CHAPTER 2

Overall Education Progress in GPE Developing Country Partners

Photo credit: **Educate a Child**

2.1 Introduction

The global picture is one of overall progress at all levels, with the rise in primary completion leading to increased numbers of children entering lower secondary education.

This chapter widens the analysis of the report beyond primary education to include pre-primary and lower secondary education in GPE developing country partners. It shows that the global picture is one of overall progress at all levels, with the rise in primary completion leading to increased numbers of children entering lower secondary education. Some countries with high primary completion rates have also been able to shift their attention to pre-primary education, leading to important, government-led strides in enrolment at that level. The conditions of learning – in particular class sizes and teachers' training levels – have also improved.

Almost half of GPE developing country partners are fragile or affected by conflict, with high levels of inequality, and many have particularly low enrolment, completion and/or learning levels.

Despite these encouraging results, many of the 59 developing countries that belong to the Global Partnership for Education face exceptional challenges. Almost half of them are fragile or affected by conflict, with high levels of inequality, and many have particularly low enrolment, completion and/or learning levels. Marginalized groups – including girls and young women, those who live in rural areas, and those from the poorest families – are still at a significant disadvantage at all levels of education. A poor child from a remote region, for example, may be over 10 times less likely to finish primary education than a rich child from a large city. Some groups are still effectively excluded from education.

In addition, a high proportion of education spending – sometimes over a third – is wasted through low levels of internal efficiency, in countries where financial resources are already limited. Taking action to reduce the number of children who drop out or repeat grades could significantly improve countries' ability to achieve results with the resources available.

Finally, the lack of quality, timely data remains a critical issue in developing country partners, particularly data on financing and learning. The Global Partnership is addressing these challenges through its data strategy, which involves increasing the collection, reporting and use of data, and is reflected in its new funding model.

This chapter is comprised of six main sections. Section 2.2 examines the data challenges. Section 2.3 considers core indicators in pre-primary and lower secondary education, including rates of enrollment, transition and completion. Broadening the scope of the chapter to include three levels of education (pre-primary, primary and lower secondary), section 2.4 looks at equity issues, section 2.5 examines trends in internal efficiency and section 2.6 shows how learning conditions in developing country partners have improved. In conclusion, section 2.7 presents the main findings of the chapter.

2.2 Data problems hinder progress in GPE developing country partners

Relevant, reliable and timely data are crucial to build effective national education systems, monitor policy implementation and enable global monitoring. However, a significant lack of national and international data is still hampering efforts toward quality education for all.

This section considers the availability of key education indicators in data published by UIS, before examining the consequences for national education sector plans when data needed to support the policy cycle are not available. It concludes by outlining the strategy that the GPE Secretariat plans to implement to improve the availability of quality data at national and international levels.

Box 2.1 **Data Sources**

The information in this chapter relies primarily on data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). Other sources include the Global Partnership's analysis of recent national education sector plans in developing country partners, and household survey information on disparities.

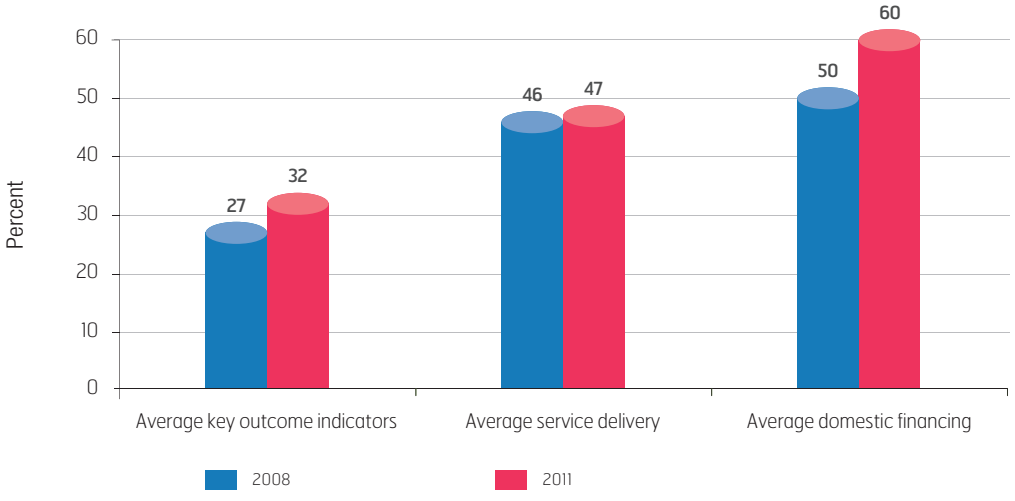
This year, UIS is computing indicators using on the 2012 population revision (World Population Prospect, United Nation Population Division) instead of the 2010 revision used in the past. This has led to substantial changes in indicator values for some countries. Therefore, data in this report (country-level data and GPE averages) should not be compared with data in the 2013 Results for Learning Report (https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/results-learning-report-2013). For averages over all developing country partners, UIS data were used to calculate estimates for countries with missing values.

2.2.1 Lack of data remains a major challenge

Every year, countries provide UIS with key data such as enrolment levels, education expenditure and teacher numbers. UIS translates the raw data into indicators using national data and external data sources, such as the International Monetary Fund and United Nation population databases. Indicators may therefore be unavailable in the UIS database if a country did not provide the raw data, if UIS did not consider data reliable enough, or if there is a lack of coherence with external data. For example, due to inconsistencies between population data[1] and enrollment data, population-based indicators were not published for Ethiopia and Albania although data on enrollment and repetition were available for these countries.

Of the key indicators in data published by UIS for developing country partners, the percentage for which information was missing increased between 2008 and 2011 – for outcome, service delivery, and domestic financing indicators (see Annex 2.1 for details about the indicators used) alike (Figure 2.1). (Some information is still missing for 2012, so this year was not considered.)

Figure 2.1 **Percentage of GPE developing country partners missing data among key outcome, service delivery and financing indicators in data published by UIS**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

1 2012 revision of the UN Population Division.

Table 2.1 **Most recent year since 2000 for which data on primary enrollment and public expenditure on education are published in January 2014 data release**

	Primary enrollment		Public expenditure on education as a total government expenditure	
Year *	**# of countries with data published**	**% of countries with data published**	**# of countries with data published**	**% of countries with data published**
2009 and earlier	4	7	21	36
2010	3	5	13	22
2011	6	10	12	20
2012	42	71	12	20
2013	4	7	1	2
Total	**59**	**100**	**59**	**100**

Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

** School years sometimes correspond to the civil year and sometimes overlap two years. The convention is that year 2012 refers to the school year than ends in 2012 i.e. either to 2012 for a school year that corresponds to the civil year or to 2011-2012 otherwise.*

Of all the sets of indicators missing data, domestic financing is the most problematic set of indicators with 60 percent of missing data in 2011.

Domestic financing is the most problematic set of indicators, with 60 percent of missing data in 2011 and the largest increase in the share of countries with missing data between 2008 and 2011. Even for the simplest information, on primary enrolment and public expenditure on education, 12 percent of developing country partners have information at least two years older than the expected 2012 data for primary enrolment, and 58 percent for the share of government expenditure devoted to education (Table 2.1).

Figure 2.1 and Table 2.1 do not consider learning data, as these are not yet published by UIS. Some information on learning is available (see GPE DataHub [2]), but only for 16 developing country partners, and in formats that are not comparable from region to region (6 countries have recent PASEC results, 8 have recent SACMEQ results for reading and mathematics, and 2 have recent TIMSS results for mathematics).

The analysis above shows that the data problems in developing country partners, particularly with regard to financing and learning, have worsened in recent years. It is therefore imperative to address this challenge. The Global Partnership is committed to improving this situation and sets clear targets and deadlines in this regard in its case for investment [3] (see section 2.2.3).

2.2.2 Lack of evidence undermines national education sector plans

The lack of data seriously undermines countries' ability to build and implement sound education sector plans.

An education sector plan (ESP) is the key tool to promote the long-term development of education in a country. It is the result of an iterative, consultative process and describes clear education goals that the government wants to accomplish, as well as the approach, strategies and actions that will be taken to achieve these goals. Ideally, an ESP should systematically answer four key questions: Where does the sector stand today? Where will the sector be in the future? How can it get there? How do we know that the sector is moving in the right direction? Answering the first and last questions requires strong national data. The first question requires an analysis of the current situation in the education sector and its context, while answering the last question relies on strong monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. So the lack of data seriously undermines countries' ability to build and implement sound ESPs.

2 http://datahub.globalpartnership.org/#/2012

3 The Global Partnership for Education Case for Investment 2011-2014: https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/case-investment-2011-2014

The impact of the data deficit can be gauged by examining a recent analysis by the Global Partnership of 42 recently endorsed [4] ESPs in developing country partners (Table 2.2).

The evaluation shows that 48 percent of developing country partners still do not rely on education sector analyses, meaning robust evidence, in their ESP and 24 percent do not have a comprehensive results framework that covers all the dimensions and subsectors found in the ESP. These findings underline the need to strengthen countries' evidence base and ensure that all countries have a solid monitoring and evaluation framework. This requires better collection and communication of good quality data, and its use in evidence-based decision making.

48 percent of GPE developing country partners still do not rely on robust evidence in their education sector plan and 24 percent do not have a comprehensive results framework required for an effective monitoring.

Table 2.2 **Data availability in education sector plans of 42 GPE developing country partners**

Indicator	Number	Percentage
ESPs that mention the existence and use of an education sector analysis, evaluation of a previous ESP or similar type of report, and summarize key results of these analysis in the ESP	22	52
ESPs that include a results framework that covers all the dimensions and subsectors found in the ESP	32	76

Source: GPE compilation based on country education sector plans.

2.2.3 The Global Partnership for Education focus on data

To design and implement effective education policies that reach all children, countries should know how many children are in school, how many are learning, which children are out of school, and what the conditions of teaching and learning are. As we have shown above, however, such data are still insufficient in many developing country partners. That is why the Global Partnership supports a "data revolution" in education, and is calling on its partners to increase their commitment to improve availability, reliability and timeliness of data and their use in the policy cycle. Through its data strategy,[5] the Global Partnership intends to support the collective efforts of its partners to tackle gaps in data on the education sector, learning outcomes and financing. The strategy's objectives are to increase the collection, reporting and use of data to show government commitment in education; to improve educational equity (through the use of disaggregated data), system efficiency, and ultimately service delivery and learning outcomes.

The Global Partnership aims to help developing country partners strengthen their capacity to make quality data available at national and international levels. The Global Partnership has developed a new funding model that embedded key elements of the data strategy. The new funding model [6] considers the availability of recent and reliable data as a key element of the policy process and support countries to develop strategies to improve data when data are lacking. It also calls for ESPs to include a stronger evidence base in the form of a rigorous diagnostic of the education sector. The new funding model also supports reinforced monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, including a national commitment to learning assessment systems. The model's sector-level results-based element will act as an incentive to improve the monitoring of education outcomes. Finally, the Global Partnership is working closely with the Learning Metrics Task Force to address the learning data gap.[7] In that perspective, the ongoing development of a proposal for an international platform

The Global Partnership intends to support the collective efforts of its partners to tackle gaps in data on the education sector, learning outcomes and financing through its data strategy.

4 The study only covers education sector plans that were endorsed in 2011 or beyond.

5 http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/data-strategy-improved-education-sector-planning-and-monitoring-0

6 See chapter 4, box 4.4 or http://globalpartnership.org/content/board-decisions-may-2014 for more information.

7 For more information on the Learning Metrics Task Force, see: http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/learning-metrics-task-force.aspx

for assessing learning, which could provide funding and technical support for learning assessment systems, is particularly relevant. For instance, such an initiative would provide grants and technical support for the analysis of national learning assessment systems, the implementation and use of learning assessments, and the strengthening of national capacity.

2.3 Recent progress in pre-primary and lower secondary education

Building on the analysis of primary education in Chapter 1, this section shows that encouraging progress has been made at pre-primary and lower secondary levels. Public pre-primary education has increased in countries that have already achieved high primary completion rates. Lower secondary education has expanded as an increasing number of primary education completers seek to continue their education. Retention remains a challenge, however, and approximately 60 percent of children in developing country partners still do not complete lower secondary education.

2.3.1 Increase in access to pre-primary education supported by public policies

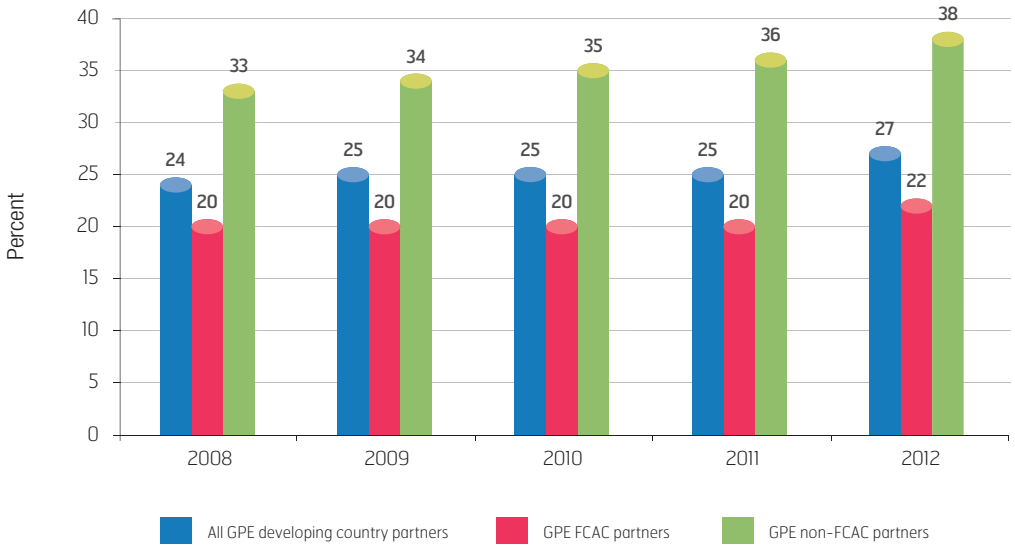
Early childhood care and education (ECCE), the first of the Education for All goals set in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000, provides critical support to children in the early stages of their development and enables them to gain more from further levels of education. On average, children who have benefited from early childhood education will perform better as they enter primary school. In addition, the most deprived young children are also those who stand to gain the most from early childhood education.[8]

The gross enrolment ratio grew progressively between 2008 and 2012 from 24.4 percent to 27 percent driven by an increase in enrolment in public institutions.

In developing country partners, gross enrolment ratios (GER) show that approximately one in four children have access to pre-primary education (one in five in fragile and conflict-affected countries). The GER grew progressively between 2008 and 2012, by 2.6 percentage points on average, from 24.4 percent to 27.0 percent overall, and from 20.1 percent to 22.1 percent in fragile and conflict-affected countries (Figure 2.2). This progress has been driven by an increase in enrolment in public pre-primary institutions, where enrollment levels have increased by over 50, while enrollment in private institutions has stagnated. As a result, public institutions' share of pre-primary enrollment in developing country partners with data rose from 60 percent in 2008 to 68 percent in 2012.

8 See, e.g., Arnold, Caroline, Kathy Bartlett, Saima Gowani and Rehana Merali. 2006. "Is everybody ready? Readiness, transition and continuity: lessons, reflections and moving forward." Background paper for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007.

Figure 2.2 **Gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education, GPE developing country partners**



Source: Estimates by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

These average figures hide large disparities between countries. In 12 developing country partners, pre-primary school capacity is sufficient to give access to pre-primary education to at least one child in two: Albania, Georgia, Ghana, Guyana, Kenya, Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Vietnam. In 16 countries, however, less than one child in ten has access to pre-primary education: Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tajikistan and the Republic of Yemen. Of these 16 countries, 11 are fragile and conflict-affected countries (FCACs). Most developing country partners with high pre-primary GER also have primary completion rates (PCRs) higher than 90 percent (Table 2.3).

Most countries with high pre-primary enrollment also have primary completion rates higher than 90 percent.

Table 2.3 **Pre-primary gross enrollment rate and primary completion rate, GPE developing country partners**

	PCR over 90%	PCR between 75% and 90%	PCR below 75%
Pre-primary GER over 50%	Georgia, Ghana, Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, São Tomé and Príncipe, Vietnam	Guyana, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea	Pakistan
Pre-primary GER below 10%	Bhutan, Tajikistan		Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Rep., Chad, Dem. Rep. of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Yemen

Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

Table 2.4 **GPE developing country partners with the largest change in pre-primary gross enrollment rate, 2008–2012**

Country	GER 2008 (or closest year)	GER 2012 (or closest year)	Annual GER increase (percentage points)
Mongolia	57	86	7.1
Nepal	59	84	5.0
Albania	55	69	3.6
Ghana	101	116	3.0
Gambia, The	21	30	2.8
Vietnam	67	77	2.7
Sudan	27	35	2.6
Lao PDR	15	24	2.3
Bhutan	1	9	2.1

Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

The same pattern is evident among countries with the largest changes in pre-primary GER between 2008 and 2012 (Table 2.4). Most of these countries already had strong primary education systems in place (PCRs higher than 90 percent), and a large proportion also had high pre-primary GER (over 50 percent). One exception is Bhutan, which made important progress from a very low original GER: pre-primary enrolment increased from 1 percent to 9 percent between 2008 and 2012, driven by an increase in both public and private provision of pre-primary education.

Where a large proportion of children still do not complete a full primary education cycle, developing country partners have been prioritizing primary enrolment, so in most of these countries, levels of pre-primary enrolment have remained low. On the other hand, high improvements in pre-primary GER reflect increased attention to the pre-primary cycle in several countries that have achieved, or almost achieved, universal primary education.

Where a large proportion of children still do not complete a full primary education cycle, developing country partners have been prioritizing primary enrolment.

2.3.2 Some progress in coverage, intake and completion in lower secondary education

As more and more children graduate from primary education, countries have paid more attention to the lower secondary grades. An increasing number of countries are aiming for universal basic education – giving all children access to a full cycle of primary plus lower secondary education, and thus 9 to 10 years of schooling. Enrollment has increased, but many children still drop out before completing lower secondary education.

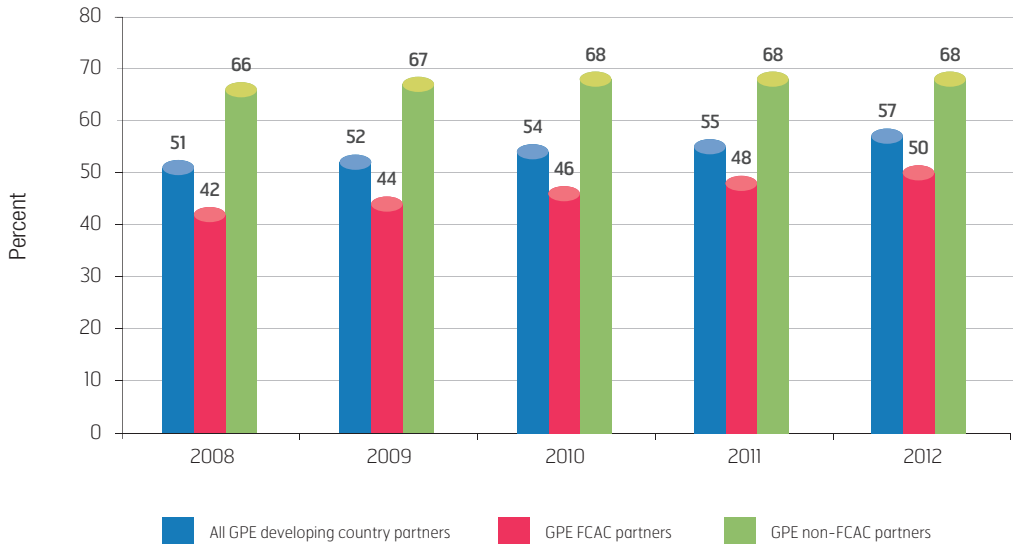
Seven million additional children in lower secondary education between 2008 and 2012

The number of children in lower secondary education in developing country partners rose from 42.8 million in 2008 (including 12.0 million in FCACs) to 49.7 million in 2012 (including 15.3 million in FCACs). Enrollments increased by 16 percent, while the school age population only increased by 5 percent.

The number of children in lower secondary education rose by 16 percent between 2008 and 2012, while the school age population only increased by 5 percent.

During the same period, the share of children enrolled in lower secondary grades (as measured by gross enrolment rates) increased by 5.6 percentage points in developing country partners: 8 percentage points in FCAC partners and 2.2 percentage points in non-FCAC partners (Figure 2.3). Lower secondary GER rose by more than 2 percentage points per year in 16 countries: Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Djibouti, Georgia, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Tanzania. On the other hand, lower secondary GER decreased in six countries: Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Mongolia, Sudan, Uzbekistan and Zambia.

Figure 2.3 **Gross enrollment ratio in lower secondary education, GPE developing country partners**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

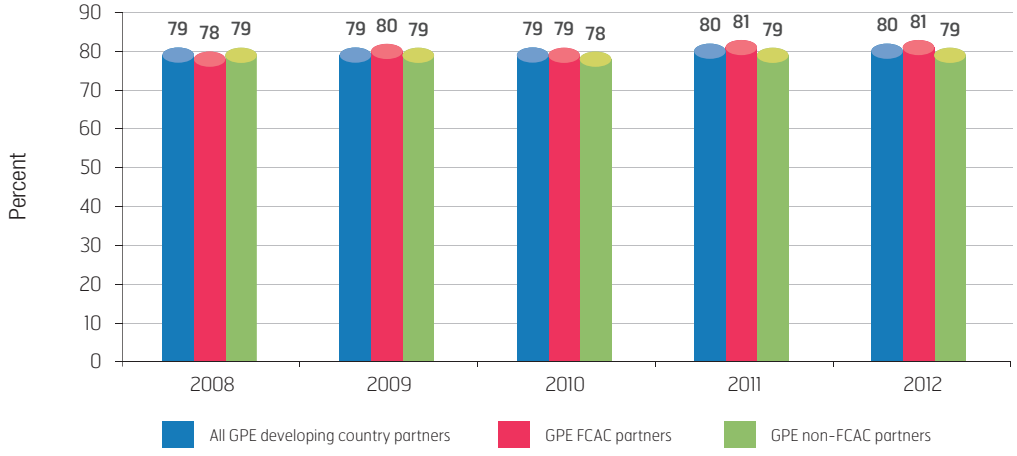
8 out of 10 children completing primary education transitioned into lower secondary education...

The proportion of children completing primary education who transitioned into lower secondary education remained high and stable between 2008 (when it was 79 percent) and 2012 (80 percent). There was also no significant difference between FCACs and other developing country partners (Figure 2.4).

Stable transition rates, given the increase in primary completion rates, translate into more children in lower secondary education, which explains the large increase in lower secondary gross enrolment rates. In the 40 countries with data for 2008 to 2012, the number of new entrants to lower secondary education increased by 16 percent, from 10.3 million to 12.0 million, while the total number of children at the entrance age to lower secondary education rose by only 4 percent, from 19.1 million to 19.9 million.

Stable transition rates from primary to secondary education, given the increase in primary completion rates, translate into a large increase of the number of children in lower secondary education.

Figure 2.4 **Transition rates, GPE developing country partners**



Source: Estimates by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

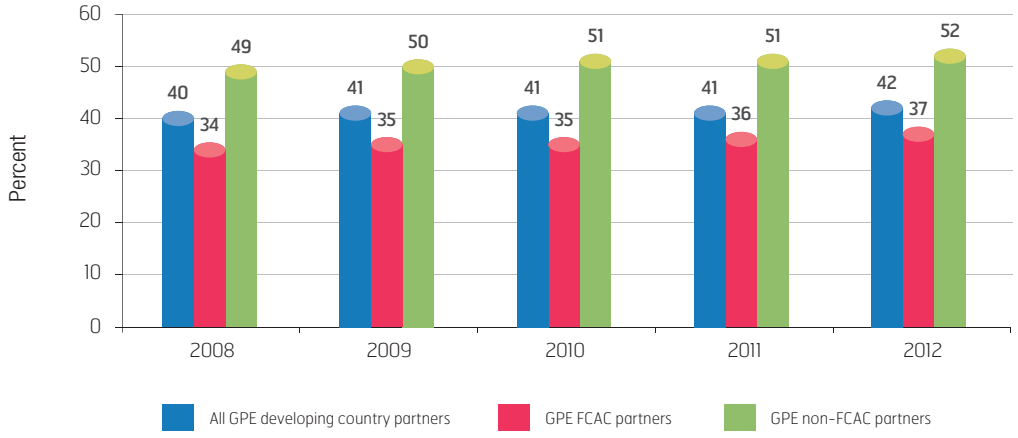
In 2012, 18 countries had a transition rate greater or equal to 90 percent while 8 had transition rates below 70 percent. Countries that made important progress between 2008 and 2012 include Cameroon, Central African Republic, Mauritania, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Senegal: in all of these countries, transition rates increased by more than 4 percentage points annually.

Retention remains a challenge. Approximately, 60 percent of children in GPE developing country partners still do not complete lower secondary education.

...but lower secondary completion is still low because of high dropout

The share of children entering lower secondary education who complete the cycle increased slightly between 2008 and 2012, from 40 percent to 42 percent (Figure 2.5). Lower secondary completion rates increased from 34 percent to 37 percent in FCAC partners and from 49 percent to 52 percent in non-FCAC partners, showing that countries are having difficulty preventing children from dropping out.

Figure 2.5 **Lower secondary completion rates, GPE developing country partners**



Source: Estimates by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

The largest increases in lower secondary completion rates have often taken place in the countries with the lowest starting points: out of 10 countries whose lower secondary completion rate changed from a lower to a higher range, 5 were in the lowest category (below 25 percent) in 2008 (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5 **Lower secondary completion rates, GPE developing country partners, 2008 and 2012**

Lower secondary completion rate, 2008	Lower secondary completion rate, 2012				
	Less than 25%	25%-50%	50%-75%	More than 75%	Not available
Less than 25%	Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger	Djibouti, Madagascar, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania			
25%-50%		Benin, Cambodia, Cameroon, **Côte d'Ivoire,** Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Honduras, Liberia, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Mali, Pakistan, Senegal, Togo, Republic of Yemen	São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste		
50%-75%			Bhutan, The Gambia, Ghana, Nicaragua **Zambia**	Nepal, Vietnam	
More than 75%				Georgia, Guyana Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, **Moldova, Tajikistan,** Uzbekistan	Albania
Not available	South Sudan	Dem. Rep. of Congo, Guinea-Bissau	Sudan, Papua New Guinea		Afghanistan, Comoros, Haiti, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Zimbabwe

Source: GPE compilation based on UNESCO Institute for Statistics data.

Countries with progress in lower secondary completion rate that moved up one range

Countries in black text — Countries with progress in lower secondary completion rate but without change in the range

Countries in orange text — Countries with decline in lower secondary completion rate but without change in the range

One-third of children of lower secondary school age were out of school in GPE developing country partners in 2012

The share of children of lower secondary school age who are out of school has been decreasing in developing country partners (Table 2.6). The decrease between 2008 and 2012 was particularly marked in FCAC partners, from 43 percent to 38 percent. Overall, the number of out of school children of lower secondary school age decreased from 32.4 million to 30.8 million (Table 2.7) while the lower secondary school age population increased from 89.2 to 93.6 million.

Overall, the number of out-of-school children of lower secondary school age decreased from 32.4 million to 30.8 million between 2008 and 2012.

Table 2.6 **Percentage of out-of-school children of lower secondary school age, GPE developing country partners**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All GPE developing country partners	36.4	35.4	33.9	33.7	32.9
GPE FCAC partners	43.0	41.4	39.6	39.0	37.8

Source: Estimates of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

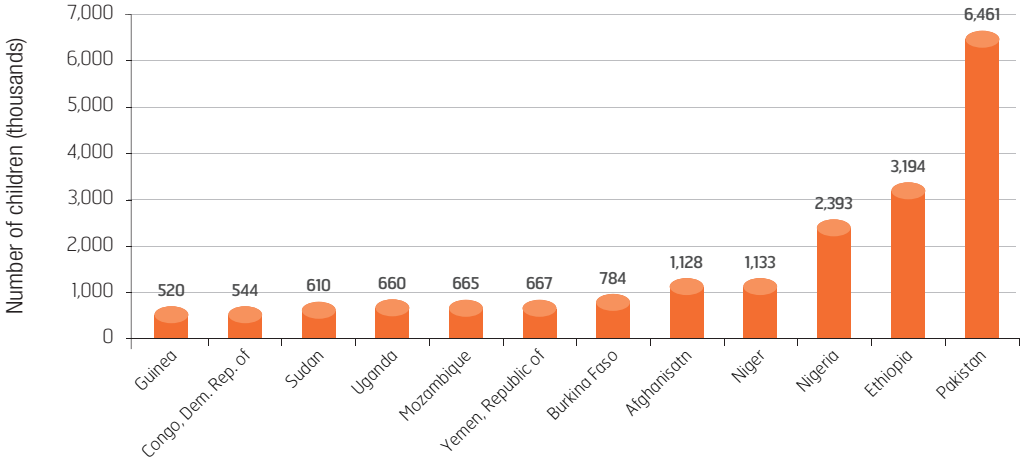
Table 2.7 **Number of out-of-school children of lower secondary school age, GPE developing country partners (thousands)**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All GPE developing country partners	32,410	31,943	31,092	31,242	30,820
GPE FCAC partners	24,457	24,130	23,606	23,694	23,349
GPE non-FCAC partners	7,953	7,813	7,486	7,548	7,472

Source: Estimates of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Among developing country partners with data, 18.8 million children of lower secondary age are out of school – 60 percent of the total – in the 12 countries with more than half a million out of school (Figure 2.6).[9]

Figure 2.6 **GPE developing countries partners with the largest number of out-of-school children of lower secondary school age, 2012**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

None of these 12 countries had a PCR above 80 percent in 2012, meaning that low numbers of primary school leavers automatically contributed to a high number of out of school children of lower secondary education age. However, lower secondary attendance is also affected by transition rates and retention. For example, among the 10 countries with the highest num-

9 Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria are missing data. In 2011 (2013's UIS publication), Ethiopia had 3.2 million lower secondary school age children out of school and an out-of-school rate of 39. Based on the 2011 MICS survey in Afghanistan, there were 1.1 million out-of-school children (49 of the lower-secondary school aged population). In Democratic Republic of Congo, based on the 2010 MICS survey there were 540,000 children out of school (18 of the lower secondary school age population). Finally, in Nigeria, using the 2011 MICS, there were 2.2 million children out of school (20 of the lower secondary school age population).

bers of primary non-completers, Niger is eighth highest. But among the 12 countries above with the highest numbers of lower secondary age children out of school, Niger moves up to rank fourth, reflecting particularly low levels of retention in that cycle.

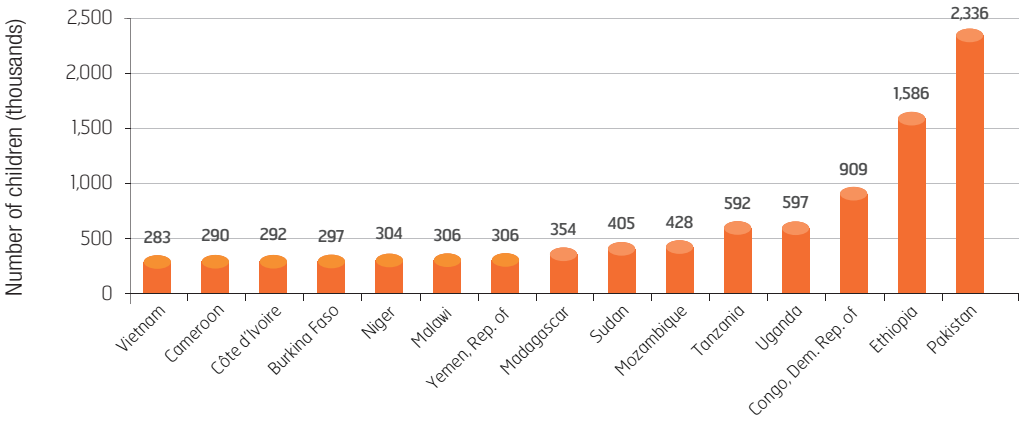
More than 12 million children still do not complete lower secondary education

Among developing country partners with data[10], 15 still had more than 250,000 children each who did not complete lower secondary education. Together, these countries account for 9 million non-completers, or close to 77 percent of the total (Figure 2.7). The Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda had more than half a million non-completers each.

Again, while the same countries tend to be those with the largest number of lower secondary children out of school and those with the largest numbers of non-completers (except when data is missing for non-completers), the order of the countries differs, reflecting different survival rates.

Together, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda account for half of the 14 million children who did not complete lower secondary education in developing country partners.

Figure 2.7 **GPE developing country partners with the largest number of children who do not complete lower secondary school, 2012**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

Photo credit: **GPE/Koli Banik**

10 The countries with missing data are: Afghanistan, Comoros, Haiti, Kenya, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, South Sudan and Zimbabwe.

2.4 Reaching the marginalized: Progress and challenges

While national averages may suggest that some countries are close to achieving education goals, some segments of the population remain at a great educational disadvantage. This section uses recent household survey data to examine those disparities, which particularly affect girls, disabled, children from poor families and those who live in rural areas.

2.4.1 Overall progress toward gender parity in GPE developing country partners

Overall, GPE developing country partners have made moderate progress towards getting equal numbers of girls and boys into school.

Overall, developing country partners have made progress towards getting equal numbers of girls and boys into school. The gender parity index – the ratio of girls to boys – improved between 2008 and 2012 for the key indicators of gross intake rate (GIR) and gross enrolment rate (GER) in primary education; primary completion rate; and lower secondary completion rate. However, this increase has been moderate: gender parity indexes generally improved by 1 to 3 percentage points, with greater increases in FCAC partners than in non-FCACs. Non-FCAC partners have already reached gender parity, on average, for primary GIR and GER, and have almost reached parity for primary completion rates. Gender challenges for primary education are most prominent in FCACs, but the slower progress in non-FCAC partners shows that as countries come closer to gender parity, progress becomes more difficult.

Gender inequalities remain larger at higher levels (Table 2.8). On average, for 100 boys completing primary education, there were 89 girls (85 in FCACs and 96 in non-FCACs), while for 100 boys completing lower secondary education, only 83 girls did (77 in FCACs and 91 in non-FCACs).

Table 2.8 **Gender parity index for primary and lower secondary completion rates**

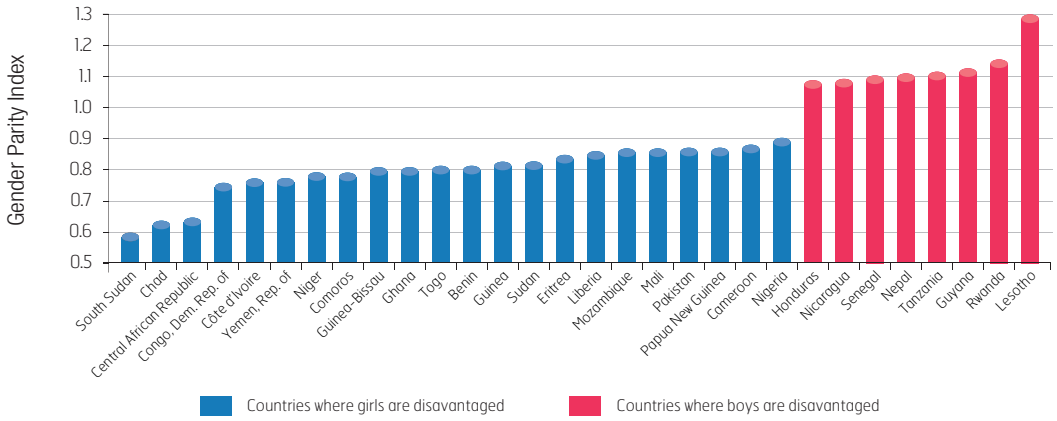
Indicator	Countries	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
GPI for primary completion	All GPE developing country partners	0.86	0.87	0.88	0.89	0.89
	GPE FCAC partners	0.82	0.82	0.84	0.84	0.85
	GPE non-FCAC partners	0.94	0.95	0.96	0.97	0.96
GPI for lower secondary completion	All GPE developing country partners	0.79	0.80	0.81	0.82	0.83
	GPE FCAC partners	0.71	0.73	0.74	0.75	0.77
	GPE non-FCAC partners	0.89	0.90	0.90	0.91	0.91

Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

GPE non-FCAC partners have already almost reached gender parity and gender challenges for primary education are most prominent in FCAC partners.

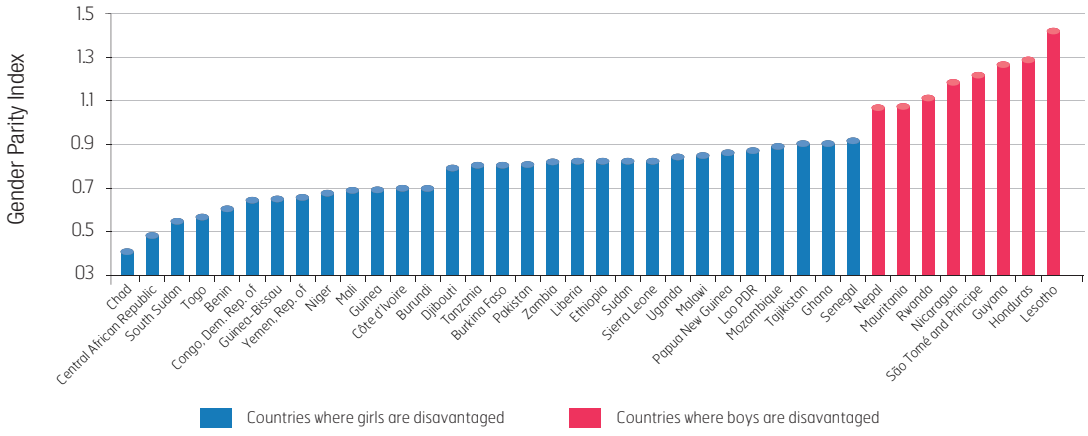
In most countries with the lowest gender equality, girls are at a disadvantage in primary education (Figure 2.8), and even more so in the lower secondary cycle (Figure 2.9). Countries where there are more than 20 percent more boys than girls completing primary and lower secondary education include Benin, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Niger, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo and the Republic of Yemen. In addition, there are more than 20 percent boys than girls completing lower secondary education in Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Comoros, Djibouti, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Tanzania.

Figure 2.8 **Gender parity index for primary completion rate in GPE developing country partners with the highest gender inequality**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

Figure 2.9 **Gender parity index for lower secondary completion rate in GPE developing country partners with the highest gender inequality**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

In some countries, however, boys are at a disadvantage, with discrepancies being most marked in Lesotho both in primary and lower secondary and in Guyana, Honduras, Nicaragua, and São Tomé and Principe in lower secondary, where there are over 20 percent more girl completers than boy completers.

While gender equity issues generally affect girls, boys are at a disadvantage in some countries, such as Lesotho, Honduras, Nicaragua and São Tomé and Principe.

Over one youth in four and one young female in three is illiterate

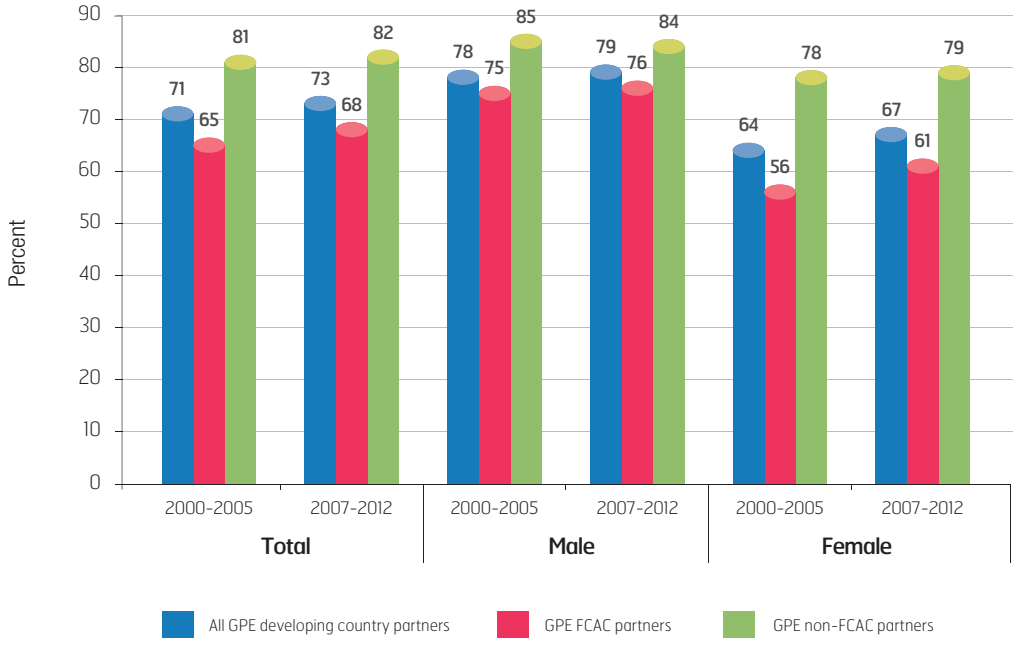
Gender inequalities are also evident in literacy rates among those aged 15 to 24.[11] The average rate in developing country partners rose slightly between the 2000-2005 period and the 2007-2012 period, from 71 percent to 73 percent. This still leaves more than one youth in four illiterate (one in three in FCAC partners and less than one in five in non-FCACs). While the average male literacy rate remained stable at around 79 percent, the average female literacy rate

11 According to the UIS definition, a literate person is a person who can read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life.

The youth literacy rate is below 50 percent in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Guinea, Liberia, Mali and Niger.

increased from 64 percent to 67 percent, leaving one in three young women illiterate (Figure 2.10). Averages hide major disparities between countries, however: eight developing country partners have literacy rates above 95 percent (Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Vietnam) but nine still have literacy rates below 50 percent (Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Guinea, Liberia, Mali and Niger).

Figure 2.10 **Youth literacy rates, GPE developing country partners**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

2.4.2 Inequality is also linked to geographical area and family income

The likelihood for children aged 5 to 15 of never having attended school was 19 percent higher for girls than for boys, 2.1 times higher for rural children than for urban children, and 3.4 times higher for poor children than for children of wealthy families.

Children's chances of attending and completing school are affected not only by gender but also by where they live and by their families' income. Such disparities were analyzed using Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)[12] household survey data for 2010 or 2011 for nine developing country partners: Afghanistan, Bhutan, Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo and Vietnam (Table 2.9).

In these nine countries, 31 percent of those aged 5 to 15 had never attended school: 34 percent of girls vs. 28 percent of boys, 33 percent of rural children vs. 16 percent of urban children, and 48 percent of children in the poorest quintile (the poorest one-fifth) vs. 14 percent of children in the wealthiest quintile. Hence the likelihood of never having attended school was 19 percent higher for girls than for boys, 2.1 times higher for rural children than for urban children, and 3.4 times higher for poor children than for children of wealthy families.

12 The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) is developed by UNICEF to assist countries in collecting and analyzing data in order to fill data gaps for monitoring the situation of children and women. The MICS enable countries to produce statistically sound and internationally comparable estimates of a range of indicators in the areas of health, education, child protection and HIV/AIDS. The availability in the MICS of variable such as the level of household wealth, the area of residence (information not available in administrative/UIS data) allow for an analysis of equity beyond the gender factor.

A similar pattern can be observed regarding the percentage of children aged 5 to 15 whose highest level of education attended was pre-primary, primary or secondary. The highest level was 10 percent more likely to be secondary education for boys than for girls, 2.1 times more likely to be secondary education for urban vs. rural children, and 4.4 times more likely to be secondary education for children from the wealthiest quintile vs. children for the poorest quintile.

Note that the percentage of those aged 5 to 15 who have never attended school includes children who will enter school at a later stage. In addition, children who repeat will take more time than expected to complete a given cycle of education. The disparities observed between genders, geographical locations and income levels may therefore reflect disparities in a child's likelihood to attend school, but also disparities in ages of attendance or repetition rates.

Table 2.9 **Percentage of children per highest level attended (MICS data for 9 GPE developing country partners)**

	Never attended	Pre-primary	Primary	Secondary
Total	**31.0**	**3.2**	**54.5**	**10.3**
Gender				
Girls	33.7	3.1	52.1	9.8
Boys	28.4	3.3	56.7	10.8
Area of Residence				
Rural	33.1	3.0	54.2	8.2
Urban	15.7	4.7	62.1	17.1
Household Wealth				
Poorest (bottom quintile)	47.6	1.7	44.1	4.4
Poorer (second quintile)	37.6	2.3	51.6	6.9
Poor (middle quintile)	30.1	3.4	56.5	9.6
Rich (third quintile)	23.7	4.2	59.4	12.5
Richest (highest quintile)	13.8	4.7	61.9	19.4

Source: GPE compilation based on MICS household survey data, 2010 and 2011.

Photo credit: **GPE/Jawad Jalali**

The largest disparities in completion of primary education are related, in majority, to income.

A broader consideration of both DHS[13] and MICS[14] shows a broad variety of determinants of disparities. The largest disparities in completion of primary education between population groups are related, in majority, to income (difference between the richest and poorest quintiles of the population), then geography (e.g. urban/rural or national regions) (Table 2.10).[15]

Table 2.10 **Nature of largest inequality between population groups, 25 GPE developing country partners with recent household surveys, 2010 and later**

The largest inequality between two single categories is related to...	Number of countries	Percentage	Countries
Income	14	56	Bhutan, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Haiti, Honduras, Lao PDR, Malawi, Nepal, Rwanda, Togo, Vietnam
Mixed income and geography	8	32	Burkina Faso; Congo, Dem. Rep. of; Ethiopia; Mozambique; Senegal; Sierra Leone; Tanzania; Zimbabwe
Geography	3	12	Afghanistan, Nigeria, Uganda
All	25	100	

Source: GPE compilation based on World Inequality Database in Education http://www.education-inequalities.org/

In Afghanistan and Mozambique, the likelihood of completing primary education is 14 times higher for a boy in an urban area from the richest category of the population than for a girl in a rural area from a family in the lowest income category.

The same group may enjoy an advantage in some contexts within a country but not in others, as is shown by an analysis of the most and least advantaged categories (considering only gender, rural/urban and income quintiles) for 18 developing country partners (see Annex 2.4 for details). In all cases, the least advantaged category was always rural poor while the most advantaged was always urban rich. In addition, in the large majority of countries, being a male was an advantage whether one was rural poor or urban rich. In Afghanistan and Mozambique, for example, the likelihood of completing primary education is 14 times higher for a boy in an urban area from the richest category of the population than for a girl in a rural area from a family in the lowest income category. In Malawi, however, being a female appears to be an advantage whether the child is rural poor or urban rich: the PCR of female urban richest is two times higher than a PCR for a male rural poorest. In some countries, though, the same characteristics can be an advantage in some contexts and not in others: for example, in Burundi, Lao PDR, Rwanda and Uganda, among wealthy urban children girls appear to have an advantage over boys, but among poor rural children, it is boys that have an advantage over girls. In Ghana and Haiti, being a male is a disadvantage in poor rural environments, but an advantage in rich urban environments.

13 The Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) is implemented with the support of Macro International and USAID (United States Agency for International Development). DHS data cover a wide range of monitoring and impact evaluation indicators in the areas of population, health, education and nutrition.

14 World Inequality Database in Education http://www.education-inequalities.org/

15 Sub-groups involving more than one category (e.g. poorest quintile, rural richest quintile) were not included in the table.

2.5 Repetition and dropout reduce the efficiency of GPE partner education systems

In countries where resources are scarce, it is vital to ensure that education spending generates maximum returns. This implies, in particular, that all children should complete their education in a timely manner, and learn what they are supposed to learn. Unfortunately, there are significant sources of inefficiency in developing country partners' education systems, including high levels of repetition and dropout.

2.5.1 Fewer repeaters in primary education but little change at lower secondary level

Studies[16] at country, school and individual level show that decisions on repetition often depend on subjective factors such as the student's relative position in the class, the environment, the schooling conditions and the teacher's qualifications, and that repetition increases dropout. Both repetition and dropout remain significant obstacles to universal primary education.[17]

Declining repetition levels in primary education

The percentage of repeaters in primary education decreased in developing country partners with data[18] between 2008 and 2012, by 0.6 points overall (1.4 points in non-FCAC partners). In 2012, the average percentage of repeaters in FCAC partners was 11 percent, twice the average of non-FCAC partners (Table 2.11).

The average percentage of repeaters in FCAC partners was 11 percent, twice the average of non-FCAC partners in 2012.

Table 2.11 **Percentage of repeaters in primary education**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All GPE developing country partners	9.6	9.4	9.2	9.0	9.0
GPE FCAC partners	11.3	11.4	11.2	11.1	11.1
GPE non-FCAC partners	7.0	6.4	6.1	5.7	5.6

Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

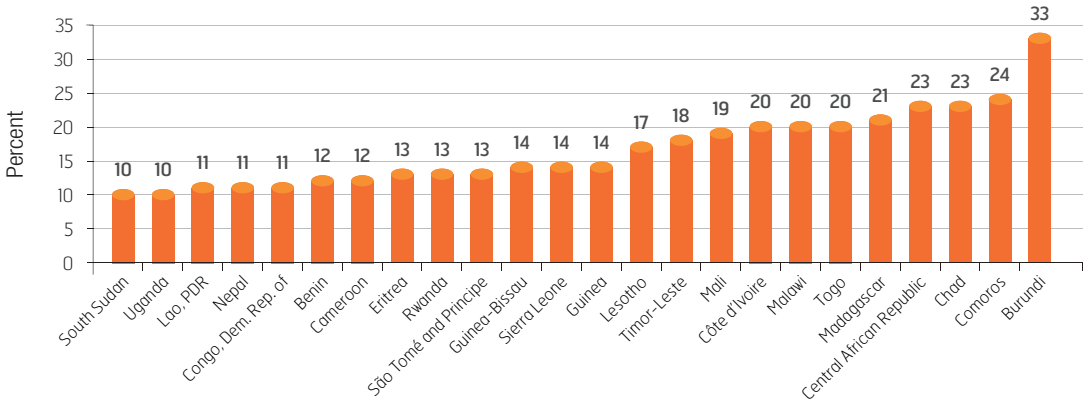
Average percentages of repeaters vary from 0 percent to 33 percent among developing country partners. Nine countries have less than 1 percent of repeaters: Albania, Georgia, Guyana, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Mongolia, Nigeria, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Twenty-four countries, mostly French- or Portuguese-speaking, have more than 10 percent of repeaters (Figure 2.11).

16 Behaghel, Luc, Paul Coustère and Fabric Lepla. 1999. "Les Facteurs de l'efficacité dans l'enseignement primaire, les résultats du programme PASEC sur neuf pays d'Afrique et de l'Océan Indien." Dakar: Conférence des ministres de l'Éducation des États et gouvernements de la Francophonie (CONFEMEN).

17 See e.g. André, Pierre. 2009. "Is grade repetition one of the causes of early school dropout?: Evidence from Senegalese primary schools." Munich: University of Munich.
And: Ananga, Eric. 2011. "Dropping out of school in Southern Ghana: The push-out and pull-out factors." CREATE Pathways to Access, Research Monograph No. 55. Brighton: University of Sussex.
And: Bernard, Jean-Marc, Odile Simon and Katia Vianou. 2005. "Le redoublement, mirage de l'école africaine?" Dakar: CONFEMEN.

18 There countries are: Afghanistan, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kenya, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Zimbabwe.

Figure 2.11 **Countries with percentages of repeaters above 10 percent in primary education, 2012**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

Overall the percentage of repeaters in primary education declined between 2008 and 2012.

The percentage of repeaters has been increasing in a small number of developing country partners. In Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique and Timor-Leste, there was an increase in repeaters' rates of over 3 percentage points between 2008 and 2012. Mali and Timor-Leste already had percentages of repeaters higher than 10 percent in 2008.

The percentage of repeaters decreased by over 3 percentage points between 2008 and 2012 in 11 developing country partners, 9 of which had percentages of repeaters higher than 10 percent in 2008: Cambodia, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Nepal, Nicaragua, Rwanda, and São Tomé and Principe. In São Tomé and Principe, the percentage of repeaters decreased by 13 percentage points, from 24 percent to 11 percent. In Lao PDR, repetition decreased from 17 percent to 11 percent and in Cambodia repetition was almost cut in half, from 11.2 percent to 5.8 percent.

Photo credit: **GPE/Stephan Bachenheimer**

Stable levels of repetition in lower secondary education

The percentage of repeaters in lower secondary education was almost stable around 7 percent in developing country partners with data[19] between 2008 and 2012. The repetition rate is higher in FCACs (8.2 percent) than in non-FCACS (5.4 percent). Both FCAC and non-FCAC partners saw limited change during the period (Table 2.12). As in primary education, average percentages of repeaters in lower secondary are very diverse, ranging from 0 percent (6 countries, none of them conflict-affected, have percentages of repeaters lower than 1 percent) to 25 percent. Twenty-one countries, 10 of them fragile or conflict-affected, have percentages of lower secondary repeaters higher than 10 percent (Figure 2.12).

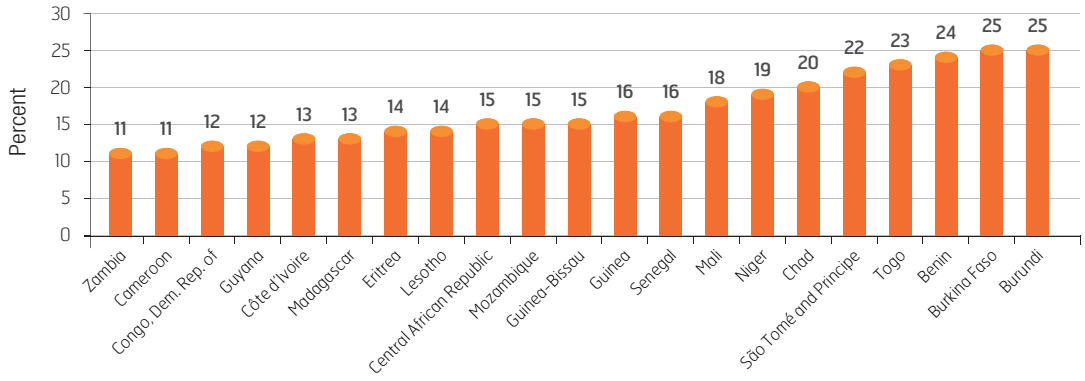
The percentage of repeaters in lower secondary education was almost stable around 7 percent in developing country partners between 2008 and 2012.

Table 2.12 **Percentage of repeaters in lower secondary education**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All GPE developing country partners	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.3	7.1
GPE FCAC partners	8.7	8.5	8.4	8.8	8.2
GPE non-FCAC partners	4.6	4.8	4.9	5.1	5.4

Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

Figure 2.12 **Countries with percentage of repeaters above 10 percent in lower secondary education, 2012**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

In six developing country partners, four of them fragile or conflict-affected, the percentage of lower secondary repeaters rose by over 2 percentage points between 2008 and 2012: Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Lesotho, Mozambique, Senegal and Zambia.

On the other hand, percentages of lower secondary repeaters fell by over 4 percentage points in four developing country partners: Cameroon, Malawi, São Tomé and Principe, and Sierra Leone. All of them had percentages of repeaters higher than 10 percent in 2008. In a small number of cases, however, percentages of repeaters have been fluctuating, and gains may not be sustained in future years.

In six GPE developing country partners, the percentage of lower secondary repeaters rose by over 2 percentage points.

19 Data are missing for Afghanistan, Comoros, Haiti, Kenya, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, South Sudan and Zimbabwe.

2.5.2 Internal efficiency in primary education

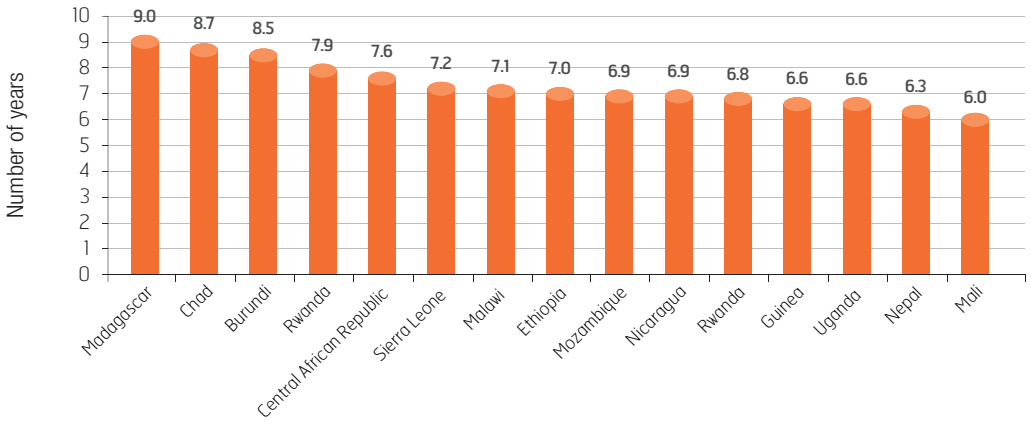
13 GPE developing country partners spent more than six years of education rather than four to get one child to the beginning of Grade 5.

Ideally, a child who starts first grade would proceed steadily through the primary cycle and finish it without repeating any grades. In reality, the number of years of education a country has to invest in for one child to graduate – the "internal efficiency" of the education system – varies because of repetition and dropout. Internal efficiency does not reflect intake rates or transition to further levels of education, but only what happens within the cycle itself.

According to the most recent UIS data, 13 developing country partners [20], eight of them fragile or conflict-affected, spent more than six years of education rather than four to get one child to the beginning of Grade 5 (Figure 2.13). These countries, which spent at least 50 percent more resources than necessary to get children to grade 5, are the least efficient of developing country partners, losing a lot of resources through dropout and repetition.

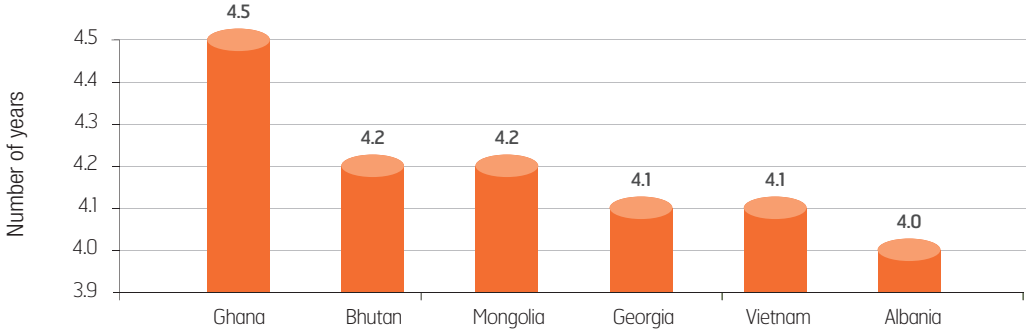
On the other hand, six developing country partners, none of them fragile or conflict-affected, spent less than 4.5 years of education on average to get one child to the beginning of Grade 5, meaning that they were very efficient, with both limited dropout and limited repetition (Figure 2.14).

Figure 2.13 **Number of years of education to get one child to the beginning of grade 5, GPE developing country partners with the lowest internal efficiency**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

Figure 2.14 **Number of years of education to get one child to the beginning of grade 5, countries with the highest internal efficiency**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

20 Only countries with duration of at least five years in primary education were taken into account.

Comparing data from 2007 and 2011[21] shows that, among countries with information for these years (plus or minus a year if data for the year itself is not available), 13 developing country partners, 6 of them FCAC partners, spent more years of education in 2011 to get one child to the beginning of Grade 5 (up to 1.8 more years in the Central African Republic) than four years before. Conversely, 18 developing country partners, four of them fragile or conflict-affected, spent less years of education to get one child to the beginning of Grade 5 (Table 2.13).

13 countries spent more years of education to get one child to the beginning of grade 5 in 2011 than in 2007.

Table 2.13 **Change in internal efficiency, GPE developing country partners**

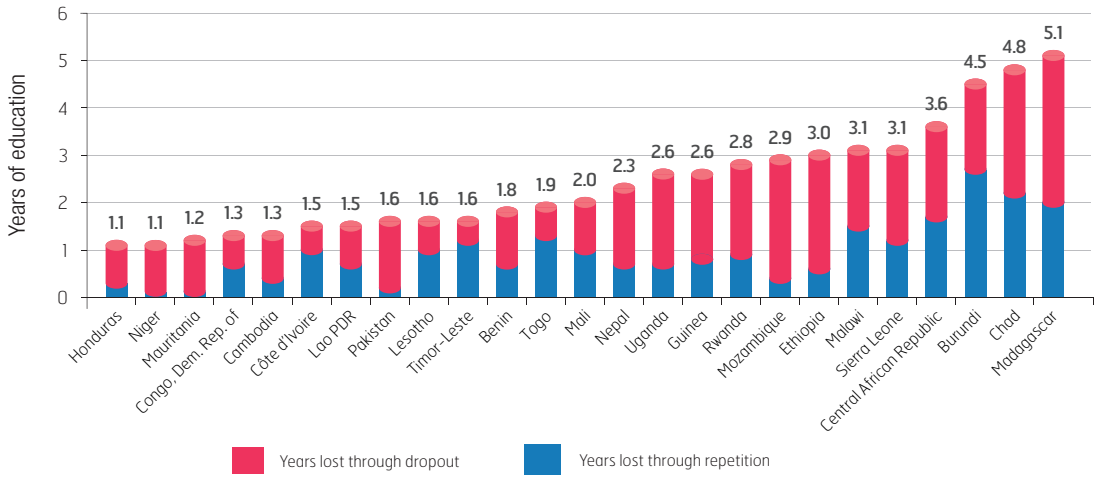
Internal efficiency fell between 2007 and 2011	Internal efficiency rose between 2007 and 2011
Burundi	Benin
Central African Republic	Bhutan
Democratic Republic of Congo	Burkina Faso
Ethiopia	Cambodia
Georgia	Cameroon
Guinea	Côte d'Ivoire
Honduras	The Gambia
Madagascar	Ghana
Malawi	Lao PDR
Mali	Lesotho
Mozambique	Mauritania
Niger	Mongolia
Uganda	Nepal
	Pakistan
	Rwanda
	São Tomé and Príncipe
	Senegal
	Timor-Leste
	Togo

Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

Computing the share of total inefficiencies due to repetition or dropout can be a useful indication to help countries focus on the most pressing issues. Among countries that spend five years of education or more to bring a child to Grade 5, the share of total inefficiencies due to repetition (including years repeated by students who ultimately drop out) ranges from 9 percent in Niger to 67 percent in Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. In countries that spend over seven years to bring one child to the start of Grade 5, both repetition and dropout are general high (Figure 2.15).

21 Dropout/survival information is known one year after enrolment information.

Figure 2.15 **Years of education lost through repetition and dropout to get one child to the beginning of grade 5**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

2.6 Improving learning conditions

Many factors contribute to ensuring a good learning environment, including teacher profiles and practices, textbook availability and pupil-teacher ratios. Little information is available about some of these factors, however, and the data that exist are often difficult to compare internationally. Two conditions of learning that do lend themselves to comparisons are the pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) and the percentage of teachers who are trained.

2.6.1 Improvement of pupil-teacher ratios

The average number of primary students for each teacher has declined in developing country partners from 40.0 in 2008 to 37.3 in 2012; the strongest decline was for FCACs, where the pupil-teacher ratio fell by almost four students per teacher (Table 2.14).

Pupil-teacher ratios in primary education improved, especially in fragile and conflict-affected countries where it fell from 42.4 to 38.5 students per teacher between 2008 and 2012.

Table 2.14 **Primary pupil-teacher ratio**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All GPE developing country partners	40.0	39.3	38.7	38.2	37.3
GPE FCAC partners	42.4	41.0	40.1	39.9	38.5
GPE Non-FCAC partners	36.1	36.3	36.1	35.2	35.0

Source: Estimates of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

There were wide disparities between countries, however, with PTRs in 2012 ranging from 8 to 80. In 26 countries (12 of them fragile or conflict-affected) the PTR was higher than 40 and in eight it was higher than 50 (Table 2.15). In most countries, the PTR remains close to 40, but the Central African Republic and Malawi both have PTRs around 75-80. In addition, national averages generally mask regional inequality; pupil-teacher ratios are well in excess of 80 in some areas of these countries.

Table 2.15 **Pupil-teacher ratio in countries with primary PTRs of 50 or more**

Country	2008 (or closest year)	2012 (or closest year)	Change (%)
South Sudan	-	50	-
Ethiopia	62	54	-14
Mozambique	64	55	-14
Rwanda	68	59	-12
Chad	62	61	-2
Malawi	78	74	-6
Central African Republic	100	80	-20

Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

At the individual country level, there was an increase in PTRs by more than one student per class in Liberia, Mauritania, and São Tomé and Príncipe. PTRs decreased in 36 countries with data, and fell by over five points in eight of them: Bhutan, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nepal, Rwanda, Tanzania and Timor-Leste. Some of these countries originally had very high PTRs. In the Central African Republic, the average PTR went from 100 in 2008 to 80 in 2012 (the impact of the current crisis was not captured in the 2012 figures). In Rwanda the PTR declined from 68 to 59, in Mozambique from 64 to 55 and in Ethiopia from 62 to 54.

During the same period, PTRs in lower secondary were mostly stable and also significantly lower: 22.6 students per teacher in 2012 and 23.1 in 2008 (Table 2.16). In 2012, lower secondary PTRs ranged from 8 to 56. Major improvements were made in some countries that had very high PTRs in 2008; PTRs fell from 56 to 43 in Eritrea, from 50 to 43 in Ethiopia, and from 52 to 37 in Nepal.

Pupil-teacher ratios in lower secondary were mostly stable and also significantly lower: 22.6 students per teacher in 2012 and 23.1 in 2008.

Table 2.16 **Lower secondary pupil-teacher ratios**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All GPE developing country partners	23.1	21.6	23.3	23.1	22.6

Source: Estimates of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

2.6.2 More trained teachers in GPE developing country partners

UIS reports the percentage of teachers who are trained according to national standards, but standards vary from country to country, so data are not internationally comparable. In addition, the data published by UIS include both initial and in-service training so we cannot distinguish teachers without initial training from others. Despite these caveats, the proportion of trained teachers does shed some light on learning conditions in developing country partners.

There was an increase in the percentage of trained teachers in developing country partners between 2008 and 2012, from 77.5 percent to 81.3 percent at primary level, and from 72.5 percent to 77.1 percent at secondary level (Table 2.17).

The percentage of trained (initial and in-service training) teachers increased in GPE developing country partners.

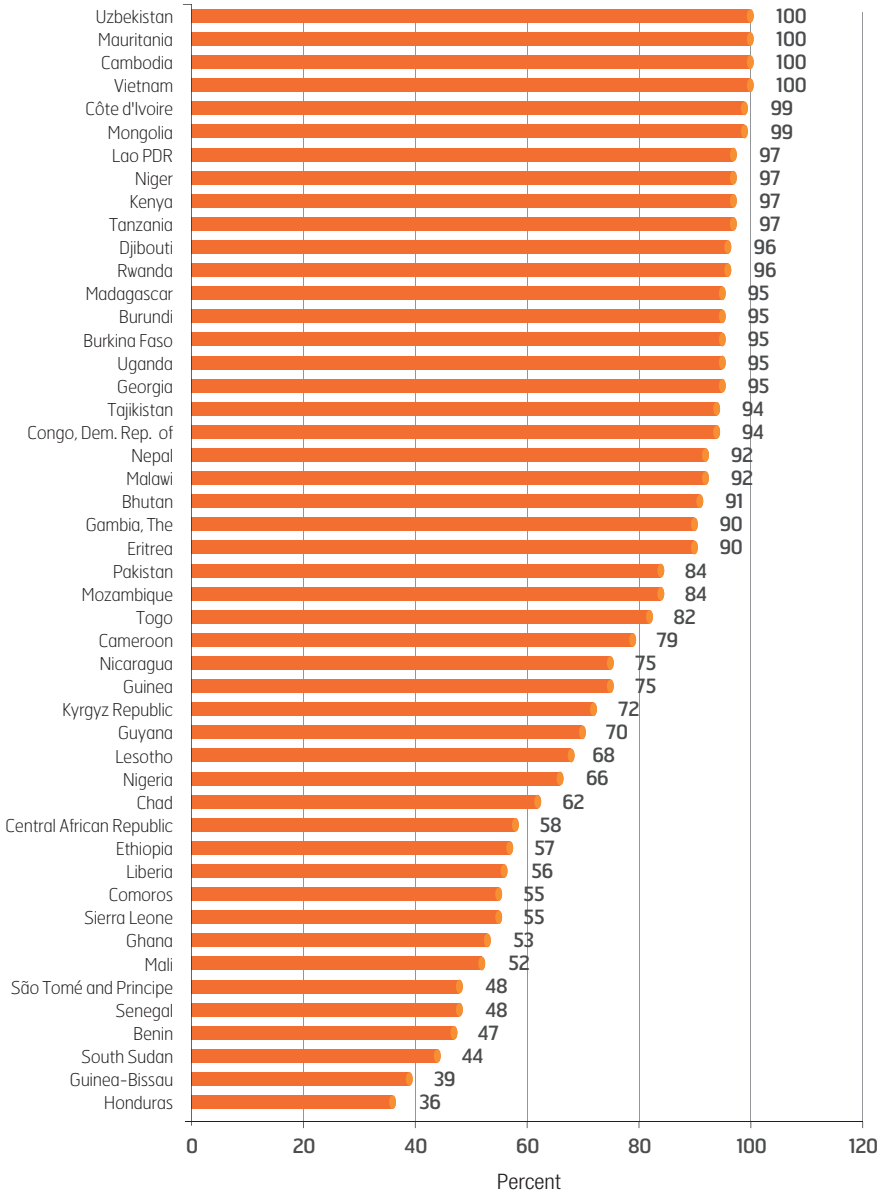
Table 2.17 **Evolution of the proportion of trained teachers, GPE developing country partners**

Trained teachers (%)	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
Primary education	77.5	78.1	78.4	79.5	81.3
Lower secondary education	72.5	73.1	73.8	75.3	77.1

Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

In 2012, the proportion of trained teachers in primary education varied widely in developing country partners, between 36 and 100 percent (Figure 2.16). In Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal and South Sudan, less than 50 percent of teachers are trained.

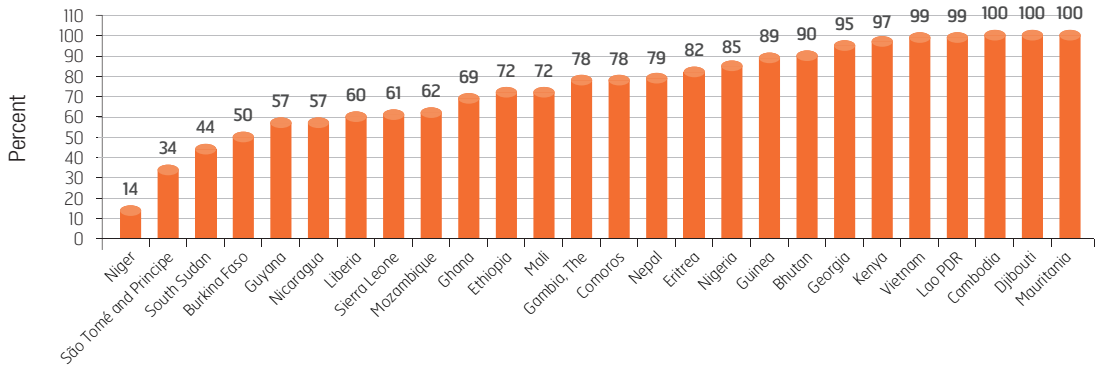
Figure 2.16 **Percentage of trained teachers in primary education, 2012**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

In lower secondary education, a significant proportion of countries did not have data available, but for those where data were available, the percentage of trained teachers varied even more widely than at primary level, from 5 to 100 percent (Figure 2.17).

Figure 2.17 **Percentage of trained teachers in lower secondary education, 2012**



Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal, http://www.uis.unesco.org.

2.7 Progress and challenges in access, equity and efficiency

Efforts are still needed to improve access to pre-primary and lower secondary education.

Despite progress in getting more children into pre-primary and lower secondary education, only a fraction of children are enrolled in either cycle, so developing country partners need to increase their efforts to improve access to these levels of education.

In pre-primary education, progress was driven by an increase in the percentage of public pre-primary school enrollment. However, enrollment in pre-primary education remains low in most developing country partners. In 2012, one in four children in developing country partners had access to pre-primary education (one in five in FCACs), with large disparities between countries. Most countries with high pre-primary enrollment or large increases in pre-primary enrollment also have primary completion rates higher than 90 percent; developing country partners with low primary completion, on the other hand, have been prioritizing primary enrolment.

Meanwhile, as more and more children complete primary education, increased attention has gone to the lower secondary grades. An increasing number of countries seek to give all children access to a full basic education cycle. In 2012, 8 out of 10 children completing primary education transitioned into lower secondary education and gross enrolment ratios had increased by 5.6 percentage points, from 51.1 in 2008 to 56.7 in 2012. Further efforts are needed to prevent dropout, however, as completion rates are still low, at 42 percent on average in 2012 (37 percent in FCACs).

Internal efficiency in primary education is also often low. Due to repetition and drop outs, the 13 least efficient developing country partners spent more than six years of education to get one child to the beginning of grade 5 when four years should be sufficient. In some countries, increasing intake rates have been accompanied with decreasing survival rates, showing that a focus on retention is essential to ensure that children who start school remain there.

Finally, gender parity has improved in recent years, for both access and completion. In 2012, in developing country partners, for every 100 boys completing primary education, there were 89 girls (96 in non-FCACs and 85 in FCACs).

Due to repetition and drop out, internal efficiency in primary education is also often low in GPE developing country partners.

Of course, focus should not however be put only on gender issues: developing country partner household survey data provide a reminder that income and urban/rural disparities are generally more marked than gender disparities. Among those aged 5 to 15 in developing country partners with recent MICS survey data, the likelihood of never having attended school was 1.2 times higher for girls than for boys, 2.1 times higher for rural children than for urban children, and 3.4 times higher for poor children than for children of wealthy families.

Income and urban/rural disparities are generally more marked than gender disparities, but also tend to compound themselves.

The analysis in this chapter also shows that sources of disadvantage tend to compound themselves so that some population groups still have virtually no chance of completing primary education. In Afghanistan, Burkina Faso and Mozambique, poor female rural children had less than one chance in 10 of completing primary education. It is therefore essential to help countries set in place adequate policies to reach all children, particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable.

Data availability remains a critical issue in many GPE developing country partners.

Analysis of progress in education, which is a first step toward developing and implementing appropriate policies, relies on quality and timely data. Unfortunately, data availability remains a critical issue in many developing country partners, with key outcome, service delivery and financial indicators missing in data published by UIS. The lack of regular quality learning data is particularly worrisome in developing countries as they have to face a learning crisis. To help improve this situation, the Global Partnership has been working closely with the Learning Metrics Task Force. Much focus has been put on the need to strengthen learning assessment systems in order to improve learning policies, and ultimately learning itself. A promising proposal for an international platform for assessing learning, which could provide funding and technical support for regional and national learning assessments, is under development.

The urgent need for an improved evidence base in the education policy process is signaled by the fact that almost half all developing country partner sector plans lack analyses of the education sector, and almost a quarter do not have comprehensive results frameworks. The GPE data strategy seeks to address these persistent problems through increased focus on data and evidence in its new funding model. But more needs to be done by the education community to address the data and evidence gap. Investing in data is critical to inform policies to ensure that they are as effective as possible and offer all children the education they need.

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