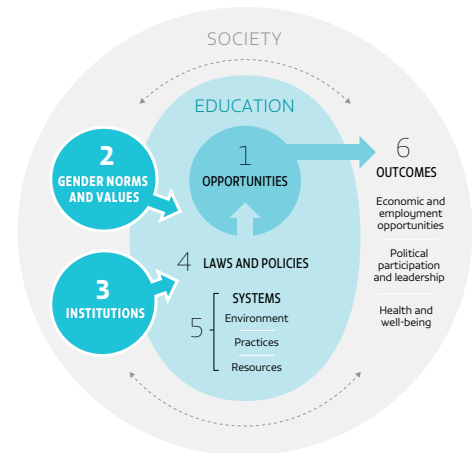
CREDIT: Christopher Herwig/UNICEF

# Structural inequality impedes gender equality in education

Disparities in educational attainment and achievement are not random. Nor can these disparities be addressed only through actions within education. Rather they are often rooted in deep structural inequalities in societies that determine the education options of boys and girls, women and men.

Entrenched norms can weaken even political and legal commitments to gender equality, which are intended to provide political accountability in the protection of human rights, including the right to education for all. International recognition of gender inequality in education is based on the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which has been ratified by 189 countries. While most countries have ratified CEDAW, many have included reservations on some of its articles, thus undermining their commitment to truly eliminate discrimination against women and advance gender equality.

For instance, 12 countries have included reservations in Article 2 that calls on parties to the convention to adopt legal and policy measures to eliminate discrimination against women. India, the Federated States of Micronesia, Niger and Qatar disagree with Article 5 on challenging and eliminating gender stereotypes and discriminatory cultural practices, including those based on general acceptance of women's subordination and disadvantage. Political and legal commitments to gender equality must be subject to no exceptions or reservations. They should be translated into concrete and effective actions to protect the rights of all, and particularly women and girls.



## UNEQUAL AND HARMFUL SOCIAL NORMS AND VALUES PERSIST

Gender norms are rules that apply differently to men and women, dictating expected behaviours or attributes (Heslop, 2016). They are based on power relations and traditional views of roles and positions of men and women in society. They shape social attitudes, behaviours and practices; affect laws and policies; and prevent changes in education.

CEDAW provides clear guidance on the type of actions and policies countries must implement to address gender-based discrimination, including in education. It stresses that the discrimination girls and women face in education is both ideological and structural. It calls on parties to modify social and cultural patterns of conduct that are based on 'stereotyped roles for women and men' (Articles 5 and 10c). Unless the negative gender norms, values and practices that permeate the very fabric of some societies are challenged, girls and women will continue to face discrimination, preventing them, as well as boys and men in certain cases, from exercising their right to education.

For instance, one common view is that women's primary role is to be wives, housewives and caregivers. Such views influence education in several ways, including how boys and girls view school. Analysis of the sixth round of the World Values Survey, carried out between 2010 and 2014 in 51 countries, showed that half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that 'when a woman works for pay, the children suffer'. The idea was widespread in India and in Western Asian countries such as Jordan and Palestine, where more than 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

The view that 'being a wife is just as fulfilling as working for pay' was held by 63% of respondents. More than 80% held this belief in countries of Central Asia, including Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan; Northern Africa and Western Asia, including Egypt and Yemen; Eastern Europe, including the Russian Federation and Ukraine; and Eastern and South-eastern Asia, including Japan and the Philippines.



Such beliefs can lead to a vicious circle of reduced opportunities in employment and education. As the next section relates, Japan has one of the lowest shares of women in school leadership positions, further fueling unequal perceptions of gender roles. In the case of migration, there is an expectation that women who migrate, as many Filipino women do, should enter domestic or home care work, even if this results in a loss of skills (**Box 6**).

Patriarchal norms that place little or no value on girls' and women's education restrict their chance of equal access to education. About 27% of World Values Survey respondents agreed that 'a university education is more important for a boy than a girl', with shares ranging from 2% in Sweden to 56% in Pakistan and 59% in Haiti (**Figure 12**). On average, men were about 10 percentage points more likely to agree with the statement, rising to 19 percentage points in countries including Algeria and Palestine, even though women are by far the majority of graduates. In the two countries with the most negative views of girls' education, there was no gender gap in opinions held in Pakistan but a 35 percentage point gap between men's and women's views in Haiti.

Such discriminatory attitudes can constrain girls' education opportunities, though the relationship is not straightforward. Some of the strongest negative beliefs are indeed held in countries with highly unequal access to tertiary education, such as Uzbekistan. But they are also held in countries that have recently expanded education opportunities to women, such as India. In other words, a move towards equalizing education opportunities in societies with unequal norms may or may not be a lever for shifting these norms.

Challenging gender norms means working with adolescent girls and boys on gender role issues. In Haryana, India, a multi-year secondary school-based experiment aims to change adolescents' gender attitudes and erode support for

#### BOX 6:

##### Migrant women face deskilling in many contexts

Many women who migrate to get married or join their spouses find themselves unemployed or underemployed (Morrison and Lichter, 1988). Analysis from Australia finds that while married migrant men are more likely to have prosperous careers, married women are more likely to experience a career cost (Preston and Grimes, 2017). Gender norms in society, such as expectations about domestic responsibilities and occupational segregation, determine women's labour force participation and the extent to which their skills are used.

In India, analysis of four rounds of the National Sample Survey showed that 90 million women migrated for marriage between 1983 and 2008. They had low rates of participation in the labour force owing to a lack of adequate vocational skills and tertiary education, and a disproportionate burden of care responsibilities, especially in urban areas (Rao, 2017).

Most female migration for employment is associated with domestic work or the care industry. Migrant women are a growing share of domestic workers. In Spain, 60% of domestic workers were migrants in 2012, compared with 5% in 2000 (Gallotti and Mertens, 2013). In the United States, 30% of home care workers are immigrants, 87% of whom are women (PHI, 2019); among foreign-born female workers with no more than a secondary school certificate, one in nine works in an in-home occupation (Schierholz, 2013).

This has been viewed as a 'global care chain', where migrant women, notably from countries such as the Philippines, take care of children or the elderly in high-income countries, using their wages to support their

households, including caregiving, in their countries of origin (Cortes, 2015). In domestic work globally, 73% of migrant workers and 81% of national workers are female (Gallotti, 2015). A preference for female labourers in some manufacturing sectors is linked to stereotypes that they may be more pliable and docile and may work for lower compensation even in exploitative conditions (Caraway, 2007).

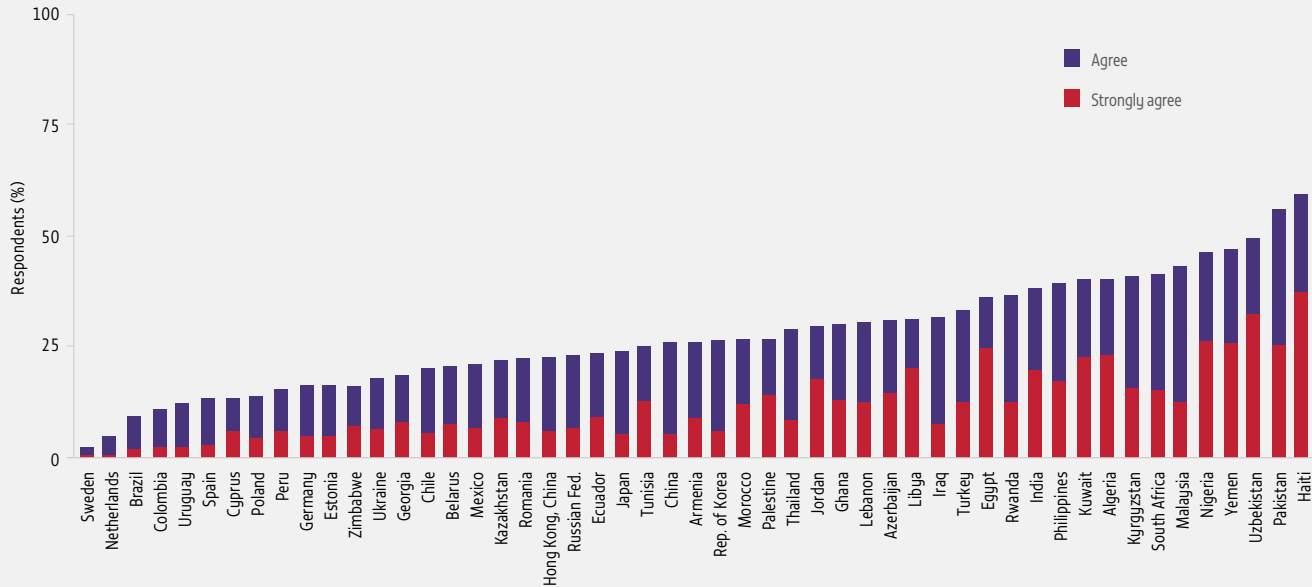
Female migrants face higher levels of deskilling. An analysis of brain waste of high-skilled immigrants in the United States estimated that between 2009 and 2013, 32% of foreign-educated women and 27% of foreign-educated men were underemployed or unemployed, compared with 21% of US-educated men and women (Batalova et al., 2016).

Deskilling is common in the care industry. In the United Kingdom, an analysis of 60 migrant women found that all felt they had been deskilled. Many migrant women who were once professionals become downwardly mobile, for instance by becoming care assistants, and are discriminated against and sometimes penalized because of perceived or real language challenges (Cuban, 2013).

There are few interventions to develop migrant women's skills. In Argentina, a programme was launched in 2006 to teach migrant domestic workers vocational skills and make them aware of their rights. In Nepal, private training institutions offer women 2-day orientation sessions on human trafficking laws and regulations and 30-day skills training programmes (Tayah, 2016).

**FIGURE 12:****Patriarchal gender norms related to women's education persist**

Percentage of people who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that a university education was more important for boys than for girls, 2010–2016



Source: GEM Report team calculations based on the World Values Survey.

restrictive gender norms. The programme involves regularly holding classroom discussions on gender equality, with some sessions teaching communication skills to help students convince others, or, for example, to persuade parents to let them marry at a later age. A randomized controlled trial showed that the programme had improved adolescents' gender attitudes. Participants reported more gender-equitable behaviours, with boys reporting that they helped out more with household chores (Dhar et al., 2018).

## CHILD DOMESTIC WORK IS A GENDER DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE THAT AFFECTS EDUCATION

Child domestic workers are among the most vulnerable to exclusion from education. In 2012, around 17.2 million children and adolescents aged 5 to 17 were in paid or unpaid domestic work in an employer's home, two-thirds of them girls (ILO, 2017c).

In more than half the countries with data from the Demographic and Health Surveys and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys over 2010–2015, the percentage of 12- to 14-year-olds involved in domestic work at least 28 hours a week was less than 2%. However, the percentage rose to 19% in Benin and 16% in Chad in 2014. In most countries, girls are more than twice as likely as boys to be involved in domestic work. The gap is larger in countries where the overall prevalence of child domestic work is high, such as Senegal (12%), where girls are 3.5 times more likely to be domestic workers, as well as in countries where the prevalence is low, such as El Salvador (1%), where girls are 7 times more likely to be domestic workers.

Girls who spend 28 hours or more per week in domestic and care work spend 25% less time at school than those involved less than 10 hours a week (ILO, 2009). Protecting child domestic workers requires various policies and interventions, including protecting their right to education via awareness campaigns, ensuring high-quality public education and social protection, and carrying out interventions to curb child labour and prevent entry into hazardous work (ILO, 2015, 2017a). This applies particularly to poor rural girls who migrate to cities out of poverty, often unaccompanied, end up in domestic work and see their education opportunities compromised (**Box 7**).

## LAWS ON EARLY MARRIAGE CAN HELP FULFIL THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Globally, some 650 million girls and women today were married when they were children. In 2010–2017, 21% of women aged 20 to 24 were married before age 18. In 2018, 16% of adolescents aged 15 to 19 were married before age 18 worldwide, compared with 19% in 2012. Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the highest prevalence of child marriage: 38% of women aged 20 to 24 married before 18. Next is the Southern Asia subregion (30%), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (25%) and the Eastern Europe and Central Asia subregions (11% each) (UNICEF, 2018b). Unless trends accelerate, it will take more than 100 years to eradicate girls' child marriage (OECD, 2018). To achieve the SDG target of ending child marriage by 2030, progress would need be 12 times as fast as the rate observed over the past decade (UNFPA and UNICEF, 2018).

In many low-income countries where child marriage is prevalent, girls are withdrawn from school to get married once they reach puberty. They then face practical barriers to education, including stigma, forced exclusion from school, and social and moral norms that confine them to their homes. Most countries with high early marriage rates are fragile, experiencing humanitarian crises and displacement. In such contexts, the early marriage trap is perpetuated because families see it as a way to protect their daughters, while going to school exposes them to risks, and the outcomes of schooling are highly uncertain (**Box 8**).

Paragraph 2 of CEDAW Article 16 prohibits forced and child marriage, but 20 countries – including many with a high prevalence of child marriage, such as Bangladesh and Niger – have reservations on the article (United Nations, 2014). In Bahrain, where Ministerial Order No. 45 of 2007 fixed the minimum marriage age for Shiite Muslims at 18 for boys and 15 for girls, conservative lawmakers argued that increasing the marriage age violated sharia (Freedom House, 2010).

At least 117 of 198 countries and territories allow children to marry (Pew Research Center, 2016). In 153 countries and territories, reaching the age of majority is ostensibly required before marriage is legal, but many exceptions to that requirement exist; for instance, in Uruguay, children can legally marry if they have parental permission. In all but one of the 38 countries where the minimum age differs between boys and girls, the lower age is that for girls.

In the United Arab Emirates, while the legal age of marriage for both women and men is 18, child marriages continue to occur due to deeply rooted cultural and tribal traditions (Musawah, 2015). However, numerous efforts have been made to address the issue, and preventive programmes and strategies have been implemented to facilitate education and employment for girls and women before they enter into marriage and family life (CEDAW, 2015). In addition, Ministry of Justice regulations prohibit marriage officers from issuing marriage licences to underage girls and boys (OHCHR, 2015).

Since 2014, 15 countries have strengthened their legal frameworks to delay the age of first marriage (OECD, 2018). Gambia's Children's Amendment Bill of 2016 criminalized child marriage and child betrothal, with conviction carrying a prison sentence of up to 20 years. In Ghana, a national campaign to end child marriage led to the establishment

### BOX 7:

#### Migrant child labourers, poverty and education should be considered through a gender lens

Poverty is often a push factor for internal migration. It leads not only adults to move to find work, but also children, whose education is disrupted. In Ethiopia, a study of nearly 5,300 out-of-school girls from six regions found that, on average, they migrated unaccompanied at age 14. Few attended school after moving; most entered paid employment (Erulkar et al., 2017). In Indonesia, about 59% of child domestic workers in Jakarta and other metropolitan areas were girls from rural areas. More than half had primary education only; a further 26% dropped out at grade 7 or 8 (Patunru and Kusumaningrum, 2013). In Peru, over 95% of domestic workers were women, and most were rural to urban migrants who migrated at a young age. Ethnographic research in Lima noted that young girls viewed domestic work as a way to leave rural areas and continue their education. But their workload often prevented them from doing so, limiting future employment prospects (Alaluusua, 2017).

In some countries, fees can restrict access to school for poor migrant children. In South Africa, when migrant parents cannot benefit from the fee exemption opportunities available to other poor families, it can have a disproportionately negative effect on girls (Baatjes et al., 2012). In Shenzhen, China, parents made more effort to obtain the right paperwork for boys' education and were more likely to pay to send their sons to state schools geographically distant from migrant communities. As a result, girls were much more likely to be attending lower-quality migrant schools (Goodburn, 2015).

It is important for children to be informed of their rights. In collaboration with the International Labour Organization, a trade union in the United Republic of Tanzania set up child labour committees in villages as watchdogs for children recruited into domestic labour (ILO, 2013, 2017c). Trained teachers can also help protect child domestic workers' education rights. Anti-Slavery International, an NGO, developed focused teacher education programmes in Peru and India. In the Philippines, it established regular school visits to raise teacher awareness and school-based liaison officers for child domestic workers (Anti-Slavery International, 2013).

in 2016 of the Child Marriage Coordinating Unit of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. A 10-year national strategic framework, which included the Ending Child Marriage Campaign, was launched. But even when legislation exists to protect women's and girls' rights and advance gender equality, it can be weakened by the existence of plural legal systems. Both Gambia and Ghana, as well as countries such as Mauritania and Nigeria, have customary and religious laws that continue to allow early marriage (Bouchama et al., 2018).

Bangladesh is another case where norms contradict and oppose international and even national commitments. The country has ratified CEDAW, but with reservations on Articles 2 and 16 (para. 1), as they conflict with personal law, which governs family matters and differs within each of the country's religious communities, Muslim, Hindu and Christian. Personal law contradicts the legal marriage ages of 18 for women and 21 for men, established by the Child Marriage Restraint Act, and thus Bangladesh tolerates child marriage despite it being a legally punishable offense. When the government sought in 2017 to amend the act, the parliament adopted a controversial amendment with a provision allowing child marriage in 'special circumstances', making it de facto legal (De silva de Alwis, 2018).

**BOX 8:****Child marriage risk rises in displacement settings**

The context in 9 of the 10 countries with the highest rates of child marriage is fragile (Women's Refugee Commission, 2016). While adolescent boys may drop out of school to work, the lack of economic opportunities for girls makes them more reliant on men, which can increase their likelihood of early pregnancy and early marriage (Steinhaus et al., 2016).

Many adolescent girls escaping conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo did not attend school. Some were raped and married the perpetrator. Others were forced to seek marriage for stability and lack of other options. In Lebanon, Syrian female refugees are more vulnerable to school dropout and child marriage due to challenges such as distance to school, school fees and lack of transport. In Jordan, 25% of Syrian refugee marriages registered in sharia court in 2013 were of 15- to 17-year-old girls, almost twice the rate for Jordanians (Women's Refugee Commission, 2016).

## DISCRIMINATORY INSTITUTIONS CAN PERPETUATE GENDER INEQUALITY, INCLUDING IN EDUCATION

In addition to social norms and values, institutions can include or exclude women as regards resources and activities, and can protect them from or expose them to discriminatory practices. Achieving gender equality in education will not occur without a strong political commitment at the institutional level.

Where political and legal commitments to gender equality are not translated into real change for girls and women, this is often linked to lingering discrimination within social institutions. The OECD's Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) is an attempt to document discrimination in social and economic institutions. It focuses on four dimensions: Women's rights in the family (e.g. child marriage), physical integrity (e.g. female genital mutilation, violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights), access to productive and financial assets (e.g. access to land, workplace rights) and civil rights (e.g. political representation). SIGI looks at the extent to which laws, attitudes and practices fail to respect and protect women's and girls' rights (OECD, 2018). Its value ranges from 0%, when the same rights are guaranteed to men and women, to 100%, when there is profound or deep discrimination against women and girls.

The 2019 edition classifies 120 countries by their level of discrimination in social institutions, from Switzerland (8%) to Yemen (64%). It shows that one-quarter of countries had high or very high discrimination levels, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Guinea and the Philippines. In most of these countries, women are even more discriminated against than the 2014 edition indicated. The countries are characterized by highly discriminatory legal frameworks, very poor implementation measures, and customary practices and social norms which weaken and deny women's rights. SIGI also covers discrimination in family codes: Half the countries in its database have high or very high levels of such discrimination, with scores in excess of 40%, and 23 have scores above 80%, including Bahrain and Qatar at 92% (Bouchama et al., 2018).

The persistence of discrimination in social institutions inevitably permeates education systems, including tacit understanding of what may be acceptable in curricula and textbooks. Abolition of discriminatory laws is critical given the backlash against gender equality observed in many countries and regions, including countries in central and eastern Europe such as Austria, Romania and Slovakia. In Poland, a parliamentary group called Stop Gender Ideology was formed in 2014. Among its targets was a pre-school teacher education guide on gender equality. Institutions providing education on gender equality have experienced harassment and hostility from local authorities (Juhász and Pap, 2018).



Marta, 16, with her one-month-old son, Carlo, at her mother-in-law's home in Sinaloa, Mexico. Marta had to drop out of school during her pregnancy and is worried about returning due to the difficulty of child care and her domestic responsibilities as a wife.

CREDIT: Jonathan Hyams/Save the Children

# Education systems and processes can be intrinsically unequal

Gaps in education attainment and achievement are the result not only of the general social and economic context but also of its reflection in education systems: Policies, processes and resource allocation. In other words, gender equality in education system outputs and outcomes depends, to some extent, on gender equality in the choice of inputs. Regulations, general and school-specific policies, curricula, and teacher education must be designed through a gender lens if they are to contribute to equality. A few examples in this section highlight selected connections.

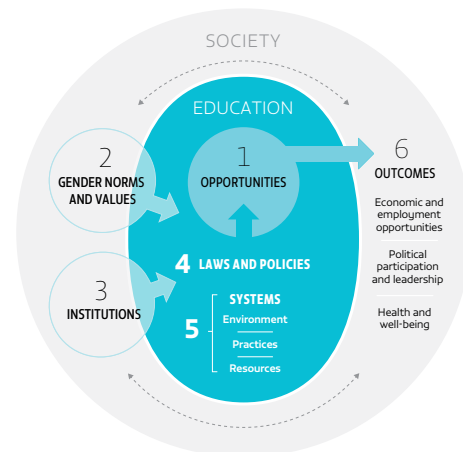
## PREGNANT GIRLS SHOULD NOT BE EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL

Girls' early school leaving often comes just before or after early marriage or in the wake of pregnancy. About 90% of births among 15- to 19-year-olds occur within marriages or unions. Globally, nearly 16 million girls aged 15 to 19 give birth each year; 2 million of them are under 15 (UNFPA, 2015b). In Chad, Mali and Niger, child marriage and early pregnancy rates exceed 160 per 1,000 15- to 19-year-olds. Pregnancy has been identified as a key driver of dropout and exclusion among female secondary school students. Longitudinal data from Madagascar confirm that teenage pregnancy leads to early school leaving (Herrera Almanza and Sahn, 2018).

Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, some steps have been taken to protect pregnant girls' right to education. A recent report by the NGO Human Rights Watch identified 18 countries with no laws, policies or strategies supporting girls' right to go back to school after pregnancy. Equatorial Guinea, Sierra Leone, the United Republic of Tanzania and Togo enforce a total ban on pregnant girls and young mothers in public schools.

However, 25 countries were found to have introduced some measure to enable girls to continue their education. Of those, four, including Cabo Verde and Gabon, have policies or strategies allowing pregnant girls to stay in school, without prescribing a mandatory absence after birth. Six countries, including Benin and Lesotho, have laws affirming pregnant girls' right to stay in school, but lack policies on how to enforce that right. Thus, in the absence of guidance, schools may still expel pregnant girls. And in 15 countries, policies allow pregnant girls to return to school as long as they fulfil certain conditions. In Botswana, the Kingdom of Eswatini and Zambia, girls are excluded from school for between 6 and 18 months after giving birth. They are often not allowed to return to the same school (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

Early pregnancy is an important factor in adolescent girls' early school leaving in Latin America as well. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, 19% of women aged 15 to 19 who had not completed secondary education cited marriage as the main reason, and 14% cited pregnancy. In Chile, being a mother reduces the likelihood of completing secondary education by between 24% and 37% (Kruger et al., 2009). In Mexico, among 15- to 29-year-old women who dropped out of school in 2013, 8% listed pregnancy or having a child as a reason why they left school early, and 11% cited getting married or entering a union. To address the issue, Mexico's Ministry of Public Education has committed financial resources to support students at risk, offering scholarships with a gender component to help adolescent mothers stay in school. From 2013 to 2015, it offered more than 700,000 scholarships aimed at keeping girls in school (OECD, 2017).



## SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS ARE OFTEN NOT SAFE OR GENDER-INCLUSIVE

Girls and boys should feel welcome in a safe and secure learning environment. Governments, schools, teachers and students all have a part to play in ensuring that schools are free of violence and discrimination and provide a gender-sensitive education of good quality. To achieve this, governments need to develop non-discriminatory curricula, facilitate teacher education and make sure sanitation facilities are adequate. Schools are responsible for addressing school-related violence and providing comprehensive sexuality education. Teachers should follow professional norms regarding disciplinary practices and provide unbiased instruction. Students must also behave in a non-violent, inclusive way.

### *School-related gender-based violence affects millions of boys and girls*

School-related gender-based violence, in its physical, sexual and psychological forms, affects children and youth around the world in terms of their school attendance, well-being and learning. Unequal gender norms and power relations feed into manifestations of violence in and around schools, often with grave consequences for education attainment and achievement, affecting both boys and girls but in different ways.

Schools should serve as models of respectful behaviour, but too often they are sites of physical violence. About 720 million school-aged children live in countries where they are not fully protected by law from corporal punishment in school (UNICEF, 2018a). Even where legal provisions ban such practices, the law is often not fully implemented. In India, at least 65% of children are physically punished by teachers, despite corporal punishment being banned in schools. Research in Gurugram, Haryana state, found that gender-specific forms of punishment were used against disadvantaged children. Girls experienced sexist verbal abuse about their age, weight, appearance and marriage prospects. Boys were more likely than girls to receive physical punishment in later primary grades. Most teachers used corporal punishment routinely and most parents approved, often punishing children at home upon finding out that teachers had beaten them (Agrasar, 2018).

Sexual violence is strongly related to unequal distribution of power between men and women. Its prevalence often increases in contexts of conflict and displacement (**Box 9**). But is a particularly difficult form of violence to monitor and report. In Kenya, sexual violence is believed to affect about one-third of girls and one-sixth of boys under 18, but most do not discuss their experience or receive help (Population Council, 2018). Among Kenyan

### BOX 9:

#### Gender-based violence is worse in displacement settings

Girls are vulnerable to gender-based, often sexual, violence in displacement contexts. In South Sudan, between December 2013 and October 2017, nearly all of the 1,200 children who reported experiencing sexual violence were girls. In Ukraine, girls faced abuse by soldiers.

In 18 countries, girls and women were targeted because armed groups opposed their getting an education, according to *Education Under Attack 2018* from the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack. In Afghanistan, the Islamic State targeted 94 coeducational schools between 2013 and 2016. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, several accounts describe incidents where girls were forcibly taken from school by military fighters and raped. In Yemen, several school principals and heads of education received WhatsApp messages threatening school bombings if girls continued at school (GCPEA, 2018).

Younger men and displaced boys, particularly those who are unaccompanied, also face hardships that are often ignored. Younger men in displacement contexts face high rates of physical and sexual violence. They cannot legally work and do not benefit from social protection programmes; loss of status, vulnerability and unemployability can have severe psychological consequences. Displaced boys are often placed in accommodation with other boys, separate from women and families. An analysis of the vulnerability 13- to 17-year-old refugee boys faced in Greece, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey included restricted mobility, since they are often viewed as a security threat and face detention. Syrian refugee boys in Jordan reported that their experience of violence was a key challenge and a major reason for dropping out of school (Presler-Marshall, 2018). Compounding the problem, specialized or targeted services in humanitarian response efforts are often targeted at girls and women, perpetuating harmful stereotypes that boys are better able to cope with hardships, less vulnerable and less in need of such services (Brun, 2017).

13- to 17-year-olds who experienced at least one episode of sexual violence in the previous 12 months, boys most often reported that it occurred at school, while girls reported that it occurred on the way to school. For most respondents who experienced unwanted sexual touching prior to age 18, school was the setting of the first incident (UNICEF/CDC/Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2012).

Psychological violence is also widespread. Bullying is intentional, aggressive and repeatedly occurring behaviour in the context of a real or perceived power imbalance. It affects millions of children and youth around the world. It occurs in schools and, increasingly, online. In international surveys by the World Health Organization (WHO), one in four adolescent students in mostly high-income countries (the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children study) and one in three in mostly low- and middle-income countries (the Global School-based Student Health Survey) reported having been bullied in the previous 12 months. In countries including Lithuania, Myanmar, Nepal and the Philippines, the prevalence rate was 50% or more. In most countries, boys are more likely than girls to report bullying (**Figure 13**).

As most data sources observe student performance and the incidence of bullying simultaneously, it is difficult to establish cause and effect. However, some recent analyses have argued that bullying does lead to lower student learning. In Recife, Brazil, grade 6 students who had been bullied achieved significantly lower scores in mathematics (Oliveira et al., 2018). In Ghana, where bullied grade 8 students also suffered lower achievement scores in mathematics, the effects were stronger for female students but mitigated when the teacher was a woman (Kibriya et al., 2017).

All forms of school-related gender-based violence require comprehensive, coordinated responses, including appropriate regulations, policy and leadership initiatives, reporting mechanisms, community and student partnerships, evaluation of incidents, and staff or teacher involvement (UNESCO, 2017). Education programmes that help students to communicate, understand interpersonal differences, reject gender norms and learn other life skills can help them address bullying, as both victims and perpetrators. In the United States, the Second Step programme had reached more than 8 million students in over 32,000 schools by 2016. It taught communication and decision-making skills to help students navigate pitfalls such as peer pressure, substance abuse and bullying. At the end of the programme, students in Illinois intervention schools were 56% less likely to report homophobic name-calling than those in schools where the programme was not administered (UNESCO/UN Women, 2016).

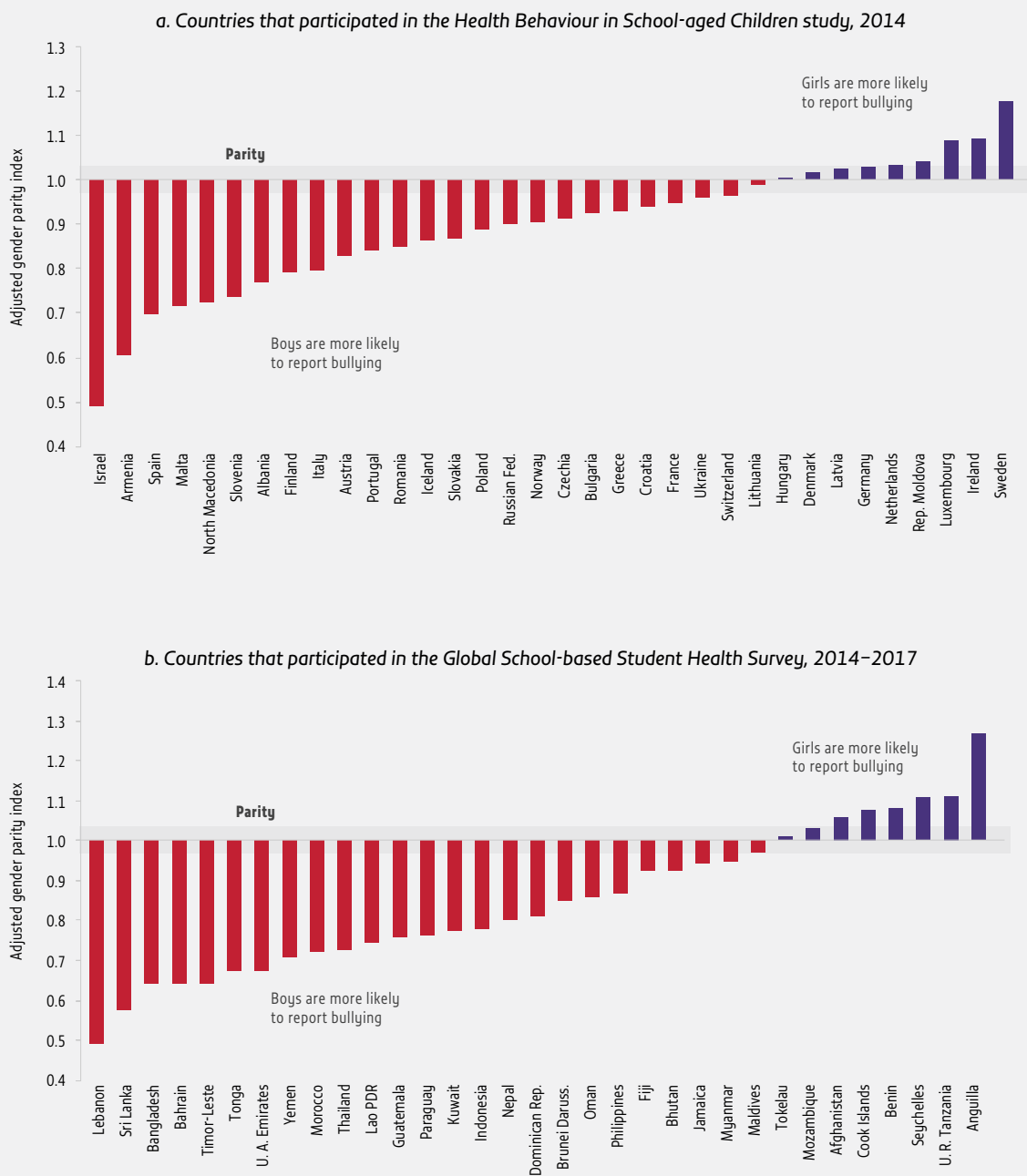
### *An education of good quality for boys and girls must include comprehensive sexuality education*

Comprehensive sexuality education is a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical and social aspects of sexuality, going beyond the narrower approaches that were more common in the past. It improves sexual and reproductive health-related outcomes, such as HIV infection and adolescent pregnancy rates, which in turn helps expand education opportunities. It disrupts harmful gender norms and promotes gender equality, which helps reduce or prevent gender-based violence and hence create safe and inclusive learning environments. And it is a key component of a good-quality education: As an active teaching and learning approach centred on students, it helps develop skills such as critical thinking, communication and decision-making, which empower students to take responsibility for and control their actions and help them become healthy, responsible, productive citizens.

The importance of comprehensive sexuality education is recognized in the SDG monitoring framework. As part of SDG 5, global indicator 5.6.2 refers to 'Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education'. As part of methodological work developed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), with support from WHO and UN Women, six pilot countries were asked to indicate whether their national curricula or guidelines on sexuality education covered eight topics: Relationships; values, rights, culture and sexuality; understanding gender; violence and staying safe; skills for health and well-being; human body and development; sexuality and sexual behaviour; and sexual and reproductive health. All eight topics were covered in Albania, Sweden and Zambia. Mexico covered half the topics, Sri Lanka two and Tunisia none.



**FIGURE 13:**  
**Boys are more likely than girls to report having been bullied**  
 Percentage of boys and girls who experienced bullying in the past 12 months



Source: UIS database.

Comprehensive sexuality education leads to more responsible and healthier sexual behaviour. In the United States, students aged 12 to 17 who were given comprehensive sexuality education were taught about the menstrual cycle, the right to say 'no' to sex, birth control methods, abstinence as a way to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, sexuality as a natural part of life, and signs and symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases. Youth exposed to these topics were twice as likely to use condoms as those who were not (Green et al., 2017).

Comprehensive sexuality education is also an important factor in teenage pregnancy prevention. In India, the Development Initiative Supporting Healthy Adolescents worked to help prevent child marriage and adolescent pregnancy by scaling up health services and providing comprehensive sexuality education, combined with mentoring, community support and life skills training. As a result, the average age of marriage increased from 15.9 to 17.9 years and contraceptive use increased by nearly 60% among married adolescents (UNFPA, 2015a).

### *Too many schools lack sanitation facilities*

Water and sanitation facilities, especially single-sex toilets and menstrual hygiene management facilities, need to be available to girls in school to ensure a dignified, gender-equitable learning environment, reduce absenteeism and facilitate girls' retention in adolescence (UNESCO, 2018a). In 2018, the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene provided a first global baseline report on the school sanitation situation. In 2016, it found, 18% of primary schools and 13% of secondary schools around the world had no sanitation facilities. The percentage of secondary schools without facilities was 24% in sub-Saharan Africa, 19% in Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand) and 18% in Central and Southern Asia (**Table 1**).

**TABLE 1:**  
Percentage of primary and secondary schools with no sanitation, by region, 2016

	Primary	Secondary
World	18	13
Sub-Saharan Africa	36	24
Northern Africa and Western Asia	10	6
Central and Southern Asia	24	18
Eastern and South-eastern Asia	...	...
Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand)	39	19
Latin America and the Caribbean	4	3
Europe and Northern America	0	0

Source: UNICEF and WHO (2018).

Many countries have developed national guidelines for menstrual hygiene management in recent years. However, in 2016, only 53% of schools globally had access to handwashing facilities with soap and water, which implies that around 335 million girls went to primary and secondary schools that lacked these essential ingredients of menstrual hygiene management. A state-level analysis across India in 2017 found that 62% of schools had dustbins for disposal of menstrual hygiene materials and 64% provided menstrual hygiene education. Moreover, variation in sanitation access by region is wide, often to the disadvantage of rural schools. In Nicaragua, 64% of urban schools but 32% of rural schools had improved basic sanitation services (UNICEF and WHO, 2018).

Such data rely on aggregated and indirect sources, which may be neither complete nor fully validated. On-site surveys often demonstrate that the situation is in fact worse. Direct observation of access, continuity, quality, quantity and reliability indicators of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in a random sample of 2,270 rural schools in six sub-Saharan African countries showed that just 1% of those in Ethiopia and Mozambique had improved water sources on premises, improved sanitation, and water and soap for handwashing. Less than 20% of rural schools across the six countries had at least four of five recommended menstrual hygiene services (separate-sex latrines with doors and locks, water for handwashing, waste bin) (Morgan et al., 2017).

Although the evidence is thin, the introduction of appropriate water and sanitation facilities has been associated with improved girls' attendance. In Nyanza province, Kenya, schools with poor infrastructure that received water supply, hygiene promotion, water treatment and sanitation improvement saw the share of girls enrolled increase by 4% (Garn et al., 2014).

## TEACHING IS FREQUENTLY A FEMALE PROFESSION WITH MEN IN CHARGE

Teaching has been characterized as a 'female' profession, especially at lower levels of education (Mitchell and Yang, 2012). Very few men work in early childhood education, at least partly because of persistent gender stereotypes and norms. There are far more men at higher levels of education and in school leadership positions. Nearly 94% of teachers in pre-primary education, but only about half those in upper secondary education, are female. Disparity between male and female teachers exists not only across education levels, but also across regions. The proportion of women among primary school teachers in low-income countries (41%) is half that in high-income countries (82%) as a result of multiple factors, including the legacy of gender disparity in access to education and norms that prevent employment of women as teachers (Table 2).

### *Many countries struggle to deploy female teachers where they are most needed*

In rural areas, attracting and retaining teachers, particularly female teachers, is often a challenge. In India, the share of female teachers declines with the remoteness of schools, from 60% when the school is located at the local government seat to 30% when it is 30 km away (Fagernäs and Pelkonen, 2017) (Figure 14).

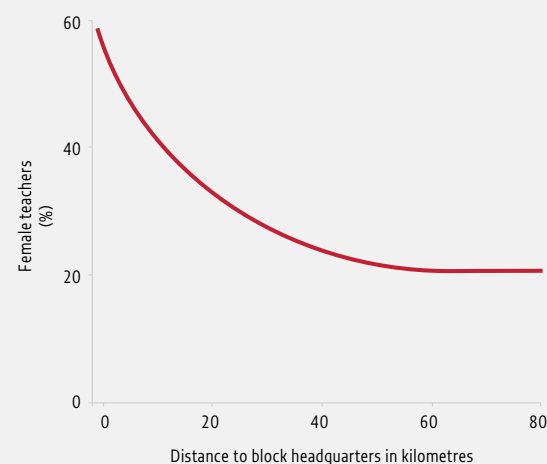
In Liberia, cases of sexual harassment were reported in training institutes in rural areas. Finding suitable accommodation for teachers in rural areas was reported to be hard, especially for female teachers, who have additional needs for safe housing (Stromquist et al., 2013). Similar challenges were reported in Togo, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania (Stromquist et al., 2017). In Mexico, an unwritten rule against assigning

**TABLE 2:**  
Share of women in the teaching force, by region, income group and education level, 2017

	Pre-primary	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
<b>World</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>42</b>
Sub-Saharan Africa	78	46	30	..
Northern Africa and Western Asia	94	64	50	..
Central and Southern Asia	..	54	47	37
Eastern and South-eastern Asia	97	68	54	..
Oceania	86	71	..	..
Latin America and the Caribbean	96	78	58	41
Europe and Northern America	96	86	67	48
Low income	86	41	..	..
Lower middle income	88	59	43	40
Upper middle income	97	71	56	..
High income	95	82	56	41

Source: UIS database.

**FIGURE 14:**  
In India, it is more difficult to recruit female teachers in remote areas  
Percentage of female teachers by distance from nearest local government headquarters, India, 2011



Source: Based on Fagernäs and Pelkonen (2017).

**BOX 10:****There is a shortage of female teachers in displacement settings**

In many displacement settings, safety concerns and cultural practices result in a shortage of female staff. The share of female primary teachers was 10% at Dadaab camp, Kenya, in 2016, and 16% at Dollo Ado camp, Ethiopia, in 2014 (UNHCR, 2015; Women Educational Researchers of Kenya, 2017). Difficulty in recruiting qualified female teachers is compounded by inability to retain them in areas experiencing violence. In Pakistan, female teachers displaced by violence were hesitant to return to work, fearing for their security in areas where militant groups targeted schools (Ferris and Winthrop, 2011). Such situations generate a vicious circle: Few girls obtain a good education, which means few are able to become teachers; gender norms require female teachers to teach female students. And safety issues constrain female teachers and students alike, exacerbating the problem (Mendenhall et al., 2018; Reeves Ring and West, 2015).

More targeted interventions are needed to improve the supply of female teachers for refugees. In Chad, the Little Ripples programme trained and employed Sudanese refugee women to provide early childhood education through play-based learning for 8,000 children aged 3 to 5 in 2 refugee camps (Save the Children et al., 2017). In Dadaab, Kenya, the Borderless Higher Education for Refugees project trained 400 teachers through onsite and online courses at all levels, with women included through affirmative action initiatives (Crea, 2016; Dippo et al., 2013). In Kakuma camp, the Teachers for Teachers project was set up to establish an all-female cohort that would provide a supportive space for women to participate and share their experiences (Mendenhall et al., 2018).

female teachers to work in rural areas has been gradually relaxed due to changing work conditions and a general shortage of teaching jobs, which has led to a more balanced gender ratio (Luschei and Chudgar, 2017).

More equitable teacher deployment matters for education outcomes in contexts with wide disparity at girls' expense. In rural Pakistan, recruiting local and female teachers had positive effects on girls' learning, reducing gender disparity in academic achievement (De Talancé, 2017). The lack of such teachers is a particular problem in conflict and displacement settings (**Box 10**).

While research evidence is scarce, a natural experiment in West Bengal state, India, assessed the effect of randomly assigning village councils to be headed by a woman on the aspirations of adolescents and their parents. In villages that were assigned a female head over two election cycles, the gender gap in occupational and other aspirations closed by 25% in parents and 32% in adolescents, compared with villages with a male head. The gender gap in educational attainment aspirations was eliminated among adolescents (Beaman et al., 2012).

***Gender norms often account for persistent disparity in education leadership***

Evidence suggests that gender disparity patterns differ between education leadership positions and teaching positions, although data are not as systematically available for the former as for the latter. An analysis drawing on 35 mostly high-income countries, most of which had participated in the OECD's 2013 Teaching and Learning International Survey, indicated that the share of female head teachers in lower secondary schools was 18 percentage points lower than the share of teachers, on average. The difference was greater than 30 percentage points in countries including Finland, Japan and Portugal, and largest in the Republic of Korea, where the share of female teachers was 68%, compared with 13% for head teachers (UNESCO, 2018).

Japan stood out as the high-income country with the most persistent challenges in improving gender equality in education leadership: 39% of teachers overall, but only 6% of head teachers, are female. National policies such as the 1985 Gender Equality in Employment Act and the 1999 Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society were meant to facilitate improvement in female employment, and the Cabinet Office's Gender Equality Bureau is responsible for pursuing gender equality. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology runs gender parity programmes within a policy framework set by the Cabinet. The ministry has initiated a variety of national

interventions to bridge the gender gap, including in teaching and school leadership; these include improving child care support, providing recurrent education support for re-employment, improving scholarly support for women researchers and improving educational support for human capital development.

However, progress has been slow, as the latest administrative data at the prefecture level show. Between 2013 and 2017, the share of female school principals increased by only half a percentage point and remained below 7%. The share increased by five percentage points in three prefectures, including Hiroshima (from 6% to 11%), but declined in several, including Akita (from 8% to 4%). The share of female vice-principals showed more improvement, rising by two percentage points to just over 10%; the share ranged from 3% in Yamanashi to 22% in Okinawa, where it almost doubled. Male teachers were still 7 times as likely as female teachers to be promoted to a head teacher position in primary education in 2017, and 11 times as likely in lower secondary education (Yurita et al., 2019).

### *Teachers need to be trained to challenge gender discrimination*

Teacher education is critical in preparing teachers to create a safe and inclusive classroom and school environment and to teach students how to act responsibly in school and out. Training materials should help teachers explore how gender discrimination and norms can be challenged. Gender-sensitive approaches can be incorporated at key stages of teacher education when classroom management and discipline approaches are introduced, in both pre- and in-service courses.

There are few internationally comparable data on teacher participation in gender-sensitive training. Scattered national-level information shows that exposure to such training is relatively uncommon. In Italy, teacher education rarely addresses gender equality issues; teachers are not systematically trained and thus lack relevant competence. Teacher training and school initiatives on gender equality are mainly based on individual interests and commitments. In Romania, evidence indicates that teachers are not prepared to address gender equality, and textbook content and school processes reinforce gender stereotypes (Juhasz and Pap, 2018).

In Uganda, the 2016 Gender in Education sector policy is committed to developing and implementing a gender-responsive education and training curriculum for teacher educators and to promoting gender-responsive teaching and learning materials for schools and colleges. In addition, the 2015–2019 National Strategy for Girls' Education committed to scaling up gender training for secondary school teachers and introducing gender training as a comprehensive and integral part of the teacher training curriculum and performance review. However, a survey of 70 secondary school teachers found that about 45% had never received gender-sensitive pedagogy training. Among those who had, 43% reported that the training lasted a week or less, and little was known about the quality of training in general. As a result, many teachers still judged girls based on stereotypes, seeing them as shy and with low self-esteem (Nabbuye, 2018). Such obstacles are multiplied in contexts of migration and displacement (**Box 11**).

**BOX 11:****Teacher training is key to promoting gender equality in migrant and refugee communities**

Teachers often fulfil multiple roles, helping migrant and displaced children feel included and thrive in the education system and beyond (Mendenhall et al., 2018). For example, in the case of internal migration, teachers can help girls who settle with their families in slums overcome gender-related challenges and stay in school. A study of informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya, found that, when teachers were not present, girls were reported to be vulnerable to sexual harassment and violence at school (Abuya et al., 2012). An analysis of rural to urban migrant adolescents in Beijing, China, found that teacher support helped mediate the relationship between perceived discrimination and antisocial behaviour, with girls experiencing more positive benefit from teacher support than boys did (Jia and Liu, 2017).

Not much is known about how the intersection of migration and gender is addressed in teacher education. In India, a toolkit for middle school teachers developed by the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development and the Digital Intercultural Exchange advises teachers to discuss gender as a factor in migration. It urges teachers to stimulate discussions on how gender influences migration, gender stereotypes and gender equality (MGIEP, 2018).

Gender equality in international migration is often addressed under the umbrella of teacher training for diversity. For instance, in Austria, competence in social and gender diversity and providing effective learning environments for students of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds is an essential goal of initial teacher education (Public Policy and Management Institute, 2017).

In displacement contexts such as refugee camps, education in gender-responsive approaches to teaching is often unavailable. However, some interventions have combined teacher training, community links and infrastructure support to achieve progress on gender-responsive teaching. In Kenya, in the Dadaab and Kakuma camps, World University Service of Canada and Windle Trust Kenya introduced a remedial programme that provided special teaching and learning aids training girls with exceptional secondary graduation grades as teachers. The programme also employed community mobilizers to make sure parents and community understood the programme's importance. As a result, teacher attitudes, community support for girls' education and interactions between boys and girls improved (Kinoti and Philpott, 2011).

Another intervention in Dadaab and Kakuma, the largest refugee camps in northern Kenya, as well as the surrounding host communities, is the Kenya Equity in Education Project (2017–2022), which is supported by the Girls' Education Challenge fund of the UK Department for International Development. It delivers training to teachers, setting gender quotas, and to local government officials responsible for teacher supervision and professional development, through a collaborative Teacher Training Working Group. There are teacher education modules on basic pedagogy, inclusive education, gender-responsive pedagogy, instructional leadership and remedial teacher training, with a focus on assessment and feedback. This training is complemented by quarterly classroom observation and coaching conducted by local consultants to support ongoing teacher professional development.



Children walk home from school in Mosul's Old City, Iraq.

CREDIT: Sam Tarling/Save the Children

# Donors differ in level and type of support to gender equality in education

Official development assistance can be a major source of influence orienting country policies towards gender equality in education in countries with unequal norms and wide disparity in attainment and achievement. This section briefly explores the degree of commitment in donor policies and aid disbursements, using official documents and aid project-level data identified through a 'gender marker'. It then provides an overview of donor projects using information obtained through a questionnaire sent to selected bilateral donors, international organizations and NGOs, which asked them to describe ways in which their programmes were addressing selected key priorities in girls' education.

## AID POLICIES VARY IN THEIR EMPHASIS ON GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

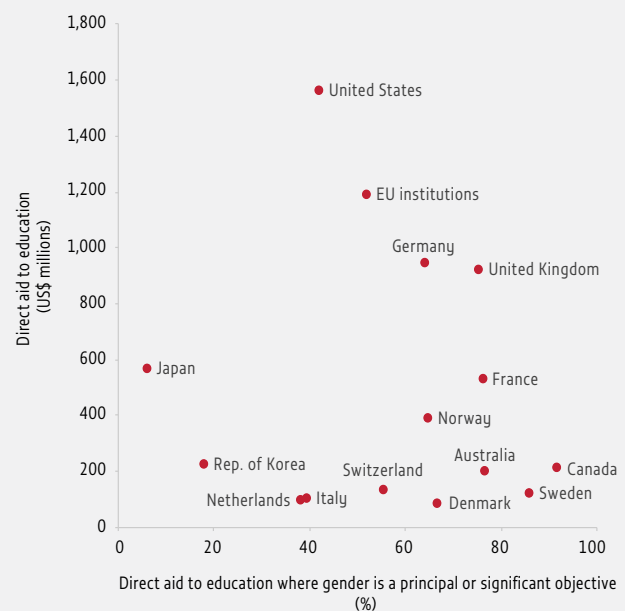
One way to assess the extent to which donors target their projects and programmes on gender equality is through the Creditor Reporting System (CRS) of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), which has a filter identifying projects with a focus on gender equality and women's empowerment. Every disbursement reported to the CRS is marked as: (a) 'principal', if gender equality was an explicit objective of the activity and fundamental to its design; (b) 'significant', if gender equality was an important but secondary objective; or (c) 'not targeted'. Both development and humanitarian aid projects are screened (OECD, 2016).

According to this classification, US\$4.2 billion, or half, of total direct education aid included gender equality and women's empowerment as either a significant or a principal objective. Donors allocated nearly 40% of this amount, US\$1.6 billion, to primary education. About US\$600 million each went to activities related to education policy and management, vocational education and higher education. On average, across DAC member countries, 55% of direct aid to education was deemed gender-targeted, ranging from 6% in Japan to 92% in Canada (**Figure 15**).

This prioritization broadly reflects the aid policies of the countries involved. Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, for example, has established a Gender Equality Fund as part of its gender equality and women's empowerment strategy (Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2019). Canada has proclaimed a feminist international assistance policy (Global Affairs Canada, 2017). Since 2012, the United Kingdom has invested in two rounds of the ambitious Girls' Education Challenge initiative, which currently operates 27 projects in 15 countries. Two evaluations praised its focus on gender equality, although they questioned

**FIGURE 15:**  
Canada and Sweden focus most of their aid to education on gender equality

Direct aid to education and share focused on gender equality as principal or significant objective, 15 largest donors, 2017



Source: GEM Report team analysis based on OECD CRS (2018).



projects' sustainability and the effectiveness of their links to learning outcomes (ICAI, 2016, 2018; Coffey, 2017). By contrast, the United States has not updated its 2012–2016 gender equality and women's empowerment strategy (USAID, 2012), and the Japan International Cooperation Agency's thematic guidelines on gender and development have not been revised for a decade (JICA, 2009).

## DONORS TACKLE PRIORITIES ON GIRLS' EDUCATION IN VARIOUS WAYS

For reasons outlined in this report, many countries, usually poorer ones, are still far even from the target of parity in primary and secondary education enrolment, let alone the more aspirational target of non-discrimination in all aspects of the education system. Girls' education therefore remains a priority area for many actors in international development and is indeed a priority of the French G7 Presidency in 2019. But how do donors approach the main priorities?

As part of the preparation for the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Education and Development, the GEM Report team and UNESCO sent a questionnaire to the aid agencies of the G7 countries, selected international organizations and NGOs, asking them to put forward projects for tackling 12 priorities in girls' education. This section summarizes selected responses by area of priority. It concludes by asking whether donor interventions live up to aid effectiveness criteria and, in particular, whether they have the potential to be scaled up and taken up by governments.

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The first three priority areas in the questionnaire were related to gender norms.

### 1

#### EMPOWERMENT OF GIRLS AND BOYS TO FIGHT GENDER STEREOTYPES

There is some evidence that mentoring programmes for girls can have positive effects, for example by increasing the likelihood of their remaining and progressing in school, delaying early marriages, and enabling girls to acquire life skills with support from their mentors. The Jielimisha ('educate yourself' in Swahili) project is a girls' club and mentorship programme supported by the UK Girls' Education Challenge initiative in partnership with SOS Children's Villages. The project aims to improve the life opportunities of 10,000 marginalized girls in primary and secondary schools in Kenya's Laikipia, Meru and Mombasa districts by supporting them (by themselves, at home, in school and in their communities) in attending and completing a full cycle of education and transitioning to the next level. The aim is to increase support for girls' education by communities, school management systems, teachers, school infrastructure and policies. The approach focuses on improving teaching quality through teacher training, coaching and mentorship and encouraging local communities to support girls' education. The project also supports 7,000 boys.

Sport is increasingly seen as a tool to influence gender norms because it can bring together disadvantaged communities, promoting individual sporting abilities while strengthening skills needed to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life, such as cooperation, respect, problem-solving, empowerment and communication.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development has supported Africa – Sport for Development (S4D), a regional initiative implemented between 2014 and 2019 in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia and Togo, with individual measures carried out on a smaller scale in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Nigeria and Rwanda. A whole-system approach is reflected in engagement of ministries (e.g. for youth, education, sports or development), community and youth centres, schools and academies, national and international civil society organizations and local sporting institutions. Gender norms are tackled in various ways, including by training female and male coaches, integrating gender-sensitive sports curricula in schools, providing adequate water and sanitation services when sports facilities are built or rehabilitated, and creating safe learning and recreation environments for both girls and boys. Efforts are made to assess the impact on skills development through interviews and focus group discussions.

Across the 9 African countries participating in S4D, more than 57,000 children and young people benefit from the 34 sports grounds created or rehabilitated, and 30% of all coaches trained are female, increasing the involvement of women and girls in sports. In Namibia, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is paving the way for development of a national school sport policy. This ambition is supported by the integration of S4D in grade 10 and 11 curricula and development of a Physical Education for Life teachers' guide that informs the training of physical education teachers at the University of Namibia.

## 2

### ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL ACTORS

If gender equality in education is to be achieved, it requires working at all levels to challenge and modify negative norms and overcome cultural barriers. For change to occur, education and social campaigns about the right to education and gender equality should involve families and parents as well as community and religious leaders (UNESCO, 2018b; UNGEI, 2017).

The UNICEF and UNFPA Global Programme to Accelerate Efforts to End Child Marriage is supported by the European Union and the governments of Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom, as well as Zonta International, an NGO. The programme targets 200,000 girls and boys and carries out activities in 12 countries where child marriage is particularly prevalent or burdensome, including 4 in Western Africa: Burkina Faso, Ghana, Niger and Sierra Leone. In Burkina Faso, the programme aims to protect the most vulnerable adolescents from harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, child marriage and violence against children. Alongside behaviour change initiatives and community dialogue projects, the programme focuses on community-level provision of integrated services for families and children to meet their health, education and social protection needs. To date, the programme has engaged over 800 villages, raising awareness of healthy lifestyles and giving a voice to girls and boys aged 10 to 19. The programme focuses on keeping girls in school, which can prevent the perpetuation of female genital mutilation and child marriage.

The Yes I Do programme in Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Pakistan and Zambia aims to end deep-rooted discriminatory gender and social norms. Funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented by Plan International Netherlands, the African Medical and Research Foundation, Rutgers, Choice for Youth and Sexuality, and the Royal Tropical Institute along with local partners, the programme harnesses the potential of social movements, identifying change-makers in communities, increasing awareness of young people's sexual and reproductive health needs, collaborating with civil society organizations to advocate for policy change, and empowering girls and boys to take action.

In Mozambique, the international NGO Plan International runs the project with three national NGOs. In 2016–2020, the project is directly targeting 61,000 adolescents (58% of whom are girls) and aims to reach 310,000 others indirectly. Its approach is gender transformative, taking into account gender issues from women's and men's perspectives to help end child marriage and early pregnancy. It has supported development of the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage and abolition of Decree 39/2003, which required pregnant girls to transfer from day school to night classes. The project also participated in the design of a bill on preventing and combating early and forced marriage, establishing 18 as the minimum age for marriage and penalizing anyone who contributes to, allows or creates conditions for early marriage to happen.

## 3

### FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS

An important factor in motivating girls to enrol in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programmes is helping them overcome anxiety and gain confidence in their abilities. To help girls feel confident in making choices, education systems need to improve career guidance and orientation advice services and promote role models.

In South Africa, the UNICEF TechnoGirl programme, in partnership with the Department of Education, has addressed gender inequity in STEM since 2005. Girls aged 15 to 18 from underprivileged urban and rural schools who are doing well academically are placed in corporate mentorship and skills development initiatives to help them gain confidence and link their school lessons to the skills they need to succeed in the labour market. They receive help in making informed career choices, with an emphasis on science, technology and engineering. In addition, over 5,000 young women have received university or college scholarships. There are now TechnoGirl initiatives in all nine provinces, helping build a cadre of future leaders. An evaluation of the project found that only 11% of participants reported they would probably have pursued a different career path had it not been for the project, however, which means there is significant scope for improving targeting.

The Gender-Responsive Quality STEM Education project, funded by Japan, is a partnership between the Francophonie Education and Training Institute, UNESCO, the Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa, the African Union International Centre for Girls' and Women's Education, and Microsoft. It targets francophone African countries, including Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Madagascar, Mali, Niger and Senegal. The programme provides training lasting 10 days for regional trainers and 5 for national trainers. The training covers enabling and prohibitive factors for girls' education in STEM, as well as the role of school administrators, heads of teacher training colleges, and representatives from ministerial technical departments in providing leadership to create a school environment conducive to gender-equitable participation in STEM. Participants learn about gender-sensitive responsive pedagogy, critically analyse educational resources and are instructed in ways to use ICT to improve girls' participation in STEM.

The next three priority areas in the questionnaire were related to policies to improve access to education.

## 4

### CASH AND IN-KIND TRANSFER PROGRAMMES FOR GIRLS, IN PARTICULAR FROM DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

Two types of social programme have been used to address poverty and access to education for vulnerable groups, including vulnerable girls. The first is cash transfers to vulnerable households, conditional on school attendance. One challenge with such programmes is identifying appropriate criteria to target potential beneficiaries. The criteria may include means testing, location, community leader assessments and self-selection. Although conditional cash transfers were introduced and gained popularity in Latin America, where secondary school dropout rates are higher among boys, they are increasingly used in countries where girls are disadvantaged. As these tend to be poorer countries, the support of international partners is important. In Pakistan, the Benazir Income Support Programme aims to reduce poverty and improve living standards and educational attainment among the poorest families by providing regular payments to female heads of household. As part of a component funded by the United Kingdom, 315,000 additional families will benefit by 2020. Eligible families receive a monthly stipend of about US\$2.10 per child, conditional on at least 70% school attendance each quarter.

The second type of social protection programme, food for education, is more widely used, reaching more than 350 million children in 169 countries. The World Food Programme (WFP) in 2012 launched its Adolescent Girls Project in the Mirriah division of Niger's Zinder region with 3,000 beneficiaries. Now in its second phase (2016–2020) with 13,000 beneficiaries, the project is implemented in partnership with UNICEF, UNFPA, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and UN Women. It originally targeted adolescent girls with a joint education and nutrition programme delivered through primary and secondary schools. The project consists of three components. First, a monthly scholarship of US\$7 is provided to girls, conditional on 80% school attendance. Second, daily meals fortified with micronutrients are provided to girls and boys in primary schools, and weekly iron and folic acid supplements are given to girls and boys in secondary school. Third, sensitization and awareness-raising efforts target boys and girls as well as communities to provide messages on nutrition, nutrition-sensitive practices and other life skills. An evaluation of the first phase showed that the percentage of secondary school girls who completed their school year increased from 32% in 2013/14 to 68% in 2014/15. Nutrition knowledge, dietary diversity and consumption of iron-rich foods increased, while anaemia prevalence fell.

## 5

**SECOND-CHANCE PROGRAMMES FOR GIRLS WHO HAVE LEFT SCHOOL OR ARE AT RISK OF LEAVING**

Early pregnancy and poverty are among several factors that place adolescent boys and girls at risk of leaving school early. Similarly, legislation and social assistance are just two of the tools that can be deployed to prevent dropout. Some programmes are intended to engage the community to identify children at risk of early school leaving. Others give children who have left school a second chance to complete basic education and obtain education qualifications, thus providing them with an opportunity to re-enter formal schooling.

Predicting which girls may be at risk of dropout and providing them with timely support is an essential but complex undertaking. The School Accountability for Girls Education project in Uganda, funded by the US Department of State and managed by World Vision in partnership with local NGOs, operated between 2016 and 2018 in 151 schools in 10 districts, targeting girls and young women aged 13 to 19 who had dropped out or were at risk of dropping out. It used a two-pronged strategy involving an early warning system and the engagement of Stay in School Committees to transform social norms and practices; reduce risk of early marriage, pregnancy, gender-based violence and HIV infection; and support girls to stay in school. The approach has also been used in Kenya, Mozambique and the Kingdom of Eswatini.

Second-chance programmes are crucial for young women who have missed out on education. They are typically delivered in non-formal settings and target underserved communities. The Advancing Quality Alternative Learning project, supported by Japan in partnership with Pakistan's federal and provincial governments, is a non-formal learning programme providing alternative education opportunities for disadvantaged groups, particularly girls and women. Promoting connections between literacy, life skills and vocational education, it aims to foster positive attitudes towards learning and education within families and communities. The project also works to strengthen non-formal education systems through policy development and by customizing standards, curricula, learning materials, data, monitoring, evaluation and assessment for adult literacy.

## 6

**TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

As long as technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is perceived to be primarily a choice for boys, a crucial education opportunity for girls will remain out of reach. The Skills and Technical Education Programme in Malawi is a partnership between the European Union, UNESCO, the national Ministry of Labour, Youth and Manpower Development, Mzuzu Technical College and local NGOs. Its three objectives are to promote gender-equitable access to TVET, improve its quality and relevance, and strengthen the governance and management of TVET regulatory bodies and training institutions. Girls' access and retention are to be increased in four ways. First, formal and informal training programmes are being reviewed to increase their relevance and attract female students to male-dominated trades as well as other training programmes. Second, a new guidance and counselling programme is being introduced in secondary schools to raise awareness of the importance of technical careers. Third, scholarships are being created to target female students and students from vulnerable groups. Finally, instructors are being trained in appropriate pedagogy.

Germany and the African Union Development Agency are supporting the Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training for Women in Africa programme, part of the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. The project has operated in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Malawi, Kenya and Togo. It targets women in formal vocational training, female smallholders who lack access to training, and women who run small or micro businesses. The project aims to ensure that TVET systems offer labour market-oriented, income-boosting training opportunities for women in the agri-food sector to give them the skills they need to earn a living through paid work or self-employment. Taking women's diverse needs and social roles into account, the project offers access to informal and flexible training options, such as evening and weekend courses, which link with formal education and training provision at local level.

The next three priority areas in the questionnaire were related to policies to improve teaching and learning resources.

## 7

### CURRICULUM AND TEXTBOOK REFORMS TO ELIMINATE GENDER BIAS AND STEREOTYPES

Relatively few interventions have been targeted at supporting curricular and textbook reforms. Under the UNESCO Malala Fund for Girls' Right to Education, the Gender Equality and Girls' Education Initiative in Viet Nam project (2015–2017) included a component on gender mainstreaming in curriculum and textbook development and teaching practices. In addition to contributing to development of the Action Plan on Gender Equality of the Education Sector for 2016–2020, the project aimed to influence attitudes to gender mainstreaming in curriculum and textbook development through substantive capacity development targeting curriculum developers, trainers, managers, education practitioners and students at all levels nationwide. Among the key results: The Ministry of Education and Training has developed a revised curriculum framework for primary and secondary education involving curriculum developers trained as part of the project. Revised curricula and textbooks will benefit over 15 million students and 850,000 teachers.

EU4Skills: Better Skills for Modern Ukraine is a programme funded by the European Union, Germany, Finland and Poland. Implemented by Germany's GIZ development agency and KfW development bank, it runs from 2014 to 2020. The overall objective is to reform and modernize Ukraine's TVET system so as to improve its quality and attractiveness for both female and male learners and increase its relevance to labour market needs, including overcoming gendered labour market segregation. Its activities include gender mainstreaming through gender-sensitive, competence-based TVET curriculum standards applied to formal and non-formal vocational education and gender-responsive teaching, learning and assessment materials. It has also introduced gender-targeted interventions, such as accommodation and sanitation facilities for girls at vocational colleges and gender-responsive career guidance capacity development to overcome gender-segregated employment opportunities.

## 8

### GENDER-RESPONSIVE TEACHER EDUCATION

In Viet Nam, with European Union support, the Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance, the Viet Nam Ministry of Education and Training, provincial and district education and training departments and a local NGO, the Research Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development, began implementing a gender-responsive play-based learning project in 2018 in 15 mountainous districts with high poverty, food insecurity, environmental threat and child marriage rates. The project focuses on kindergarten teachers, since the early years set the foundation for future learning and are a period of flexibility in brain development, when gender norms and stereotypes can be effectively challenged. When kindergarten teachers apply traditional gender values in the classroom, both teacher and student behaviours reflect gender stereotypes.

Working with teachers, school leaders, parents and guardians, the project is transforming one pre-school per district into a model school that develops self-confidence, self-esteem and collaborative skills of 3- to 5-year-olds. The aim is to build gender-responsiveness among teachers, school leaders and government officials involved in supporting the country's 156 pre-schools in 15 districts. To that end, the project has piloted a pre-school gender-responsive play-based learning toolkit, and is working to strengthen capacity among pre-school teachers, school principals and government personnel. A parent-school sensitization model is under way, with a particular focus on fathers. Finally, a planned nationwide advocacy campaign will embed the approach into the in-service pre-school teacher training curriculum.

Plan International, with support from Dubai Cares and individual Canadian donors, implemented the Support for Better Opportunities for Girls project in Mozambique between 2014 and 2018. The project targeted 30,000 disadvantaged girls, aiming to improve primary school completion rates, increase transition rates from primary to secondary school and bring excluded girls back into education. The core activity was addressing structural inequality through peer professional development and teacher support.

## 9

**FEMALE TEACHERS IN RURAL AREAS**

Countries use various strategies to improve the supply of rural teachers, including recruiting locally, providing financial incentives and improving working conditions. The Supporting Female Teachers to Teach in Rural Schools project in Malawi has been operating since 2010, supported by ActionAid, the Teachers' Union of Malawi and community-based organizations. It has supported construction of houses for female teachers in rural areas, who act as role models and improve girls' retention in school. Construction of each house is conditional on the local school management committee and other community members agreeing with district education officers that a female teacher will be posted to the school.

Basic Education Quality and Access is a multi-donor project in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, funded by the European Union, Australia and the United States in partnership with UNICEF; the WFP; the NGOs Plan International, World Vision, Save the Children and ChildFund; and the national Ministry of Education and Sports. It aims to improve pre-service and in-service training of primary teachers. The programme offers targeted scholarships for teacher training colleges to ethnic minority members. Of the 520 teachers trained to date, 70% have been female. Many of the teachers are deployed to remote villages.

The final three priority areas were related to policies to improve the learning environment.

## 10

**SAFE SCHOOLS, INCLUDING PROTECTION FROM ATTACKS AND SAFE JOURNEYS TO SCHOOLS**

Safety on the way to and at school should be a priority. Boys and girls must feel connected to and empowered by their education experience. But this can be challenging, especially in conflict and emergency settings, where instability makes both schools and routes to school insecure and vulnerable to generalized violence as well as attacks by armed groups.

Afghanistan is the country with the highest gender disparity in access to school. Severe security threats, negative norms and scarce resources complicate efforts to address the problem. In these conditions, the establishment of community-based schools has proved to be one promising way to increase girls' access. Since 2006, Canada has helped set up more than 9,200 such schools, in which over 80% of the 273,000 students were girls. Apart from increasing enrolment, these schools have been effective in improving learning outcomes, particularly for girls; reducing the systemic barriers to girls' education caused by distance and insecurity; increasing recruitment and deployment of female teachers; and strengthening trust in the value and legitimacy of public service providers.

Since 2018, community-based school models have been overseen by the Community-Based Education Transition Unit at the Ministry of Education; the 2018 Community-Based Policy and Guidelines recognize community-based schools as part of the formal education system. The policy states that when distance from a public school is greater than 3 kilometres and security threats impede access to public schools, community centres are to be rehabilitated and used as community-based schools. Community-based schools must have proper water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and focus on recruiting and training female teachers.

In Bangladesh, the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) fund supported the 12-month Education for Children of Rohingya Refugees and Host Communities project in Cox's Bazar. The intervention has helped build more than 270 learning centres and is on track to complete 50 more. Over 25,000 refugee children aged 4 to 14 have received access to a safe and protective learning environment. To encourage involvement by parents and community members, outreach activities advocating for school enrolment, hygiene and sanitation, and emphasizing the importance of a safe learning environment, have reached close to 20,000 people. Working with Bangladesh's government, UNICEF, UNESCO and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, ECW launched a new grant in 2018 to benefit an additional 88,500 refugee and host community children and adolescents. The goal is for the multi-year grant to connect with other initiatives in coming years to reach more than 500,000 refugee and host community youth and 9,800 teachers.

## 11 SCHOOL-RELATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs funded the Fighting School-Related Gender-Based Violence project, implemented by UNESCO in partnership with UNICEF and Plan International, in Cameroon, Senegal and Togo between 2016 and 2018. In cooperation with the ministries of education and social protection, the project took a multisector approach, working both within and outside schools to implement various measures. It took steps to strengthen legal frameworks, internal regulations and official codes of conduct. It developed training programmes for the education community aimed at raising awareness of school-related gender-based violence and gender equality in schools. It involved pupils and community members and leaders via a participatory approach, conducting awareness-raising programmes on non-violence, children's rights, gender equality and girls' empowerment. And to measure the outcomes of violence prevention activities, it established mechanisms for data collection, reporting, referral and monitoring of gender-based violence, within and outside schools, through intersector coordination.

Under UNAIDS leadership, 21 eastern and southern African countries endorsed a Ministerial Commitment on Sexuality Education and Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in 2013. In 2016, a roadmap, regional accountability framework, civil society engagement strategy and youth accountability action plan were developed to help the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community track country progress and reach targets by 2020. With support from Sweden, UNESCO and its partners are promoting the realization of these targets through the 2018–2020 Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future (O3) Programme, which aims to ensure the delivery of good-quality comprehensive sexuality education. It aims to reach 10.7 million students and 186,000 teachers between 2018 and 2020. An additional 30 million people are to be reached through community engagement and 10 million young people through social and new media platforms.

## 12 ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE WATER AND SANITATION FACILITIES

WASH in Schools for Girls (WinS4Girls), a project funded by Canada, operated in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Niger and Nigeria from 2015 to 2018. In Ghana, the project supported the government, in partnership with the University of Ghana and the Forum for African Women Educationalists, in developing and rolling out an in-depth national minimum standards package with a gender lens. Separate school latrine facilities were built for girls, with latrines in over 500 schools fitted with changing rooms to promote menstrual hygiene management. The project aimed to foster behaviour change by promoting understanding of basic facts about menstruation. Many girls know nothing about menstruation until it starts, and community members often believe menstruation renders girls and women unable to perform regular daily functions. A national campaign, Be Amazing. Period!, focused on building girls' confidence and increasing boys' understanding of menstruation as a natural and positive part of a girl's development.

### AID DIRECTED AT GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION NEEDS TO LEAD TO SUSTAINABLE RESULTS

An emphasis on gender equality in aid programming is a good indicator of commitment, but it will not be sufficient to bring change. The broad selection of donor approaches to tackling challenges in girls' education presented above is not intended to be representative of all interventions in the priority areas, nor is it necessarily indicative or suggestive of good practice in conception and/or implementation. To assess whether a donor project or programme applies good practice, projects need to be considered against criteria that might include:

- Whether they were effective in tackling one or more priorities with a proven positive impact on gender equality – for example, completion rates, number of qualified female teachers, improvement in learning outcomes

- Whether they were scalable and replicable in the sense that, while they may serve a particular context, they also have the potential in some form to address challenges on a larger scale as a government programme and/or in a different context
- Whether they were participatory in development or implementation, involving support by national and local authorities, civil society and community organizations, and the private sector.

For most of the interventions presented, assessing whether the criteria of effectiveness, scalability and participation were met would have been beyond the scope of this report. Access to information that could demonstrate whether interventions were designed so as to be scaled up and eventually implemented as national programmes is limited.

The design of gender equality-related interventions needs to include a clear plan for how they will effect change as they transition from a relatively small-scale, donor-led, implementer-controlled project to a government-led, fully resourced national programme. This involves not only an appropriate theory of change but also a well-thought-through practice of change. Considerations include the following:

- Has a plan been made for how the intervention will be picked up by government? Have sufficient negotiations been held between the donor, implementer and authorities?
- Can the programme's cost per capita, which is inevitably higher in the pilot stage, be brought down to such a level that it would be plausible for the government to pick up the bill?
- Can the government realistically absorb the programme by activating existing budgetary and financing channels?
- Can the government realistically absorb the programme in terms of its administrative mechanisms, for example by ensuring appropriate oversight or training functions?
- Is the content of the programme sufficiently adapted to the realities of the country or would the intervention need to be adjusted further? Would that risk diluting its effectiveness?
- Does the programme have – and can the government continue applying – appropriate targeting tools to ensure that the interventions reach those most in need?
- Has a monitoring framework been established, enabling the collection of the right information on costs, implementation and results?
- Has a robust evaluation proved the merit of scaling up the project? Has this evaluation been sufficiently independent – and has it sufficiently considered the complications of scaling up – to ensure beyond doubt that the advice given to government is reliable?

Before a project can be considered ready for scaling up, these issues need to be scrutinized, since projects must compete with one another for limited resources. The current level of education financing in most countries concerned is not high enough to justify wasting donor or government resources – or to run the risk that projects will end when external financing runs out.



Tanzania. Burundian schoolkids and teachers desperate for learning resources.

CREDIT: UNHCR/Georgina Goodwin



# Countries with large gender gaps in education need to make their education sector plans more responsive

Designing and scaling up a good programme on gender equality in education is a shared responsibility. Donors need to carry out due diligence and collect relevant information to prove interventions' sustainability. Governments need to be receptive to good ideas that are rooted in national education realities, and take all measures necessary to adopt and roll them out. The first step is to incorporate the ideas in national education plans, as one sign of a commitment to applying a gender lens in the education policy and planning cycle (UNESCO, 2018a).

The GEM Report team sought to determine whether governments consider donor intervention effectiveness in relation to gender equality in education and, if so, whether they take note of the most successful interventions to include them in their education sector plans. Education sector plans should express how governments mean to tackle key challenges to achieve key objectives. While plans are not expected to list detailed actions, they should indicate what programmes will be the main vehicles for achieving their objectives and how much the programmes will cost. If gender-unequal norms, institutions, policies, environments and resource allocation rules form a major constraint for achievement of national education objectives, then a plan should make clear how these bottlenecks are to be addressed.

Informed by the variety of interventions initiated and funded by donors to tackle gender inequality in education, the GEM Report team selected 20 countries with some of the highest levels of disparity in education participation to assess whether their education sector plans recognized these priorities and included clear indications of their commitment to respond to these needs. The analysis included the education sector plans of 17 countries plus the national education plan and 4 provincial education plans of a federal country (Pakistan), the national education strategy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the national development plan – that is, a plan not specific to the education sector – of Angola.

The countries are situated in five loose and somewhat contiguous geographical groups: Sahel, littoral western Africa, central Africa, in and around the Horn of Africa, and southern Asia (**Figure 16**). They were selected based on their gender parity index of the gross enrolment ratios in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education, cross-checked with evidence on gender parity in completion rates. Inevitably, the inclusion of some countries over others has been marginal, as data are patchy in some cases. And countries with low disparity in enrolment may still be characterized by highly unequal gender norms and exclusionary practices in education.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and United Nations Girls' Education Initiative have published guidelines for education planners which include criteria on what constitutes a gender-responsive education sector plan (GPE and UNGEI, 2017). The guidelines include a checklist of 19 questions in 7 areas, focusing on whether the plan is (1) informed by gender analysis, (2) transacted through a participatory and gender-sensitive stakeholder consultation process, (3) reflective of gender strategies and lessons learned and with gender integrated throughout, (4) backed by adequate financial resources, (5) reflected in the operational plan, (6) backed by necessary institutional capacity and (7) strengthened through gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation.

To the extent possible, this review has attempted to cover these questions, albeit from a macro-level perspective in some cases. It was not possible to assess accurately whether a participatory and gender-sensitive consultation process had been followed, even where the documents provided some information. For instance, Liberia and

**FIGURE 16:**

**Countries with significant gender disparity in education participation are concentrated geographically**  
*Twenty countries whose education sector plans were reviewed from a gender equality perspective*



Source: GEM Report team.

Togo mention involvement of ministries dealing with gender as well as representatives of women's groups. Somalia provides the percentage of female participants in the consultation process. But involvement by these stakeholders is no guarantee that their voices were heard and considered. Chad, meanwhile, had an inclusive process, but it is not clear whether it was also gender-sensitive. Other countries, such as South Sudan, did not mention details of a gender-sensitive process in their plans but that does not mean no consultation occurred. To assess the situation more fully, it would have been necessary to contact all participants, which would have been prohibitive not only for cost reasons but also in practical terms, given the long stretch of time over which the plans were drafted, with some dating from 2010.

Assessing whether an education sector plan is backed by adequate financial resources on gender equality is also a challenge. The budget of Mali's plan, for example, is not detailed enough to enable assessment. In Guinea, activities promoting gender equality are budgeted, but not enough information is available to assess whether the budget is adequate. Such analysis would require information not just on the absolute amounts budgeted but also on unit costs, to assess whether they are realistic and sustainable, and, especially, on actual spending and its distribution. The operational plans were not always included in the education sector plans or annexes. In those cases, the programme plans or result frameworks were checked to ascertain whether activities related to gender equality were included.

Last but not least, the extent to which an education sector plan anticipates and considers interventions related to those initiated by donors does not necessarily demonstrate that national governments have taken ownership of these ideas. A few plans were clearly drafted with external support, raising questions about national ownership.

If education sector plans are to be gender-responsive in practice and not just on paper, they should reflect effective, donor-supported, gender equality-focused programmes and projects. The GEM Report team reviewed whether the plans incorporated actions responding to the 12 priority areas for gender equality in education reviewed in the previous section.

## **MANY KEY PRIORITY AREAS FOR GENDER EQUALITY ARE NEGLECTED IN EDUCATION SECTOR PLANS**

Among those priority areas, cash and in-kind transfers were the most likely to be included: They featured in three-quarters of the plans, although the breadth of coverage and depth of support were hard to assess. For instance, the Chad Intermediary Education Sector Plan 2018–2020 proposes scholarships, transport subsidies and provision of kits, clothes and toilet bags for girls. The South Sudan Education Sector Plan 2017–2022 mentions capitation grants to schools and cash transfers to girls enrolled in upper primary and secondary education.

By contrast, some priority areas are neglected, notably curriculum and textbook reform, girls' participation in STEM courses and safe access to schools, which were mentioned by about one-fifth of countries. The Democratic Republic of the Congo referred to elimination of gender stereotypes from school programmes and manuals; Benin touched on gender balance in subject choice; community-level interventions in Afghanistan are intended to contribute to safety.

The quality of these examples is not easily comparable and simple references to topics do not translate into a clearly defined roadmap for action. However, on the basis of this analysis, some plans did stand out as being more thorough in their analyses and responses. The Niger Intermediary Education Sector Plan 2015–2016 was informed by gender analysis and reflected gender strategies, as well as having a related result framework. It included responses such as constructing single-sex toilets; orienting girls towards scientific or industrial branches for scholarships in secondary education, TVET and higher education; offering merit-based scholarships for girls from poor households and providing school allocations for vulnerable girls in secondary education, including both cash and in-kind transfers; and taking measures to sensitize communities on girls' schooling, including modules on gender in teacher education and radio campaigns in areas with strong resistance from religious and traditional leaders.

The Guinea Education Sector Development Programme 2015–2017 is characterized by strengths in gender analysis, monitoring and evaluation. It prioritizes retention of girls in primary school in the regions where gender discrepancies are the greatest, while recognizing the need for measures at the secondary level and in TVET and higher education. Among the activities proposed are introducing a phone number in each educational district for reporting violence at school, setting up general and technical secondary schools of excellence for girls, and sustaining or expanding school canteens and providing free lunch boxes for girls.

The Somalia Education Sector Plan 2018–2020 envisages programmes including scholarships for girls using direct money transfers or cash grants to schools; gender-sensitive water and sanitation facilities; recruitment of female secondary school teachers in rural and underserved areas, using equity-based formulas and providing hardship allowances for teachers in high risk areas; and social awareness-raising activities through a girls' ambassador programme, including role models and girls' clubs, as well as annual community awareness-raising campaigns targeting community leaders and government officials.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Angola, the Central African Republic, Djibouti and Mauritania made few references to concrete actions to promote gender equality in education. The Education Sector Transition Plan 2014–2017 of the Central African Republic does not propose any significant actions to improve girls' education other than the possibility of removing school fees for all children at the primary level and the promotion of female pedagogical advisers in primary education. The Mauritania Education Sector Plan 2011–2020 proposes just three studies to analyse causes and corrective measures and three sensitization campaigns covering three zones.

Education sector plans need to ensure a clear vision and shared priorities for fighting gender inequality in countries where girls are at a disadvantage. Interventions that have a proven potential for scaling up should be recognized, embraced and supported for countrywide adoption. Plans should identify ways in which such interventions will be embedded in the government's financing and administrative mechanisms. Their cost and monitoring implications should be taken into account.

# Conclusion


Significant progress has been made towards achieving gender parity in education, a hallmark of how international commitments can prompt national action. However, this report has shown that some of the progress could prove to be a mirage. In some cases, parity on average masks continuing disparity between and within countries. More worryingly, progress in visible areas, such as enrolment, stands in contrast with inaction in less visible areas. Few teachers receive education on how to be responsive to gender issues in the classroom. Some countries still ban pregnant girls from school. In the few countries with disaggregated data on head teachers by sex, high levels of disparity emerge in terms of women's access to leadership positions in education. In difficult contexts, including those related to migration and displacement, girls and women lose out due to long-standing negative and harmful norms.

Using its broad monitoring framework for gender equality in education, this report has aimed to bring together the various dimensions of the quest for gender equality, inside and outside education, looking at inputs, outputs and outcomes. While data remain sparse in several areas, the report has tried to clearly demarcate what progress in assorted domains would look like. The use of this approach aims to influence countries to look beyond simple parity indices that sometimes remain at the surface of the core issues around gender equality in education. The review of donor projects and programmes highlighted an increased degree of awareness among agencies that interventions to help achieve gender equality need to be sophisticated in their design and implementation.

Aside from this degree of sophistication, the report emphasized the following questions: Are aid-funded programmes adequately preparing the ground for successful initiatives to be taken up by governments? And in those cases where programmes successfully meet the conditions for scaling up, do governments take note and try to incorporate them into national policies? While more evidence is needed to do justice to these questions, there are indications that both sides need to do better. Few donor programmes are explicitly designed to be scalable in terms of unit costs, theory of change and evaluation of results. And in the cases where these conditions are met, few governments seem to be ready and willing to transform pilot projects into nationwide programmes.

The 2019 Gender Report makes the following recommendations:

- Countries need to endorse broader monitoring of gender equality in education along the lines of the framework used by the GEM Report. Disparity in attainment and achievement, especially when disaggregated further by characteristics such as poverty and location, gives a good first impression of current status and past trends but is not sufficient to direct action. Such improved monitoring should guide gender analyses in education plans and budgets.
- Donors need up-to-date policy frameworks on gender equality in education and to follow champion countries such as Australia and Canada. But this is just a starting point. Programming needs to sharpen its focus on the key question of how interesting and innovative projects can graduate into national policies. Adherence to principles of aid effectiveness and donor coordination requires agencies to build in sustainability, capacity development and evaluation so that good practice is identified and rolled out early.
- Countries with high levels of gender disparity should not view their education sector plans as a box-ticking exercise to satisfy donor demands so as to gain access to aid resources. They need to embrace gender-responsive education sector planning as an exercise that goes to the heart of their commitment to ensure inclusive, equitable, high-quality education for all by 2030 – and, through such planning, accelerate their progress to achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals.



Nada, a 14-year-old girl from Syria, was denied enrolment at school three times because of physical and mental challenges. She never gave up and kept trying to find a school that would accept her. The long search finally paid off and she found a place when she was 10.

CREDIT: Nour Wahid/Save the Children

# Gender equality in education monitoring framework

Genuine progress has been achieved in gender parity in primary and secondary education, although global or regional averages have masked continuing disparity at the individual country level as well as within countries among particular groups, such as the poor. But gender equality in education is a much broader issue. While the formulation of target 4.5 does not refer to gender equality in education, the Education 2030 Framework for Action explicitly recognizes gender equality as a guiding principle, linked to the realization of the right to education and referring to the need for girls and boys, women and men, to be equally empowered ‘in and through education’.

While equalizing education access for girls and boys is a crucial first step towards realizing gender equality in education and the intrinsic right to education for all, schools can reproduce existing gender inequality rather than challenge it. This can manifest through teacher behaviour, expectations and interactions with male and female students; peer group norms; the curriculum (whether gender is explicitly addressed or not); the distribution of education resources; and school structure, organization and management.

In addition to reducing disparity in education attendance and completion, therefore, education for gender equality entails building knowledge and skills to empower disadvantaged girls or boys, depending on context. Students and teachers need to reflect on existing norms and traditions and be encouraged to challenge them. Gender-based discrimination and violence need to be addressed. Healthy life choices should be supported, including with regard to sexual and reproductive health. Interventions to achieve these results can take place through teacher training and curricular reform, among other means.

To address these needs, the *Global Education Monitoring Report* is applying a gender equality in education monitoring framework, which identifies six domains (see Figure 1). Different indicators can track progress towards equality in each domain using available and often globally comparable data (**Table I.1**).

- 1. Education opportunities.** This domain focuses primarily on gender parity in participation and learning. The adoption of the parity index by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators to monitor the gender aspects of target 4.5 extends its use beyond enrolment ratios to all education indicators, including learning outcomes.
- 2. Gender norms and values.** Well-established indicators exist on norms, highlighting contextual factors with a direct impact on gender equality in education. These include the child marriage rate, views expressed in the World Values Survey on women’s education and post-education opportunities, and the lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence.
- 3. Institutions outside education.** Annual national implementation reports on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provide information on legislation forbidding gender-based discrimination. The OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index is based on formal and informal laws that restrict women’s and girls’ access to rights, justice and empowerment opportunities across 180 countries.
- 4. Education laws and policies.** There are criteria that assess the gender responsiveness of education sector plans. The extent to which national laws and policies protect and facilitate education of pregnant adolescent girls is an indicator of commitment to gender equality in education. The percentage of schools that provide life skills-based HIV and sexuality education is an indicator that is recognized in the SDG 4 thematic framework.

5. **Education systems.** Different measures can assess gender equality in learning environments (e.g. water and sanitation, school-related gender-based violence), teachers and teaching (e.g. share of women in education leadership and management positions, teacher education on gender issues), and finance (e.g. percentage of aid to education that is targeted on gender equality).
6. **Development outcomes.** Education is one of the key factors that influence other development outcomes, such as economic and employment opportunities (e.g. labour force participation rates by sex), political participation and leadership (e.g. proportion of seats held by women in parliaments) and health and well-being (e.g. proportion of adult women who make their own informed decisions regarding reproductive health care).

## STATISTICAL TABLES

Work is continuing to develop better substantive measures of gender equality in education. A process is currently under way, which involves, among others, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), the UN Girls' Education Initiative and UN Women, to share strategies related to global progress on measurement. The following two statistical tables are a contribution to this debate. Statistical Table 1 refers to the first domain of the gender equality in education monitoring framework, while Statistical Table 2 includes selected indicators on the next four domains. Notes by indicator provide definitions to interpret the data (**Table I.2**).

The source of the data is the UIS database unless otherwise mentioned in footnotes. The most recent UIS data presented in the tables are from the February 2019 education data release and refer to the school or financial year ending in 2018. This means 2017/18 for countries with a school year that overlaps two calendar years, and 2018 for those with a calendar school year. Education data reported to the UIS are in conformity with the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), revised in 2011. Countries may have their own definitions of education levels that do not correspond to ISCED 2011. Differences between nationally and internationally reported education statistics may be due to the use of nationally defined education levels rather than the ISCED level, in addition to the population issue raised above.

The statistical tables list 209 countries and territories, all of which are UNESCO Member States or associate members. Most report their data to the UIS using standard questionnaires issued by the UIS itself. For 49 countries, education data are collected by the UIS via the UIS/OECD/Eurostat (UOE) questionnaires. In terms of regional groups, the statistical tables use the SDG regional classification of the UN Statistical Division (UNSD), with some adjustments. The UNSD classification includes all territories, whether independent national entities or parts of bigger entities. However, the list of countries presented in the statistical tables includes only full UNESCO Member States and associate members, as well as Bermuda and Turks and Caicos Islands, non-member states that were included in the Education for All statistical tables. The UIS does not collect data for the Faroe Islands, so this territory is not included in the GEM Report despite its status as a UNESCO associate member.



**TABLE I.1:**  
Selected indicators of the gender equality in education monitoring framework

SDG indicator	Domain and indicator	Statistical tables
<b>1</b>	<b>Education opportunities</b>	
4.5.1	Adjusted gender parity index	
(4.3.2)	• Gross enrolment ratio by level of education	Yes
(4.1.5)	• Completion rate by level of education	Yes
	• Transition rate (e.g. from primary to lower secondary)	
(4.1.1)	• Proportion of children and young people achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics (grades 2/3, end of primary, end of lower secondary)	Yes
(4.6.2)	• Youth and adult literacy rate	
(4.4.2)	• Adults with information and communications technology skills	
	Share of females in technical and vocational programmes in secondary education	
	Share of females in science, technology, engineering and mathematics in tertiary education	Yes
<b>2</b>	<b>Gender norms and values</b>	
	Adults who agree with statements such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl'</li> <li>• 'A woman's most important role is to care for the household'</li> <li>• 'When a woman works for pay, the children suffer'</li> </ul>	Yes
5.3.1	Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 who married before age 18	Yes
	Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 who had a live birth at age 15 and 18	Yes
	Percentage of adolescents aged 12 to 14 involved in household chores for 28 hours or more during the week by sex	
	Percentage of children aged 5 to 14 engaged in child labour by sex	Yes
<b>3</b>	<b>Institutions</b>	
	Signatory and ratification status of international binding instruments, e.g. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and exceptions	Yes
	General provisions of non-discrimination based on gender in national constitutions	
5.1.1	Legal frameworks in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex	
<b>4</b>	<b>Education laws and policies</b>	
	Gender-responsive education sector plans	
	Inclusion of gender equality topics (gender discrimination, gender roles, gender violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights) in curricula and textbooks	
	Laws and policies that protect and facilitate education of pregnant adolescent girls	
	Laws and policies that address school-related gender-based violence	
	Laws and policies that protect children against child labour and its effect on education	
4.7.2	Percentage of schools that provide life skills-based HIV and sexuality education	Yes
<b>5</b>	<b>Education systems</b>	
	<b>Environments</b>	
4.a.1	Percentage of schools with adequate basic sanitation facilities, including single-sex toilets	Yes
4.a.2	Percentage of students experiencing bullying, corporal punishment, harassment, violence, sexual discrimination and abuse by sex	Yes
	<b>Teachers and teaching</b>	
	Percentage of teachers by sex and level of education	
	Percentage of education leaders and managers by sex and level of education	Yes
	Percentage of teachers who receive training on gender issues	
	<b>Finance</b>	
	Cash transfers that are conditional on school attendance and differentiated by sex	
	Percentage of aid to education that is targeted on gender equality by donor	
<b>6</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	
	Labour force participation rate of the population aged 15 and over by sex	
	Gender wage gap by occupation	
5.2.1	Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by an intimate partner in the previous 12 months	
5.2.2	Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months	
5.5.1	Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments	
5.5.2	Proportion of women and men in managerial position	
5.6.1	Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care	

**TABLE I.2:****Notes on indicators in the statistical tables**

Indicator	
<b>Table 1</b>	
	<p><b>Adjusted gender parity index, by indicator</b></p> <p>The gender parity index (GPI) is the ratio of female to male values of a given indicator. If the female value is less than or equal to the male value, adjusted gender parity index (GPIA) = GPI. If the female value is greater than the male value, GPIA = 2 - 1/GPI. This ensures the GPIA is symmetrical around 1 and limited to a range between 0 and 2. A GPIA equal to 1 indicates parity between females and males.</p>
<b>A</b>	<p><b>Gross enrolment ratio, by level, 2018 or latest available year</b></p> <p>Total enrolment in education at a particular level, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group. It can exceed 100% because of early or late entry and/or grade repetition.</p> <p>Source: UIS database.</p>
<b>B</b>	<p><b>Completion rate, by level, 2013–2018</b></p> <p>Percentage of children aged three to five years older than the official age of entry into the last grade of an education level who have reached the last grade of that level. For example, the primary completion rate in a country with a six-year cycle where the official age of entry into the last grade is 11 years is the percentage of 14- to 16-year-olds who have reached grade 6.</p> <p>Source: GEM Report team analysis of household surveys.</p>
<b>C</b>	<p><b>Percentage of students with minimum level of proficiency, by level, 2017 or latest available year</b></p> <p>The minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics is defined by each assessment. Data need to be interpreted with caution since the different assessments are not comparable. In the absence of assessments conducted in the proposed grade, surveys of student learning achievement in the grade below or above the proposed indicator grade are used as placeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading at the end of primary and at the end of lower secondary</li> <li>• Mathematics at the end of primary and at the end of lower secondary</li> </ul> <p>Source: UIS database based on national and international assessments.</p>
<b>D</b>	<p><b>Percentage of female graduates in tertiary education, 2018 or latest available year:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in engineering, manufacturing and construction programmes</li> <li>• in information and communication technologies programmes</li> </ul> <p>Source: UIS database.</p>
<b>Table 2</b>	
<b>A</b>	<p><b>Gender norms: perceptions</b></p> <p>Percentage of those who agree or strongly agree with the statement that 'A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl'</p> <p>Source: GEM Report team calculations based on the sixth round of the World Values Survey (2010–2016).</p>
<b>B</b>	<p><b>Gender norms: child labour</b></p> <p>Adjusted gender parity index of the percentage of children aged 5 to 14 engaged in child labour</p> <p>Source: UNICEF <a href="https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Child-labour-database_Nov-2017.xls">https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Child-labour-database_Nov-2017.xls</a> (2010–2017).</p>
<b>C</b>	<p><b>Gender norms: early marriage</b></p> <p>Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 who married before age 18</p> <p>Source: UNICEF <a href="https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Child-marriage-database_Mar-2018.xlsx">https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Child-marriage-database_Mar-2018.xlsx</a> (2010–2017).</p>
<b>D</b>	<p><b>Gender norms: early births</b></p> <p>Percentage of women aged 15 to 19 who have had children or are currently pregnant</p> <p>Source: World Bank <a href="https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/teenage-pregnancy-and-motherhood-women-ages-15-19-who-have-had-children-or-are-currently-pregnant-q2">https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/teenage-pregnancy-and-motherhood-women-ages-15-19-who-have-had-children-or-are-currently-pregnant-q2</a>.</p>
<b>E</b>	<p><b>Institutions outside education: international legislation</b></p> <p>Classification of countries by level of ratification of three treaties referring to gender equality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</li> <li>• Convention against Discrimination in Education (CADE)</li> <li>• International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)</li> </ul> <p>Countries have been classified accordingly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tier 1: State party to CEDAW, CADE and ICESCR without reservations</li> <li>Tier 2: State party to CEDAW and one of either CADE or ICESCR</li> <li>Tier 3: State party to CEDAW only</li> <li>Tier 4: State party to CEDAW with reservations and one of either CADE or ICESCR</li> <li>Tier 5: State party to CEDAW with reservations</li> <li>Tier 6: Not a state party to CEDAW</li> </ul> <p>Source: Right to Education Initiative (2018).</p>

TABLE I.2: Continued

Indicator	
<b>Table 2</b>	
<b>F</b>	<p><b>Education laws and policies: sexuality education</b></p> <p>Percentage of schools providing life skills-based HIV and sexuality education, 2017 or latest available year</p> <p>Source: UIS database.</p>
<b>G</b>	<p><b>Education systems: school-related gender-based violence</b></p> <p>Adjusted gender parity index of the percentage of students experiencing bullying, 2017 or latest available year</p> <p>Source: UIS database.</p>
<b>H</b>	<p><b>Education systems: teachers</b></p> <p>Percentage of teachers who are female, 2017 or latest available year</p> <p>Source: UIS database.</p>
<b>I</b>	<p><b>Education systems: head teachers</b></p> <p>Difference in the percentage of lower secondary teachers and head teachers who are female (2010–2013). A positive number suggests that the share of female teachers is higher than the share of female head teachers.</p> <p>Source: GEM Report team calculations based on the Teaching and Learning International Survey and other national surveys.</p>
<b>J</b>	<p><b>Education systems: sanitation</b></p> <p>Percentage of secondary schools with no sanitation service (no facility or unimproved), 2016 or latest available year</p> <p>Source: UNICEF and WHO Joint Monitoring Programme <a href="https://washdata.org/report/jmp-2018-wash-in-schools-final">https://washdata.org/report/jmp-2018-wash-in-schools-final</a>.</p>

**TABLE 1: Education opportunities**

Country or territory	A			B			C				D	
	GPI in gross enrolment rate			GPI in completion rate			GPI in achieving minimum proficiency				Female tertiary graduates (%)	
	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	End of primary		End of lower secondary		ICT	Engineering
						Reading	Mathematics	Reading	Mathematics			
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>												
Angola	0.86	0.59	0.79	0.89	0.76	0.65	...	...	...	...	38	22
Benin	0.94	0.85	0.53	0.83	0.51	0.46	0.97	1	...	...	55	55
Botswana	0.97	0.95	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.19	1.11	...	...
Burkina Faso	0.98	1.04	0.7	...	...	...	0.96	0.9	...	...	...	18
Burundi	1	1.16	0.82	1.16	0.8	0.84	1.18	1.11	...	...	27	8
Côte d'Ivoire	0.93	1.01	1.19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	38	22
Cabo Verde	0.9	0.88	0.82	0.97	0.9	0.78	1.15	1.06	...	...	...	...
Cameroon	0.76	0.68	0.58	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Central African Republic	0.78	0.5	0.38	0.78	0.55	0.37	0.78	0.64	...	...	...	...
Chad	0.96	1.04	1.09	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Comoros	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.1	0.9	...	...	...	...
Congo	0.91	0.77	0.7	0.88	0.62	0.82	1.05	0.79	...	...	...	...
D. R. Congo	0.99	0.66	0.62	0.93	0.84	0.7	...	...	...	...	37	10
Djibouti	0.89	0.84	0.82	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Equat. Guinea	0.99	1.03	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Eritrea	0.86	0.88	0.94	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	28
Eswatini	0.92	1	0.95	1.17	1.13	1.07	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ethiopia	0.91	0.89	0.98	1.03	1.12	1.18	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gabon	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gambia	1.08	1.1	...	0.94	0.96	0.85	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ghana	1.01	1	0.93	1.05	1	0.84	1	0.94	...	...	11	14
Guinea	0.82	0.67	0.63	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Guinea-Bissau	...	...	...	0.8	0.69	0.52	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kenya	1	1.01	...	1.06	1.12	0.85	1.06	1.03	...	...	30	19
Lesotho	0.97	1.25	1.3	1.33	1.46	1.32	...	...	...	...	23	21
Liberia	0.92	0.81	0.74	0.9	0.8	0.53	...	...	...	...	...	...
Madagascar	1	1.04	0.94	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	23	19
Malawi	1.03	0.99	0.75	1.18	0.92	0.84	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mali	0.89	0.87	0.69	0.84	0.75	0.6	0.93	1.02	...	...	...	...
Mauritania	1.05	0.97	0.93	0.86	0.73	0.57	...	...	...	...	41	12
Mauritius	1.02	1	1.13	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mozambique	0.93	0.95	0.82	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	27	24
Namibia	0.97	1.06	...	1.11	1.23	1.1	...	...	...	...	43	34
Niger	0.87	0.76	0.64	...	...	...	0.85	0.68	...	...	42	14
Nigeria	0.94	0.92	0.88	0.98	0.84	0.79	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rwanda	0.99	1.13	1.07	1.22	1.16	0.84	...	...	...	...	35	25
Sao Tome and Principe	0.96	1.09	1.19	1.07	1.08	1.43	...	...	...	...	...	...
Senegal	1.14	1.11	1.02	1.02	0.9	0.66	0.98	0.93	...	...	...	...
Seychelles	1.01	0.98	1.18	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	33	29
Sierra Leone	1.01	0.99	0.88	1.05	0.66	0.74	...	...	...	...	...	...
Somalia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
South Africa	0.96	1.05	1.11	...	...	...	...	...	1.08	...	37	32
South Sudan	0.71	0.59	0.45	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Togo	0.95	0.78	0.58	0.89	0.64	0.49	1.1	0.95	...	...	...	...
Uganda	1.03	...	...	1.07	0.87	0.79	1.01	0.85	...	...	...	...
United Republic of Tanzania	1.02	1.03	0.67	1.1	0.86	0.69	...	...	...	...	...	...
Zambia	1.02	0.97	...	1.03	0.88	0.68	...	...	...	...	...	...
Zimbabwe	0.98	1.04	0.93	1.03	1.01	0.77	...	...	...	...	46	20
<b>Northern Africa and Western Asia</b>												
Algeria	0.95	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.31	1.13	54	41
Armenia	1	1.02	1.1	1	1.05	1.25	...	1.01	...	...	31	12
Azerbaijan	1.02	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	47	28
Bahrain	1	1.01	1.01	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.13	48	33
Cyprus	1	0.99	0.99	...	0.99	1.1	...	...	1.23	...	31	33
Egypt	1	1	0.96	1.01	1.02	0.96	...	...	...	1.08	37	21
Georgia	1.01	1	1.03	...	1	1	...	...	1.28	1.11	25	17
Iraq	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Israel	1.01	1.01	1.02	...	...	...	...	...	1.11	1	...	...
Jordan	...	0.99	1.15	...	...	...	...	...	1.32	1.16	...	...
Kuwait	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.07	...	25
Lebanon	0.92	0.98	1	...	...	...	...	...	1.1	0.97	...	...

**TABLE 1:** Continued

Country or territory	A			B			C				D	
	GPI in gross enrolment rate			GPI in completion rate			GPI in achieving minimum proficiency				Female tertiary graduates (%)	
	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	End of primary		End of lower secondary		ICT	Engineering
						Reading	Mathematics	Reading	Mathematics			
Libya	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Morocco	0.95	0.86	0.95	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	45	46
Oman	1.03	0.92	1.02	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.23	74	39
Palestine	1	1.05	1.25	1.01	1.14	1.28	...	...	...	...	48	32
Qatar	0.99	1.05	1.33	...	...	...	...	...	1.25	1.06	38	37
Saudi Arabia	0.98	0.79	0.76	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.15	46	6
Sudan	0.94	0.98	1.06	0.97	1.02	0.83	...	...	...	...	...	46
Syrian Arab Republic	0.97	0.97	1.1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	57	44
Tunisia	0.97	0.98	1.21	...	...	...	...	...	1.22	0.87	61	45
Turkey	0.99	1.02	0.94	0.99	0.96	1.05	...	1.01	1.16	1.03	34	27
United Arab Emirates	0.97	0.98	0.89	...	...	...	...	...	1.24	1.1	58	35
Yemen	0.87	0.75	0.7	0.78	0.73	0.64	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>Central and Southern Asia</b>												
Afghanistan	0.69	0.59	0.55	0.6	0.52	0.45	...	...	...	...	...	4
Bangladesh	1.07	1.22	1.05	1.11	1.02	0.82	1.01	...	1	0.84	28	46
Bhutan	1	1.13	0.99	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	25
India	1.14	1.05	0.97	1	0.96	0.85	...	...	...	...	50	31
Iran, Islamic Republic of	1.03	0.99	1.04	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.05	42	20
Kazakhstan	1.02	1.01	1.01	1	1	1.02	...	1	1.13	1.02	39	29
Kyrgyzstan	0.99	0.99	1.02	1	1.02	1.03	...	...	...	...	45	30
Maldives	1	0.97	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nepal	1.06	1.07	1.13	0.98	0.95	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Pakistan	0.86	0.85	0.76	...	...	...	1.04	1.03	...	...	...	...
Sri Lanka	0.99	0.99	1.11	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.12	39	26
Tajikistan	0.99	0.97	0.75	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Turkmenistan	0.98	0.99	0.91	1	1	1.03	...	...	...	...	...	...
Uzbekistan	0.98	0.99	0.99	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>Eastern and South-eastern Asia</b>												
Brunei Darussalam	0.99	0.99	1.03	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	46	48
Cambodia	0.98	1.08	0.99	1.12	0.96	0.97	...	...	1.3	1.22	8	15
China	1.01	1.01	1.05	1.02	1.08	1.15	...	...	1.06	1	...	...
DPR Korea	1	1	1.02	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	36	17
Hong Kong, China	0.98	0.95	0.96	...	...	...	...	...	1.07	1.02	...	...
Indonesia	0.96	1.02	1.04	...	...	...	...	...	1.2	1.06	35	23
Japan	1	1	1.01	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Lao PDR	0.97	0.95	0.91	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	35	17
Macao, China	0.99	0.95	1.05	...	...	...	...	...	1.09	1.03	19	14
Malaysia	1.01	1.01	1.08	...	...	...	...	...	1.22	1.06	45	32
Mongolia	0.98	0.99	1.06	1.01	1.05	1.26	...	...	...	...	31	32
Myanmar	0.95	1.05	1.18	1.03	1.03	1.33	...	...	...	...	...	...
Philippines	0.97	1.07	1.14	1.12	1.25	1.22	...	...	...	...	48	24
Republic of Korea	1	1.01	1	...	...	...	...	...	1.11	1.05	29	21
Singapore	1	0.98	1	...	...	...	...	...	1.05	1.01	33	27
Thailand	1	0.9	1.02	1	1.12	1.19	...	...	1.22	1.03	48	17
Timor-Leste	0.97	1.07	1.09	1.1	1.1	1.1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Viet Nam	1	1.01	...	1.01	1.06	1.17	...	...	1.1	1.04	26	37
<b>Oceania</b>												
Australia	1	0.88	0.9	...	...	...	1.04	1.02	1.1	1	19	23
Cook Islands	0.94	0.96	1.2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fiji	0.99	1.04	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kiribati	1.06	1.13	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Marshall Islands	1.02	1.06	1.16	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Micronesia, F. S.	1	1.03	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nauru	1.03	1.01	1.08	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
New Zealand	1	0.99	1.12	...	...	...	...	...	1.1	1	23	29
Niue	0.95	0.98	0.86	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Palau	0.96	1.04	1.05	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Papua New Guinea	0.91	0.82	0.64	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Samoa	1	1.02	1.14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Solomon Is	0.99	1.06	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tokelau	0.88	0.89	1.56	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

TABLE 1: Continued

Country or territory	A			B			C				D	
	GPI in gross enrolment rate			GPI in completion rate			GPI in achieving minimum proficiency				Female tertiary graduates (%)	
	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	End of primary		End of lower secondary		ICT	Engineering
						Reading	Mathematics	Reading	Mathematics			
Tonga	0.97	1.02	1.17	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tuvalu	0.97	1.2	1.23	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vanuatu	0.98	1.05	1.08	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>												
Anguilla	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.22	1.23	...	...	...	...
Antigua and Barbuda	0.97	0.84	1.18	...	...	...	1.33	1.14	...	...	...	...
Argentina	1	0.99	1.11	...	...	...	1.1	0.95	1.1	0.86	31	41
Aruba	0.97	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bahamas	1.05	1.04	1.07	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Barbados	0.98	1.02	1.06	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Belize	0.95	1.01	1.15	1.01	1.15	1.06	...	...	...	...	19	9
Bolivia, P. S.	0.98	0.93	0.99	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brazil	0.97	0.97	1.14	1.09	1.1	1.19	1.04	0.99	1.15	0.79	15	37
British Virgin Islands	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cayman Islands	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chile	0.97	0.98	1.02	1	1.01	1.05	1.03	1	1.07	0.88	13	18
Colombia	0.97	1.02	1.13	1.04	1.1	1.12	1.02	0.98	1.02	0.96	25	35
Costa Rica	1.01	0.97	1.17	...	...	...	1.02	1.01	1.1	0.76	23	35
Cuba	0.95	0.94	1.1	1	1.01	1.01	...	...	...	...	33	42
Curaçao	0.96	1.03	1.11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dominica	0.97	0.93	1.1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dominican Republic	0.93	1	1.18	1.07	1.14	1.27	1.12	0.99	1.24	0.95	39	38
Ecuador	1.01	1.02	1.04	1	1.03	1.06	1.05	1	1.06	0.93	37	21
El Salvador	0.97	0.97	1.03	1.05	1.02	1.08	...	...	...	...	26	19
Grenada	0.95	1.06	1.04	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22	13
Guatemala	0.97	0.9	1.05	0.95	0.87	0.91	1.12	0.91	...	...	21	35
Guyana	...	...	...	1.03	1.11	1.24	...	...	...	...	...	...
Haiti	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Honduras	1	1.06	1.21	...	...	...	1.06	0.94	...	...	30	37
Jamaica	...	1.04	1.07	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mexico	1.01	1.1	1.05	1	0.99	0.98	1.22	1.06	1.13	0.9	32	28
Montserrat	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1.36	...	...	...	...
Nicaragua	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.04	0.95	...	...	...	...
Panama	0.98	0.98	1.09	1.01	1.07	1.17	1.08	0.98	...	...	56	40
Paraguay	...	...	1.08	1.09	1.09	1.12	1.08	1.02	...	...	...	...
Peru	1	0.99	1.01	...	...	...	...	...	1.1	0.88	50	26
Saint Kitts and Nevis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Saint Lucia	...	0.99	1.03	...	...	...	1.15	1.04	...	...	...	...
Saint Vincent/Grenadines	0.98	0.87	1.12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sint Maarten	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	75	...
Suriname	1	1.16	1.45	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Trinidad and Tobago	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.22	1.14	...	...
Turks and Caicos Islands	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Uruguay	0.98	...	...	1.01	1.16	0.72	1.05	0.96	1.14	0.89	20	48
Venezuela, B. R.	0.97	1.04	1.12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>Europe and Northern America</b>												
Albania	0.97	0.97	0.91	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	47	40
Andorra	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	100	...
Austria	1	0.98	0.93	...	0.98	1.01	1.08	...	1.1	0.93	14	22
Belarus	1	1.01	0.94	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24	23
Belgium	1	1.02	1.15	...	1.03	0.99	...	...	1.06	0.97	6	25
Bermuda	0.98	1.02	1.17	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9	0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	27	38
Bulgaria	0.99	0.96	0.98	...	1.01	0.9	...	1.01	1.2	1.04	40	30
Canada	1	1.02	1.01	...	...	...	...	...	1.06	0.99	30	20
Croatia	1.01	1.04	1.05	...	1.02	0.98	...	0.99	1.1	0.94	21	34
Czechia	1.01	1	1.02	...	1	1	...	...	1.11	1.01	15	33
Denmark	0.99	1	1.05	...	1.01	1.08	...	...	1.06	0.98	24	29
Estonia	1	0.99	1.03	...	1.01	1.1	...	...	1.07	1.02	27	32
Finland	1	0.99	1.14	...	1	1.08	...	...	1.1	1.05	21	22
France	0.99	0.99	1.03	...	1.01	1.12	...	...	1.1	1.01	16	26
Germany	0.99	0.97	0.9	...	0.99	1.03	...	1	1.06	0.95	18	20
Greece	1	0.95	0.93	...	0.98	0.99	...	...	1.16	1.03	39	34

**TABLE 1:** Continued

Country or territory	A			B			C				D	
	GPI in gross enrolment rate			GPI in completion rate			GPI in achieving minimum proficiency				Female tertiary graduates (%)	
	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	End of primary		End of lower secondary		ICT	Engineering
						Reading	Mathematics	Reading	Mathematics			
Hungary	1	0.97	1.01	...	1	0.95	...	1	1.1	0.97	19	29
Iceland	1	1	1.01	...	1	1.29	...	...	1.14	1.02	...	...
Ireland	0.99	1	1.05	...	1.03	1.03	...	...	1.04	1	21	18
Italy	1	0.98	0.98	...	1	1.09	...	...	1.07	0.99	16	32
Latvia	1	0.98	1	...	1.02	1.05	...	...	1.13	1.04	24	27
Liechtenstein	0.96	0.96	0.64	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lithuania	1	0.96	0.94	...	0.99	1.05	...	1.01	1.15	1.03	12	25
Luxembourg	1	0.98	1.07	...	1.04	1.07	...	...	1.09	0.98	20	20
Malta	1.04	0.96	1.09	...	1.02	1.05	...	...	1.17	1.03	16	23
Monaco	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Montenegro	0.99	0.99	1	1	1.01	1.04	...	...	1.18	0.99	...	...
Netherlands	1	0.96	1.07	...	0.98	1.21	...	...	1.08	1.01	17	24
Northern Macedonia	1	0.98	0.98	...	...	...	...	...	1.29	1.06	34	42
Norway	1	0.98	0.94	...	0.99	1.11	...	...	1.11	1.04	16	23
Poland	1.01	0.97	0.97	...	1.03	1.04	...	...	1.1	0.97	18	42
Portugal	0.96	0.97	0.98	...	0.98	1.21	...	...	1.07	0.99	23	33
Republic of Moldova	1	0.99	0.99	...	...	...	...	...	1.25	1.02	30	29
Romania	0.99	0.98	1.01	...	1.02	1.01	...	...	1.09	1	33	35
Russian Federation	1	1.02	0.92	1	1	1	...	1	1.09	0.99	...	...
San Marino	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Serbia	1	0.99	1.03	1	1	1.15	...	1.04	...	...	26	37
Slovakia	0.99	0.99	1.04	...	1	1.01	...	0.97	1.15	1	12	28
Slovenia	1	0.99	1.03	...	1	1.04	...	...	1.12	1	16	24
Spain	1.01	0.97	1.04	...	1	1.19	...	...	1.07	0.96	14	26
Sweden	1.03	1.03	1.16	...	0.99	1.02	...	1.02	1.12	1	28	32
Switzerland	0.99	0.99	0.94	...	0.99	0.94	...	...	1.1	0.99	9	15
Ukraine	1.02	1	0.92	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	19	23
United Kingdom	1	1.12	1.08	...	1	1.06	...	...	1.07	0.97	19	23
United States	1	0.96	1.03	1	1	1.03	...	...	1.08	0.98	24	20

A Adjusted gender parity index in the gross enrollment rate by level

B Adjusted gender parity index in the completion rate by level [Source: GEM Report team analysis of household surveys]

C Adjusted gender parity index in the percentage of students achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics

D Percentage of female graduates in tertiary education in (a) engineering, manufacturing and construction and (b) information and communication technologies

Note: UIS is the source unless noted otherwise.

**TABLE 2: Norms, institutions, laws, policies and systems**

Country or territory	A Adults who value university for boys over girls (%)	B GPI of adolescents in household chores	C Early marriage rate (%)	D Early pregnancy rate (%)	E Government international commitment to gender equality	F Schools that provide HIV and sexuality education (%)		G GPI of students experiencing bullying	H Female teachers (%)		I Gap in share of female teachers vs. head teachers (percentage points)	J Secondary schools with no sanitation (%)
						Primary	Lower secondary		Primary	Secondary		
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>												
Angola	...	1	30	34	Tier 2	...	...	...	47	29	...	...
Benin	...	1	26	16	Tier 1	...	...	1.08	25	10	...	24
Botswana	...	...	...	...	Tier 3	...	...	...	74	...	...	0
Burkina Faso	...	1	52	27	Tier 1	2	0	...	47	17	...	24
Burundi	...	1	20	12	Tier 2	100	100	...	53	26	...	0
Côte d'Ivoire	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	75	100	...	72	47	...	0
Cabo Verde	...	1	31	25	Tier 2	...	...	...	54	35	...	29
Cameroon	...	1	68	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	19	47	...	23
Central African Republic	...	1	67	36	Tier 2	...	...	...	18	7	...	...
Chad	...	1	32	11	Tier 3	...	...	...	20	9	...	65
Comoros	...	...	27	33	Tier 1	...	...	...	54	9	...	25
Congo	...	1	27	30	Tier 1	...	...	...	30	16	...	12
D. R. Congo	...	1	37	27	Tier 2	0	0	...	29	12	...	...
Djibouti	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	27	26	...	4
Equat. Guinea	...	...	30	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	44	...	...	4
Eritrea	...	...	41	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	39	22	...	27
Eswatini	...	1	5	...	Tier 1	100	97	0.94	69	49	...	14
Ethiopia	...	1	40	12	Tier 2	...	...	...	37	24	...	46
Gabon	...	1	22	28	Tier 2	...	...	...	53	...	...	...
Gambia	...	1	30	18	Tier 2	...	...	...	36	19	...	0
Ghana	30	1	21	18	Tier 2	...	...	1.04	41	25	...	8
Guinea	...	1	51	34	Tier 1	...	...	...	31	5	...	8
Guinea-Bissau	...	1	24	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	22	...	...	...
Kenya	...	...	23	19	Tier 2	...	...	...	50	42	...	...
Lesotho	...	...	17	19	Tier 2	...	...	...	75	55	...	...
Liberia	...	...	36	34	Tier 1	...	...	...	14	5	...	...
Madagascar	...	1	41	39	Tier 1	...	...	...	55	43	...	24
Malawi	...	1	42	29	Tier 2	...	...	...	42	31	...	32
Mali	...	1	52	38	Tier 1	...	...	...	31	14	...	30
Mauritania	...	...	37	...	Tier 4	...	...	0.96	38	11	...	66
Mauritius	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.7	77	58	...	0
Mozambique	...	...	48	46	Tier 3	...	...	1.03	45	31	...	...
Namibia	...	...	7	19	Tier 2	...	...	0.95	68	54	...	...
Niger	...	1	76	40	Tier 4	6	100	...	53	22	...	44
Nigeria	46	1	44	32	Tier 1	...	...	...	48	48	...	...
Rwanda	36	1	7	7	Tier 1	100	100	...	54	31	...	0
Sao Tome and Principe	...	1	35	...	Tier 2	50	100	...	55	33	...	0
Senegal	...	1	31	16	Tier 1	100	84	...	33	27	...	16
Seychelles	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	93	86	1.11	89	61	...	0
Sierra Leone	...	1	39	35	Tier 1	21	43	...	27	14	...	...
Somalia	...	...	...	...	Tier 6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
South Africa	39	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	79	58	...	...
South Sudan	...	...	52	...	Tier 3	...	...	...	15	13	...	30
Togo	...	1	22	16	Tier 1	...	...	...	16	...	...	...
Uganda	...	1	40	24	Tier 1	...	...	...	43	24	...	...
United Republic of Tanzania	...	1	30	27	Tier 1	...	...	1.11	51	35	...	0
Zambia	...	...	31	28	Tier 2	62	...	...	50	...	...	...
Zimbabwe	16	...	32	22	Tier 1	...	...	...	56	46	...	6
<b>Northern Africa and Western Asia</b>												
Algeria	37	1	2	...	Tier 4	0	0	1.13	76	...	...	0
Armenia	25	0	5	4	Tier 1	...	...	0.6	...	...	...	...
Azerbaijan	31	...	11	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	91	73	...	0
Bahrain	...	...	...	...	Tier 4	...	...	0.64	75	57	...	0
Cyprus	14	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	83	66	...	...
Egypt	36	1	17	11	Tier 4	0	0	0.99	61	47	...	0
Georgia	18	0	14	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	91	80	...	...
Iraq	31	1	24	...	Tier 4	...	...	0.68	...	...	...	...
Israel	...	...	...	...	Tier 4	...	...	0.49	85	...	24	0
Jordan	29	0	8	4	Tier 4	...	...	...	78	59	...	...
Kuwait	36	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.77	90	56	...	0
Lebanon	31	...	...	...	Tier 4	...	...	0.49	88	68	...	1



**TABLE 2:** Continued

Country or territory	A Adults who value university for boys over girls (%)	B GPI of adolescents in household chores	C Early marriage rate (%)	D Early pregnancy rate (%)	E Government international commitment to gender equality	F Schools that provide HIV and sexuality education (%)		G GPI of students experiencing bullying	H Female teachers (%)		I Gap in share of female teachers vs. head teachers (percentage points)	J Secondary schools with no sanitation (%)
						Primary	Lower secondary		Primary	Secondary		
Libya	32	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Morocco	20	...	...	...	Tier 4	...	...	0.72	58	36	...	6
Oman	...	...	...	...	Tier 5	...	...	0.87	70	68	...	...
Palestine	27	1	15	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	71	52	...	1
Qatar	28	...	4	...	Tier 5	100	100	0.71	81	53	...	0
Saudi Arabia	...	...	...	...	Tier 4	100	100	...	53	51	...	...
Sudan	...	1	34	...	Tier 6	...	...	...	...	...	...	30
Syrian Arab Republic	...	...	...	...	Tier 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tunisia	24	1	2	...	Tier 4	...	...	...	62	51	...	0
Turkey	32	0	15	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	59	50	...	...
United Arab Emirates	...	...	...	...	Tier 5	...	...	0.67	90	68	...	...
Yemen	45	...	32	11	Tier 2	...	...	0.71	33	...	...	...
<b>Central and Southern Asia</b>												
Afghanistan	...	1	35	12	Tier 1	...	...	1.06	34	32	...	...
Bangladesh	...	1	59	31	Tier 4	0	0	0.64	61	22	...	3
Bhutan	...	1	26	...	Tier 3	...	...	0.93	40	42	...	3
India	35	...	27	8	Tier 4	...	...	...	51	43	...	21
Iran, Islamic Republic of	...	1	17	...	Tier 6	...	...	...	67	54	...	...
Kazakhstan	22	...	7	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	99	77	...	...
Kyrgyzstan	41	1	12	6	Tier 1	100	100	...	98	77	...	...
Maldives	...	...	...	...	Tier 4	0	100	0.97	70	...	...	...
Nepal	...	1	40	17	Tier 2	...	...	0.81	44	23	...	...
Pakistan	51	...	21	8	Tier 4	...	...	...	55	61	...	9
Sri Lanka	...	0	...	...	Tier 1	...	100	0.57	87	70	...	0
Tajikistan	...	...	12	7	Tier 1	...	...	...	76	46	...	...
Turkmenistan	...	0	6	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Uzbekistan	49	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	91	60	...	...
<b>Eastern and South-eastern Asia</b>												
Brunei Darussalam	...	...	...	...	Tier 4	...	...	0.86	77	69	...	...
Cambodia	...	1	18	12	Tier 2	...	...	0.99	57	...	...	31
China	22	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	66	54	...	...
DPR Korea	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	84	45	...	...
Hong Kong, China	23	...	...	...	Tier 1	100	95	...	77	56	...	0
Indonesia	...	...	14	10	Tier 1	...	...	0.8	66	55	...	12
Japan	16	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	...	...	33	...
Lao PDR	...	1	35	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.74	52	51	...	...
Macao, China	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	83	58	...	0
Malaysia	43	...	...	...	Tier 5	100	100	0.74	70	67	21	0
Mongolia	...	1	5	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.7	96	73	...	15
Myanmar	...	1	16	6	Tier 3	...	...	0.95	82	86	...	...
Philippines	39	1	15	10	Tier 1	...	...	0.92	88	73	...	7
Republic of Korea	26	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	78	59	55	0
Singapore	26	...	...	...	Tier 5	...	...	...	80	65	12	0
Thailand	29	...	22	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.73	71	64	...	...
Timor-Leste	...	...	19	7	Tier 2	...	...	0.64	40	29	...	...
Viet Nam	...	1	11	...	Tier 2	...	...	1	73	...	...	...
<b>Oceania</b>												
Australia	4	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	...	...	21	0
Cook Islands	...	...	...	...	Tier 3	0	32	1.08	90	58	...	0
Fiji	...	...	...	...	Tier 3	...	...	0.78	59	57	...	...
Kiribati	...	...	...	...	Tier 3	...	...	0.76	82	...	...	...
Marshall Islands	...	...	...	...	Tier 3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Micronesia, F. S.	...	...	...	...	Tier 5	...	...	...	56	...	...	...
Nauru	...	...	...	...	Tier 3	...	50	0.95	78	50	...	...
New Zealand	5	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	84	63	...	...
Niue	...	...	...	...	Tier 6	0	100	...	92	57	...	0
Palau	...	...	...	...	Tier 6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Papua New Guinea	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	49	38	...	19
Samoa	...	...	11	...	Tier 3	0	0	0.88	77	57	...	...
Solomon Is	...	1	21	...	Tier 1	...	...	1.05	43	33	...	...
Tokelau	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.01	73	...	...	...

TABLE 2: Continued

Country or territory	A Adults who value university for boys over girls (%)	B GPI of adolescents in household chores	C Early marriage rate (%)	D Early pregnancy rate (%)	E Government international commitment to gender equality	F Schools that provide HIV and sexuality education (%)		G GPI of students experiencing bullying	H Female teachers (%)		I Gap in share of female teachers vs. head teachers (percentage points)	J Secondary schools with no sanitation (%)
						Primary	Lower secondary		Primary	Secondary		
Tonga	...	...	6	...	Tier 6	...	...	0.67	72	58	...	...
Tuvalu	...	...	...	...	Tier 3	...	...	0.37	82	56	...	...
Vanuatu	...	1	21	...	Tier 3	...	...	0.98	57	42	...	...
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>												
Anguilla	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.26	75	68	...	...
Antigua and Barbuda	...	...	...	...	Tier 3	98	100	...	91	74	...	...
Argentina	17	1	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.98	...	...	...	...
Aruba	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	85	59	...	...
Bahamas	...	...	...	...	Tier 4	...	...	0.89	90	71	...	...
Barbados	...	1	11	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.71	77	65	...	0
Belize	...	0	26	...	Tier 1	...	...	1.03	74	63	...	...
Bolivia, P. S.	...	...	19	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.89	66	52	...	...
Brazil	9	1	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	89	64	-3	2
British Virgin Islands	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	91	67	...	...
Cayman Islands	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	88	67	...	...
Chile	20	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.88	81	60	9	...
Colombia	11	0	23	17	Tier 2	...	...	...	77	51	...	...
Costa Rica	...	1	21	...	Tier 1	0	74	...	79	57	...	5
Cuba	...	...	26	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	81	64	...	...
Curaçao	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dominica	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	100	100	...	87	73	...	0
Dominican Republic	...	1	36	20	Tier 1	...	...	0.85	81	63	...	...
Ecuador	23	1	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	76	57	...	...
El Salvador	...	0	26	...	Tier 2	...	...	1.14	74	55	...	...
Grenada	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	100	100	...	81	65	...	...
Guatemala	...	0	30	21	Tier 1	...	...	0.75	64	49	...	...
Guyana	...	1	30	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.91	89	71	...	...
Haiti	60	1	18	14	Tier 2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Honduras	...	0	34	24	Tier 1	...	...	1	74	59	...	...
Jamaica	...	1	8	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.94	89	71	...	...
Mexico	21	1	26	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	68	50	13	4
Montserrat	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	87	64	...	...
Nicaragua	...	...	35	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	77	55	...	...
Panama	...	0	26	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	77	59	...	...
Paraguay	...	1	22	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.76	71	62	...	...
Peru	14	1	22	13	Tier 1	...	...	1.03	69	45	...	3
Saint Kitts and Nevis	...	...	...	...	Tier 3	...	...	0.82	92	69	...	...
Saint Lucia	...	1	8	...	Tier 3	...	...	...	86	72	...	0
Saint Vincent/Grenadines	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	100	100	...	84	68	...	0
Sint Maarten	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	90	58	...	...
Suriname	...	1	19	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	95	73	...	...
Trinidad and Tobago	6	...	11	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.73	...	...	...	...
Turks and Caicos Islands	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	92	60	...	...
Uruguay	9	...	25	...	Tier 1	100	100	1.13	...	...	...	...
Venezuela, B. R.	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	100	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>Europe and Northern America</b>												
Albania	...	1	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.77	85	66	...	...
Andorra	...	...	...	...	Tier 3	100	100	...	85	62	...	0
Austria	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.83	92	66	...	...
Belarus	21	1	3	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	99	80	...	0
Belgium	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	82	63	...	...
Bermuda	...	...	...	...	...	46	100	...	88	67	...	...
Bosnia and Herzegovina	...	...	4	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	87	61	...	...
Bulgaria	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.92	94	79	10	...
Canada	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	1.15	...	...	...	...
Croatia	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.94	94	70	14	...
Czechia	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.91	97	66	28	...
Denmark	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	1.02	69	56	27	0
Estonia	16	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.95	91	76	24	0
Finland	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	100	100	0.79	79	67	32	0
France	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.95	83	59	24	0
Germany	16	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	1.03	87	63	...	0
Greece	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.93	71	60	...	...

**TABLE 2: Continued**

Country or territory	A Adults who value university for boys over girls (%)	B GPI of adolescents in household chores	C Early marriage rate (%)	D Early pregnancy rate (%)	E Government international commitment to gender equality	F Schools that provide HIV and sexuality education (%)		G GPI of students experiencing bullying	H Female teachers (%)		I Gap in share of female teachers vs. head teachers (percentage points)	J Secondary schools with no sanitation (%)
						Primary	Lower secondary		Primary	Secondary		
Hungary	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	1	97	70	...	0
Iceland	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.86	82	...	17	...
Ireland	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	1.09	85	...	...	...
Italy	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.8	96	69	23	0
Latvia	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	1.02	93	83	12	0
Liechtenstein	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	78	54	...	...
Lithuania	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.99	97	82	...	...
Luxembourg	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	1.09	76	54	...	...
Malta	...	...	...	...	Tier 4	...	...	0.71	85	65	...	...
Monaco	...	...	...	...	Tier 4	100	100	...	83	58	...	0
Montenegro	...	1	4	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Netherlands	5	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	1.03	87	53	24	0
Northern Macedonia	...	1	7	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.73	81	59	...	...
Norway	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.9	75	63	3	0
Poland	12	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.89	86	69	8	...
Portugal	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.84	81	70	34	0
Republic of Moldova	...	...	12	...	Tier 1	100	100	1.04	98	79	...	0
Romania	21	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.85	90	72	5	...
Russian Federation	23	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.9	99	82	...	...
San Marino	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	...	91	78	...	...
Serbia	...	1	3	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	86	65	10	...
Slovakia	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.87	90	74	22	0
Slovenia	8	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.74	97	74	...	0
Spain	12	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.7	76	57	14	0
Sweden	3	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	1.17	77	64	12	...
Switzerland	...	...	...	...	Tier 2	...	...	0.96	83	49	...	0
Ukraine	18	1	9	...	Tier 1	...	...	0.96	97	80	...	...
United Kingdom	...	...	...	...	Tier 1	...	...	...	85	63	...	...
United States	6	...	...	...	Tier 6	...	...	...	87	63	...	0

- A Percentage of adults that agree or strongly agree that university is more important for boys than girls [Source: World Values Survey]
- B Percentage of adolescents in household chores, adjusted gender parity index [Source: UNICEF]
- C Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union before age 18 [Source: UNICEF]
- D Percentage of women aged 15 to 19 years who have had children or are currently pregnant [Source: World Bank]
- E Ratification status of international treaties on gender equality. Tier 1 indicates the highest commitment and Tier 6 the lowest. [Source: Right to Education Initiative]
- F Percentage of schools that provide HIV and sexuality education by level
- G Percentage of students experiencing bullying, adjusted gender parity index
- H Percentage of female teachers by level
- I Difference between share of lower secondary female teachers and female head teachers [Source: OECD TALIS and national sources]
- J Percentage of secondary schools with no sanitation service [Source: UNICEF and WHO]

Note: UIS is the source unless noted otherwise.

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The Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action specifies that the mandate of the *Global Education Monitoring Report* is to be “the mechanism for monitoring and reporting on SDG 4 and on education in the other SDGs” with the responsibility to “report on the implementation of national and international strategies to help hold all relevant partners to account for their commitments as part of the overall SDG follow-up and review”. It is prepared by an independent team hosted by UNESCO.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The *Global Education Monitoring Report* team is responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in this book and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization. Overall responsibility for the views and opinions expressed in the Report is taken by its Director.

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# Gender Report

## BUILDING BRIDGES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The 2019 Gender Report argues that apparent progress towards gender parity in education is not a sufficiently good indicator of the real progress made towards gender equality in education.

Many people still believe it is preferable for a man to receive a university education rather than a woman. Teachers rarely receive training in how to be responsive to gender issues in the classroom. Some countries still ban pregnant girls from school. Teaching is frequently a female profession with men in charge. A broader perspective is therefore needed.

For this reason, this Report is framed around a monitoring framework for gender equality in education first introduced in the 2016 *Global Education Monitoring Report*. In addition to focusing on gender parity in education participation, attainment and learning achievement, the framework examines different dimensions of the quest for gender equality. It looks inside and outside of education, with the understanding that change in education cannot happen if harmful gender norms are still common, or if there is insufficient political will for change.

Informed by the 2019 *Global Education Monitoring Report*, this publication is enriched by analysis of the intersections between gender, education, migration and displacement. It examines the way that relations in both origin and host communities influence women's and men's experiences as migrants and refugees – and the role of education.

Finally, this Gender Report reviews how much aid to education focuses on gender equality and presents different donor-funded programmes targeting girls' education. It calls on donors to reassess their gender-related programming to ensure that their projects are sustainable and integrated into national policies. Feeding into debates spurred by the 2019 G7 French Presidency, the Report also analyses the extent to which education sector plans in some of the countries with the largest gender disparity in education are sufficiently responsive to the need for gender equality.



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