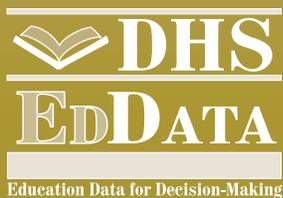


DHS EdData
Education Profile

Benin
1996 and 2001



DHS EdData Education Profiles

DHS EdData Education Profiles

This series of country education profiles uses internationally comparable data from USAID's Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) to characterize children's participation in primary and secondary schooling and adults' schooling attainment and literacy. These profiles provide information that, combined with other country-specific data, can inform education decision-making. Although the DHS began collecting education data in 1984, there was no systematic effort to analyze and present these data in a format accessible to education planners and policy-makers until the DHS EdData Activity began in 1999.

In 2000, the DHS EdData Education Profiles for Africa were produced for nine sub-Saharan African countries. The current set of profiles updates those original profiles with data from recent DHS surveys, and adds to the number of countries profiled. In addition to the thirteen country profiles for sub-Saharan Africa (Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, and Zambia), the current series includes profiles for countries in the ANE (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Egypt, India, and Nepal), LAC (Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Peru), and E&E (Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan) regions.

Data Presented in the Profiles

These profiles present data from nationally representative household surveys, which provide data at the household and individual levels. The data include educational attainment and schooling status of household members, which allow for the calculation of net and gross attendance ratios (disaggregated by sex, urban/rural residence, and region); the percentage of students under age, on time, and over age, by grade; age-specific schooling status of youth (attending, dropped out, never attended); and adult primary and secondary school completion rates and educational attainment. Recent surveys provide data on repetition, dropout, and survival rates by primary school grade. The DHS also provides information on men's and women's literacy rates for a selected age range.

A Supplement to Other Sources of Education Data

The DHS measures of children's school attendance rates differ from, and supplement, traditional sources of international statistics, such as those produced by ministries of education or UNESCO. Statistics on children's participation in schooling usually are derived from country data on children's school enrollment, which are collected from school records and used to produce net and gross enrollment ratios (NER and GER).

DHS, on the other hand, measures children's participation in schooling using data on school attendance, collected from a representative sample of households. Net and gross attendance ratios (NAR and GAR) are calculated based on questions about whether children attend (or go to) school. While the NAR and GAR may be seen as proxies for the more commonly used NER and GER, discrepancies between attendance and enrollment ratios can be expected.

DHS EdData

The DHS EdData Activity is supported primarily by USAID's Office of Education in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade, with additional support from USAID's Africa Bureau. DHS EdData is closely linked to the population and health sector DHS. In addition to analyzing the education data collected by the DHS, DHS EdData conducts various data collection activities, including in-depth household education surveys in a subset of DHS households.

The DHS EdData household survey focuses on issues surrounding the household demand for schooling in order to provide information about the decisions households make about how much of what kind of education to invest in for household members. Specific topics in the core survey include: the reasons for school-age children never having attended school or having dropped out of school, household expenditures on schooling, parent/guardians' perceptions of the benefits of schooling and of school quality, distances and travel times to schools, and the frequency of and reasons for student absenteeism.

Data on these topics, together with the information from the DHS, provide information useful for education policy and program planning and for monitoring USAID basic education activities. The linkage between the DHS EdData and the DHS surveys allows for an analysis of the relationships between education and health, nutrition, family planning, and other individual and household characteristics.

Benin

DHS EdData Education Profile: 1996 and 2001

The Benin Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) were conducted in 1996 and 2001.¹ Having data from two surveys allows for an analysis of changes in the educational setting over time.

Key Findings

Rates of primary school attendance increased between 1996 and 2001, but remained relatively low.

- In 2001, 54% of school-age children in Benin attended primary school, up from 42% in 1996.
- Primary school attendance among female children age 6-11 increased 14 percentage points between 1996 and 2001. During the same period, primary school attendance among male children increased 9 percentage points.
- In both 1996 and 2001, school-age males were more likely than their female counterparts to attend primary school.

At the secondary level, rates of attendance among youth age 12-18 were low, changing little between 1996 and 2001.

- In 2001, 15% of secondary school-age youth attended secondary school, compared to 13% in 1996.
- Attendance rates among youth age 12-18 were much higher for males than females in both 1996 and 2001.

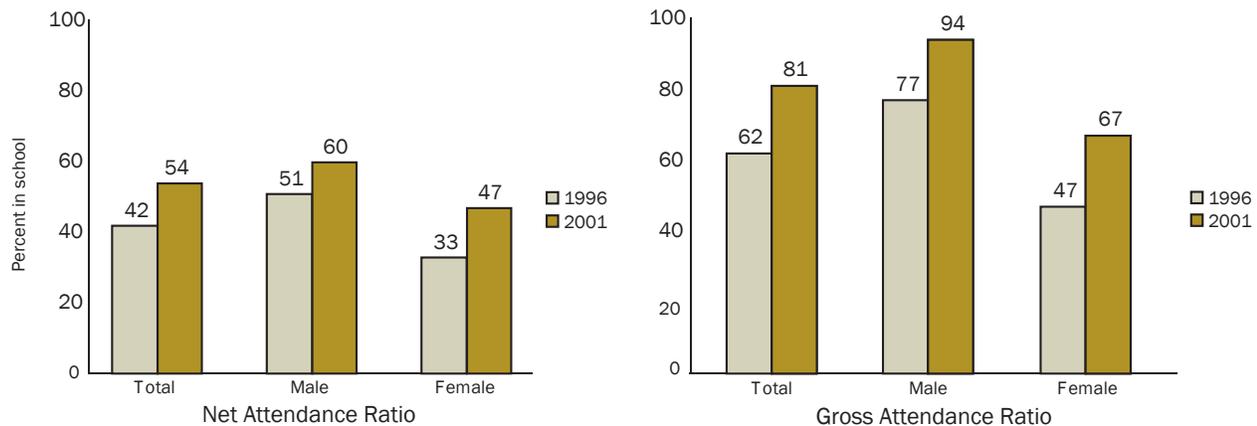
Adult educational attainment and literacy have increased over time. However, considerable gender disparities remain.

- In 2001, 21% of the population age 15 and older had completed primary school, up from 15% in 1996. In 2001, 30% of men had completed primary school, compared with 13% of women.
- The percentage of the population age 20 and older that had completed secondary school was just 2% in 1996 and 3% in 2001. At both points in time, men were more likely than women to have completed secondary school.
- 25% of women age 15-49 were literate in 2001, compared with 47% of men age 15-64.



¹ The 1996 survey was administered to 4,499 households and 5,491 women age 15-49 and 1,535 men age 20-64 from those households. The 2001 survey was administered to 5,769 households, 6,219 women age 15-49, and 2,709 men age 15-64.

Primary School Attendance Ratios: 1996 and 2001



Source: BDHS 1996 and 2001

The net attendance ratio (NAR) is the percentage of the official primary school-age population (age 6-11 in Benin) that attends primary school. The gross attendance ratio (GAR) is the total number of students attending primary school—regardless of age—expressed as a percentage of the official primary school-age population.

Primary Net Attendance Ratio (NAR)

The percentage of children age 6-11 attending primary school increased by 12 percentage points between 1996 and 2001.

- In 2001, 54% of school-age children in Benin attended primary school, up from 42% in 1996.

School-age males were more likely than females to attend primary school in 2001 and 1996, although the gender gap narrowed between 1996 and 2001.

- Between 1996 and 2001, primary school attendance among school-age females increased 14 percentage points, from 33% to 47%. During the same period, primary school attendance among school-age males increased 9 percentage points, from 51% to 60%.

Primary Gross Attendance Ratio (GAR)

Many of the children attending primary school are outside of the official age range (as reflected in the difference between net and gross attendance ratios). This can have tremendous impact on the educational infrastructure, the experience in the classroom, and education planning.

In 2001 and 1996, 1 in 3 primary school students was found to be outside (either younger than or older than) the official school age range of age 6-11.

- Students over or under the official primary school age range made up 33% of the primary school population in 2001 ($(\text{GAR } 81 - \text{NAR } 54) / \text{GAR } 81$) and 32% in 1996 ($(\text{GAR } 62 - \text{NAR } 42) / \text{GAR } 62$).

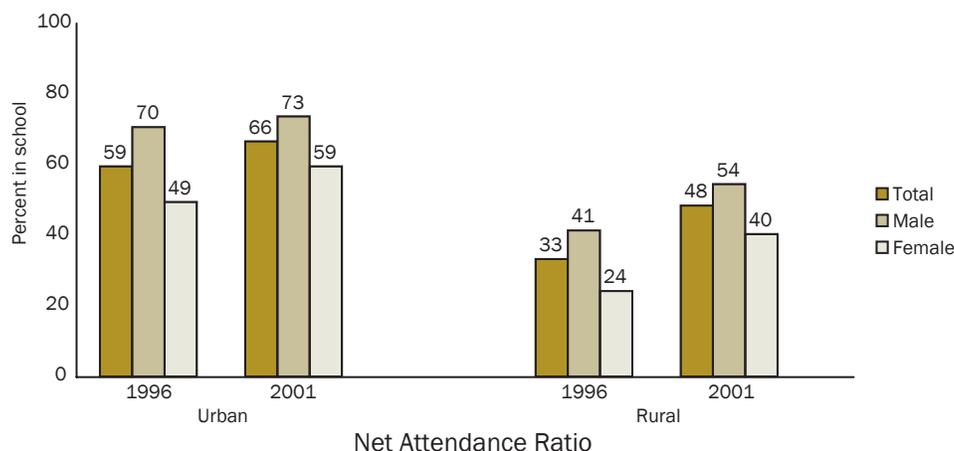
In 2001 and 1996, among youth of all ages, males were much more likely than females to attend primary school.

- The gross attendance ratio (GAR) among males was 94 in 2001, compared with 67 among females.
- In 1996, the GAR was 77 for males and 47 for females.

Primary School Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) by Urban/Rural: 1996 and 2001

In 2001, children age 6-11 in urban areas were more likely to attend primary school than children in rural areas. This urban-rural disparity declined between 1996 and 2001.

- In 2001, 66% of children age 6-11 in urban areas attended primary school, compared to 48% in rural areas. This 18 percentage point urban-rural disparity is an improvement from 1996 (26 percentage points).



Source: BDHS 1996 and 2001

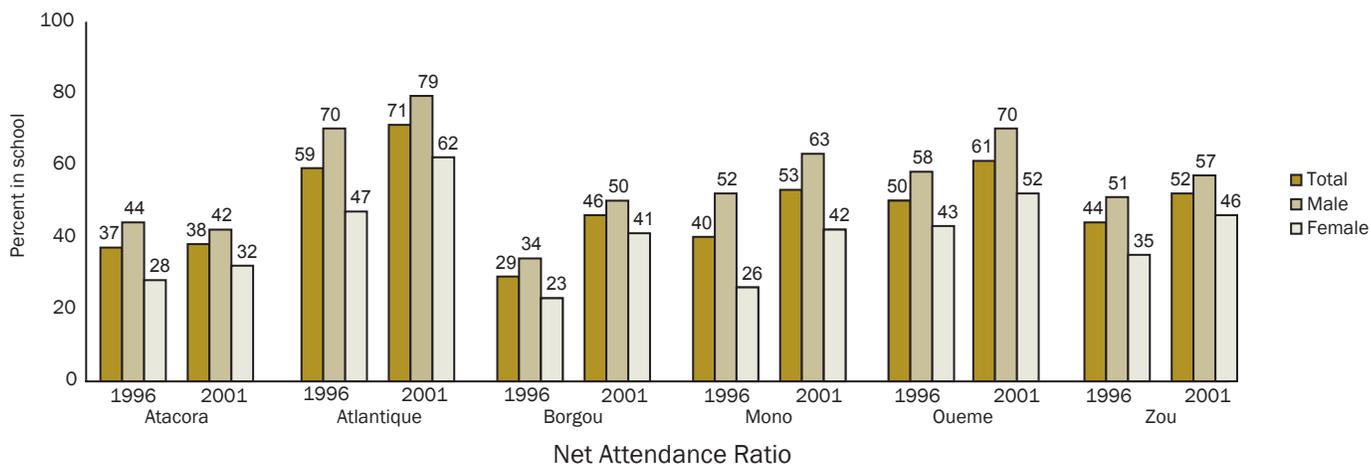
Primary School Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) by Province: 1996 and 2001

There are provincial disparities in primary school attendance in Benin.

- In 2001, the highest net attendance ratio (NAR) among primary school-age children was in the Atlantique province (71%), which includes the capital city of Cotonou. The lowest NAR was in the Atacora province (38%).
- Between 1996 and 2001, rates of attendance increased notably in all provinces except Atacora, where only female attendance increased.

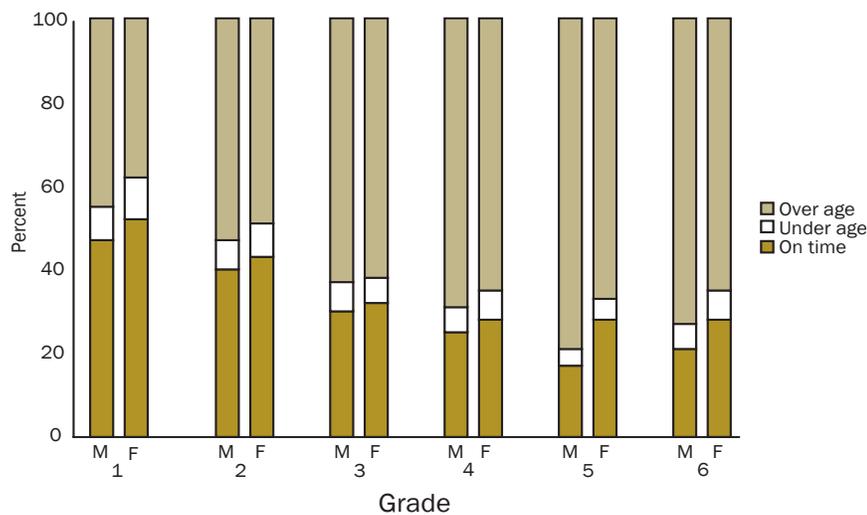
In 2001, the percentage of school-age children attending primary school was higher for males than for females in all six provinces.

- The percentage point gap in primary school attendance was widest in the Mono province, with 63% of males and 42% of females age 6-11 attending.



Source: BDHS 1996 and 2001

Over-Age, Under-Age, and On-time Students in Primary School: 2001



In 2001, 42% of students in grade 1 and 71% of students in grade 6 were over age for the grade attended.

- From 1996 to 2001, the percentage of students over age in grades 1-6 increased. For instance, in 1996 31% of grade 1 students were over age, compared with 42% in 2001 (data from 1996 not shown).
- In general, in both 1996 and 2001, male students were more likely than female students to be over age for the grade attended.

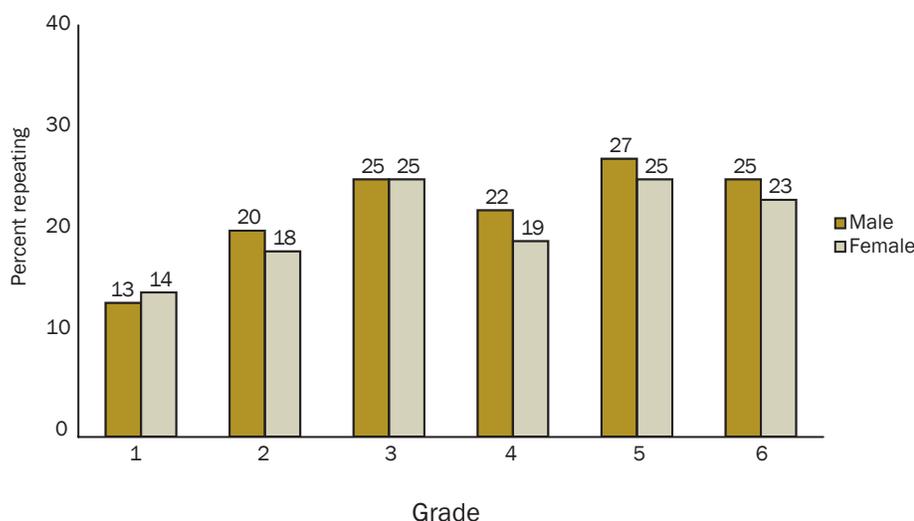
Source: BDHS 2001

Students are considered to be over age if they are two or more years older, and under age if they are one or more years younger, than the official age for their grade. Students are considered to be on time if they are of the official age, or are one year older than the official age for their grade. Since the official age of entry to grade 1 is age 6 in Benin, a grade 1 student who is age 6 or 7 is considered to be on time, a student age 8 or older is over age, and a student age 5 or younger is under age. This indicator—under age, on time, or over age for grade—differs from the percentage of primary school students outside the primary school age range in that the proportion of students over age, on time, and under age is calculated for each primary school grade, rather than for primary school overall.

Primary School Repetition: 2001²

In 2001, grade repetition was substantial in all grades, but was lowest in grade 1.

- 13% of male and 14% of female students attending grade 1 in 2001 were repeating that grade. Between 18% and 27% of students were repeating grades 2-6.
- In 2001, the percentage of males and females repeating was relatively equal in each grade.



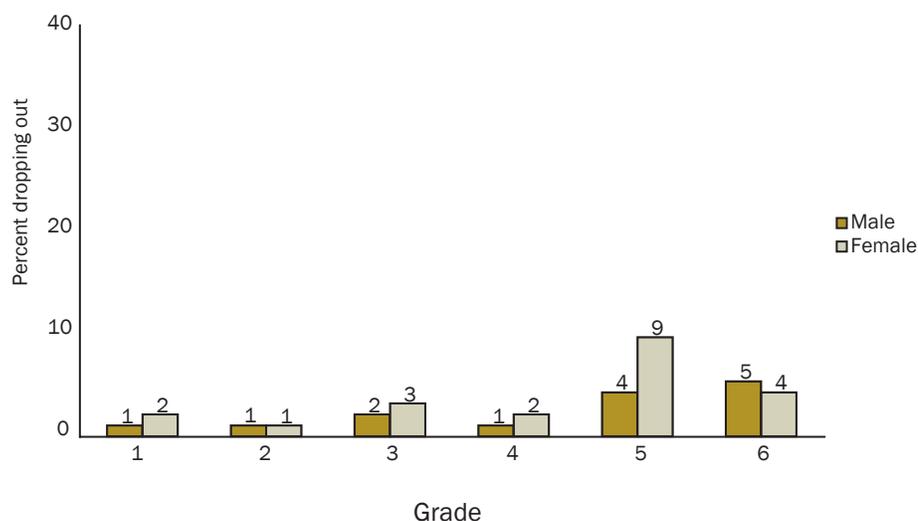
Source: BDHS 2001

² Data on repetition rates are not available from the 1996 survey.

Primary School Dropout: 2001³

In 2001, dropout was relatively uncommon in all grades, suggesting that once children start attending school they are likely to persist to the end of the cycle.

- Just 1% of male and 2% of female students attending grade 1 during the 2000 school year did not attend school in 2001. In the remaining grades, dropout rates ranged from 1% to 9%.
- Dropout rates among male and female students were roughly equal for each grade with the exception of grade 5.



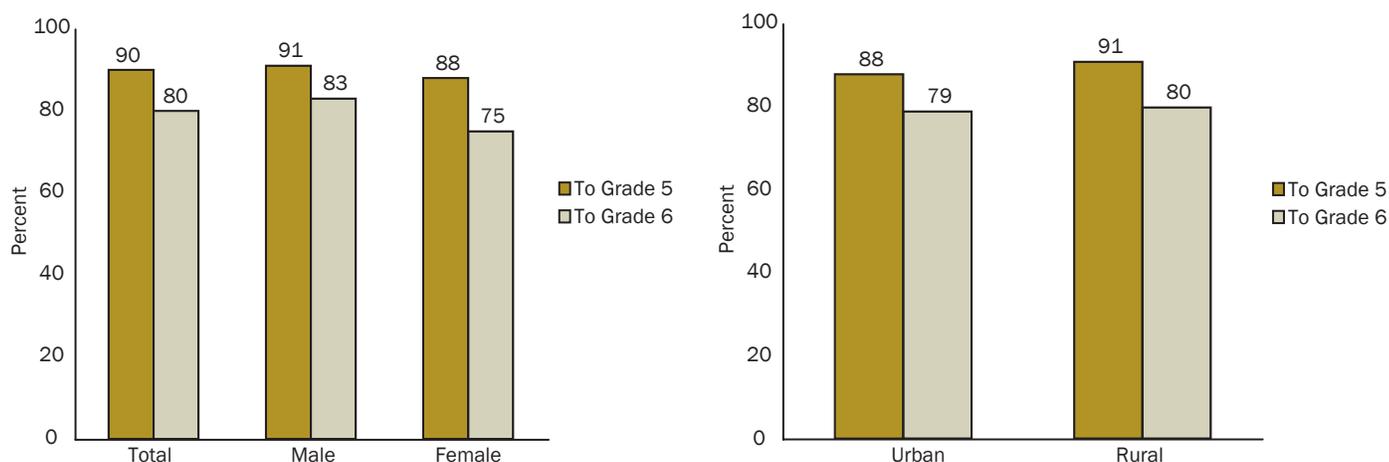
Source: BDHS 2001

³ Data on dropout rates are not available from the 1996 survey.

Survival to Grades 5 and 6: 2001⁴

In 2001, the vast majority of students who entered grade 1 could be expected to reach the final grades of the primary cycle, with or without grade repetition.

- 91% of male and 88% of female students attending grade 1 could be expected to reach grade 5, while 83% of male and 75% of female students could be expected to reach grade 6.
- There is little difference in primary school survival rates by urban-rural residence. In both urban and rural areas, 9 out of 10 students who entered grade 1 could be expected to reach grade 5, and 8 out of 10 could be expected to reach grade 6.

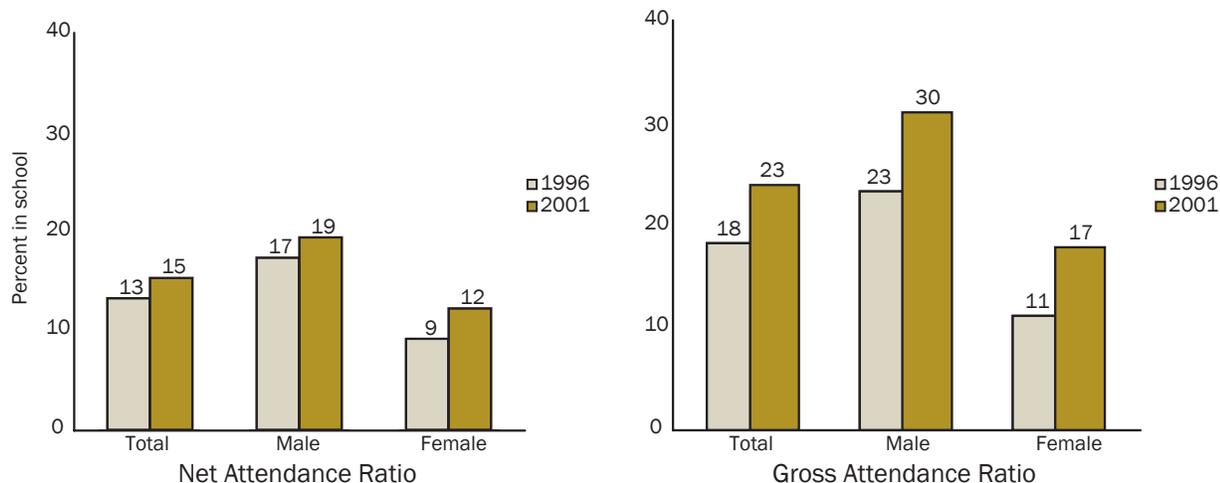


Source: BDHS 2001

Survival rates use dropout and repetition rates to estimate the percentage of students starting grade 1 who can be expected to reach a subsequent grade. The calculation allows for a student to repeat a grade up to three times before assuming that the student then drops out (see Appendix for further detail).

⁴ Data on survival rates are not available from the 1996 survey.

Secondary School Attendance Ratios: 1996 and 2001



Source: BDHS 1996 and 2001

The net attendance ratio (NAR) is the percentage of the official secondary school-age population (age 12-18 in Benin) that attends secondary school. The gross attendance ratio (GAR) is the total number of students attending secondary school—regardless of age—expressed as a percentage of the official secondary school-age population.

Secondary Net Attendance Ratio (NAR)

The percentage of youth age 12-18 attending secondary school was low and changed little between 1996 and 2001.

- In 2001, 15% of secondary school-age youth attended secondary school, compared to 13% in 1996.

Male youth of secondary school age were more likely than female youth to attend secondary school.

- 19% of male youth age 12-18 attended secondary school in 2001, compared with 12% of female youth.

Secondary Gross Attendance Ratio (GAR)

Among students of all ages (gross attendance), the rate of secondary attendance increased from 18 in 1996, to 23 in 2001. Despite increases in the gross attendance ratio from 1996 to 2001, the gender gap in secondary school attendance was still considerable.

- In 2001, the gross attendance ratio (GAR) among males was 30, compared with 17 among females.

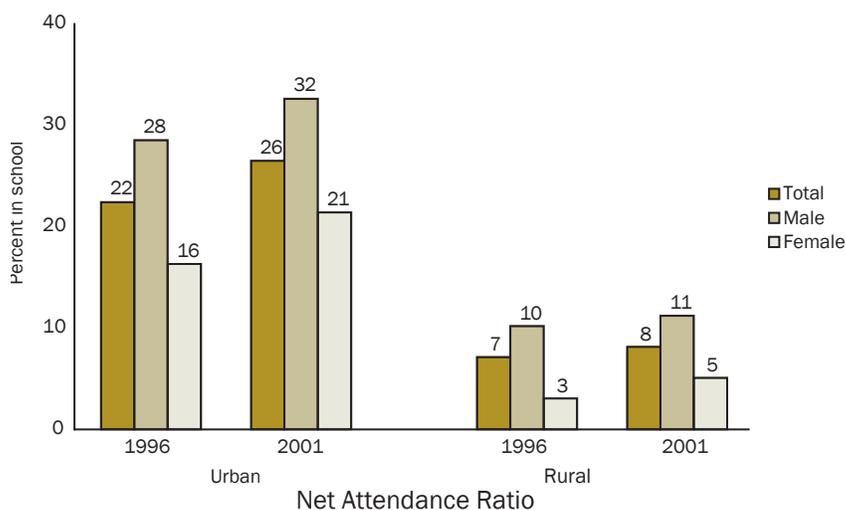
Secondary School Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) by Urban/Rural: 1996 and 2001

In 2001 and 1996, youth age 12-18 in urban areas were found to be much more likely than those in rural areas to attend secondary school.

- In 2001, 26% of youth age 12-18 in urban areas attended secondary school, compared to only 8% in rural areas.

Between 1996 and 2001, in urban areas, the secondary net attendance ratio increased.

- In urban areas, the rate of secondary attendance among school-age youth increased from 22% in 1996 to 26% in 2001.



Source: BDHS 1996 and 2001

In rural areas, the secondary NAR remained the same between 1996 and 2001.

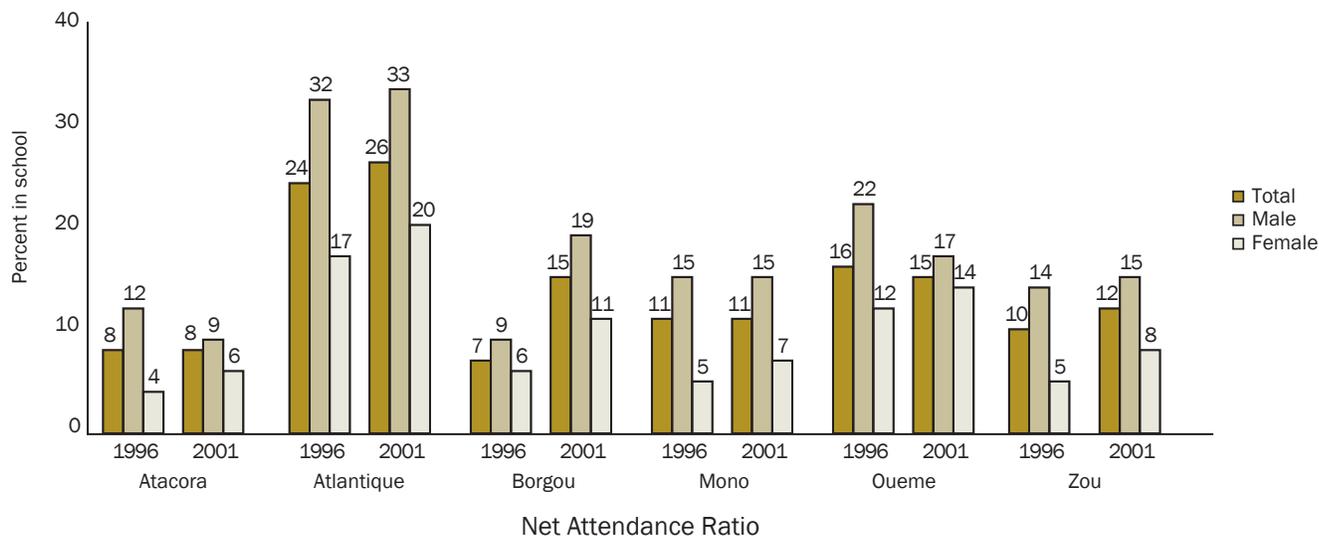
Secondary School Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) by Province: 1996 and 2001

Secondary school net attendance ratios (NAR) vary substantially by province.

- In 2001, the secondary school net attendance ratio ranged from 8% in the Atacora province to 26% in the Atlantique province.
- Between 1996 and 2001, the NAR increased notably in the Borgou province (from 7% to 15%).

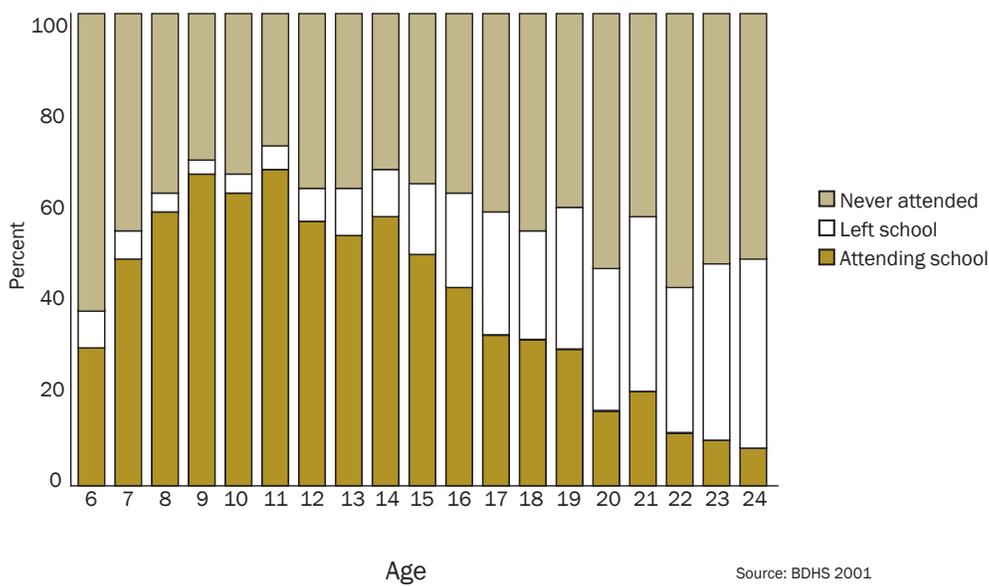
In 2001, in all provinces, male youth age 12-18 were more likely than female youth to attend secondary school.

- In Atlantique, the province with the highest overall secondary NAR, 33% of male youth age 12-18 attended secondary school while 20% of female youth attended.



Source: BDHS 1996 and 2001

Schooling Status of Youth Age 6-24: 2001



Between 1996 and 2001, the percentage of youth attending school at the pre-primary, primary, secondary, or post-secondary levels increased at each age from 6 to 24 (data from 1996 not shown).

- In 2001, the peak age of attendance was 11, with 67% of children age 11 attending school; the peak age range was 9-11.

The percentage of youth who had never attended school declined steadily from 1996 to 2001.

- In 2001, 63% of 6-year-olds had never attended school, down from 73% in 1996.
- Between 1996 and 2001, the percentage of 18-year-olds who had never attended school decreased from 54% to 46%.

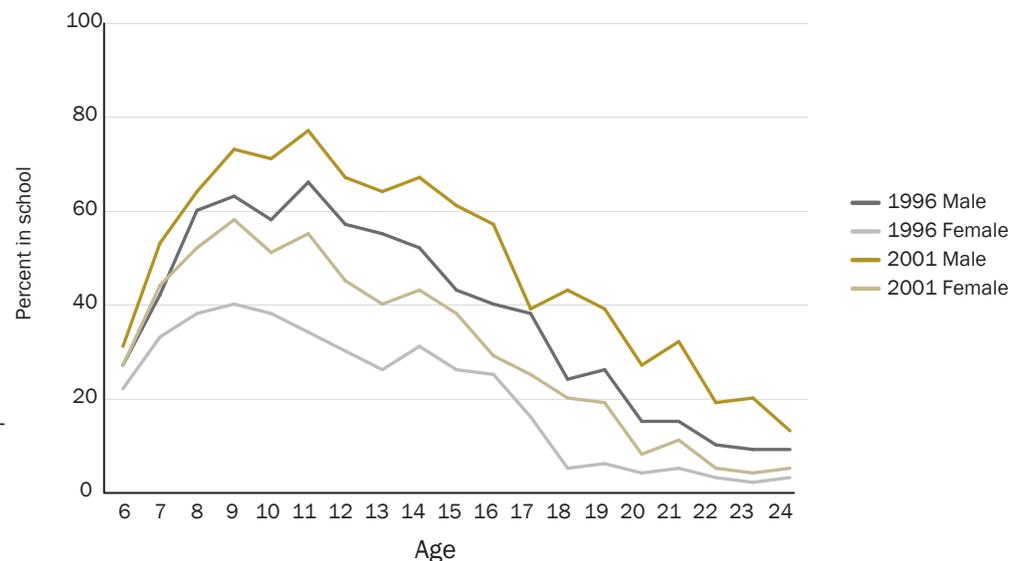
Age-Specific Attendance Rate by Sex: 1996 and 2001

In 2001, at every age from 6 to 24, the percentage of male youth attending school at any level was higher than it was for female youth.

- In 2001, attendance peaked at age 11 for males (77%) and at age 9 for females (58%).
- The largest gender gap in attendance was at age 16, with male attendance at 57% and female attendance at 29%.

Between 1996 and 2001, the age-specific attendance rate increased for females and males at each age between 6 and 24.

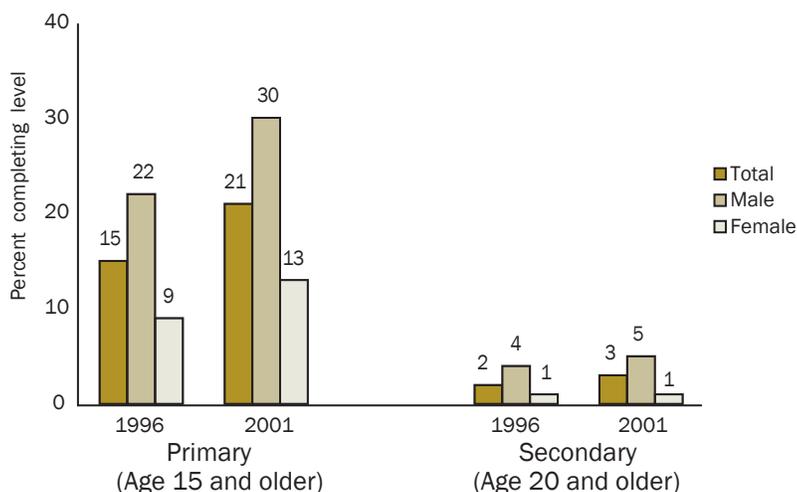
- Between 1996 and 2001, the percentage of 15-year-old males attending school increased markedly from 43% to 61%.
- During the same period, attendance rates among 11-year-old females increased from 34% to 55%.
- In 2001, attendance rates remained low among older youth, with attendance rates declining rapidly at age 17 for males and age 16 for females.



Adult Primary and Secondary School Completion Rates: 1996 and 2001

Between 1996 and 2001, the percentage of the population age 15 and older that had completed primary school increased. In spite of the increase, men remained more than twice as likely as women to have completed the primary level.

- In 2001, 21% of the population 15 and older had completed primary school, up from 15% in 1996. In 2001, 30% of men had completed primary school compared to 13% of women.



Source: BDHS 1996 and 2001

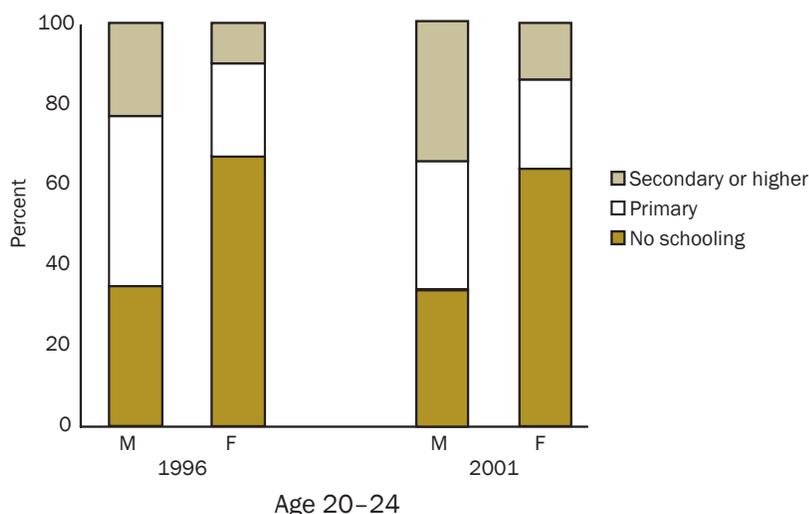
The percentage of the population age 20 and older that had completed secondary school changed little between 1996 and 2001, and men remained more likely than women to have completed the secondary level.

- In 2001, 3% of the population age 20 and older had completed secondary school, compared with 2% in 1996.
- In 2001, 5% of men and 1% of women had completed the secondary level.

Adult Educational Attainment: 1996 and 2001

Between 1996 and 2001, educational attainment increased for adults age 20-24.

- In 1996, 10% of women age 20-24 had attended secondary school or higher, compared with 14% in 2001.
- Among men age 20-24, in 1996, 23% had attended secondary school or higher, compared with 33% in 2001.



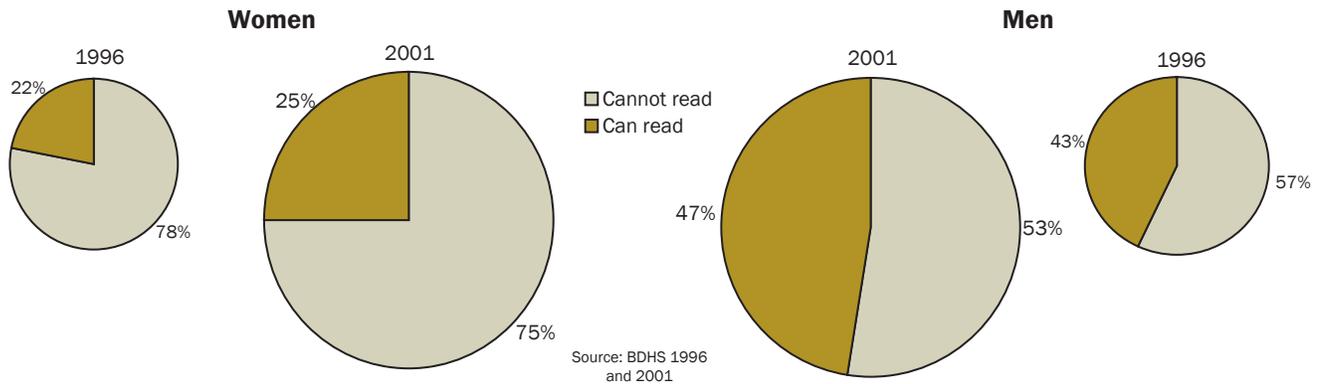
Source: BDHS 1996 and 2001

Overall, educational attainment in Benin has increased over time among both men and women.

- In 1996, 80% of women, and 56% of men age 20 and older had never attended school. By 2001, these percentages were 75% and 51%, respectively (data not shown for all age groups).

Literacy Among Women and Men: 1996 and 2001⁵

In 2001, 25% of women could read, compared to 47% of men. Between 1996 and 2001, women's literacy increased slightly from 22% to 25%, and men's literacy increased from 43% to 47%.⁶



⁵ In 1996, literacy was measured among men age 20-64 and women age 15-49. In 2001, literacy was measured among men age 15-64 and women age 15-49.

⁶ Among adults who never attended school and those who attended primary school, literacy was self-reported in 1996, and tested in 2001. In 2001, literacy was tested by asking the respondent to read a sentence in a language in which he/she was likely to be literate. Men and women who attended secondary school or higher were assumed to be literate. As a consequence, the percentage literate includes both those who attended secondary school or higher, and those who reported themselves to be literate (1996) or those who were able to read (2001).

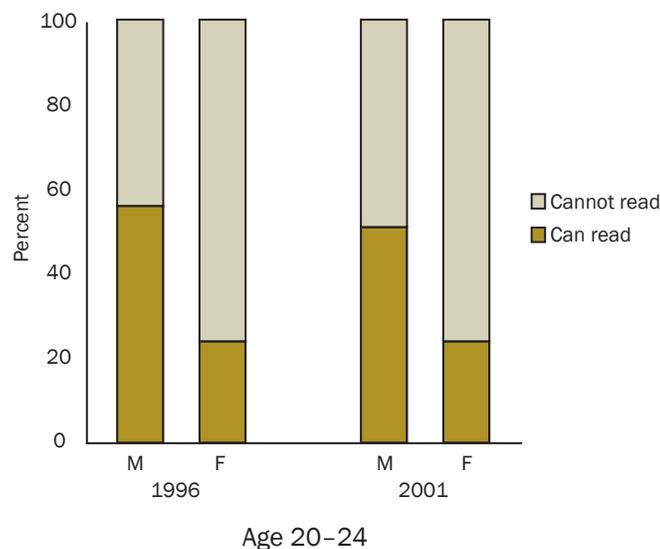
Literacy by Age: 1996 and 2001

Between 1996 and 2001, literacy changed little among younger adults.

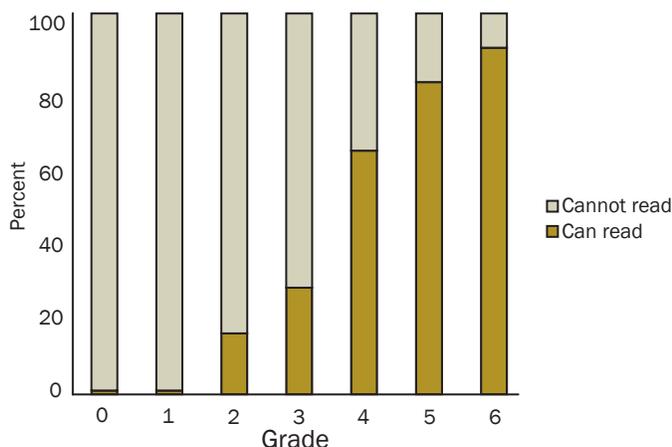
- In 1996, 26% of women age 20-24 could read, compared with 24% in 2001. In 1996, 56% of men age 20-24 could read, compared with 51% in 2001.

Literacy, while still low, has been increasing over the past 30 years.

- In 2001, literacy among men ranged from 66% among men age 15-19, to 28% among men age 50-54 (data not shown for all age ranges). At the same point in time, literacy among women ranged from 37% among women age 15-19, to 15% among women age 45-49.



Women's Literacy by Years of Primary School Completed: 2001



In 2001, 64% of women who had completed grade 4 could read and 91% of those who had completed grade 6 could read.

- Over time, the percentage of grade 4 completers who are literate has declined- from 87% in 1996 to 64% in 2001 (data from 1996 not shown).

Main Reason for Leaving School Among Women Age 15-24, by Highest Level of Schooling Attended: 2001

Women age 15-24 who no longer attended school, were asked the main reason they had left school. The most common reasons women gave for leaving primary school were not liking school and failing examinations (29% for both).

- 13% of women who left primary school cited the inability to pay school fees as the main reason for leaving.

27% of women cited not liking school and 24% cited failing examinations as the main reason for leaving secondary school or higher.

- Other common reasons women gave for leaving secondary school or higher were pregnancy (15%) and the inability to pay school fees (13%).

	Left during primary %	Left during secondary or higher %	Total %
Got pregnant	2	15	5
Got married	1	1	1
Needed to take care of children	3	0	3
Family needed help	4	0	3
Could not pay for schooling	13	13	13
Needed to earn money	5	4	4
Graduated/Had enough schooling	0.2	6	2
Failed exams	29	24	28
Did not like school	29	27	28
School not accessible	1	1	1
Other/Don't know	14	11	14

Source: BDHS 2001

Appendix: Indicator Specifications

The methods used to calculate the indicators presented in the education profiles are described below.

Net Attendance Ratio (NAR)

Primary level:

$$\frac{\text{number of students of primary school age attending primary school}}{\text{number of people of primary school age in the population}}$$

Secondary level:

$$\frac{\text{number of students of secondary school age attending secondary school}}{\text{number of people of secondary school age in the population}}$$

The Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) is the percentage of children in the target age range for the specified level of schooling attending that level of schooling, and is calculated separately for primary and secondary school. A primary NAR of 95% would indicate that nearly all of the children of primary school age attend primary school. A primary NAR of only 38%, on the other hand, would indicate that a majority, or 62%, of the children of primary school age do not attend primary school. By definition, the NAR cannot exceed 100%.

Gross Attendance Ratio (GAR)

Primary level:

$$\frac{\text{number of students attending primary school, regardless of age}}{\text{number of people of primary school age in the population}}$$

Secondary level:

$$\frac{\text{number of students attending secondary school, regardless of age}}{\text{number of people of secondary school age in the population}}$$

The Gross Attendance Ratio (GAR) for a given school level is the total number of students attending at that level, divided by the population of the official age range for that school level. The GAR is calculated separately for primary and secondary school. Unlike the NAR, the GAR can exceed 100.

Both a GAR greater than 100 and a GAR greater than the NAR indicate the presence in the classroom of children who are either older or younger than the official age range for the school level. The magnitude of difference between the NAR and GAR indicates the extent of over-age/under-age attendance. For instance, if the primary NAR is 35% and the GAR is 65, then 54% (35/65) of the primary school students are of primary school age, while 46% are either older or younger than the official age range. In some countries, where there is a substantial difference between the GAR and the NAR, the number and proportion of over-age and/or under-age students burdens the school system, absorbing resources that might otherwise be spent on children in the official age range for the level.

Primary School Under Age, On Time, and Over Age

Students in each grade of primary school are either under age, on time, or over age for the grade attended. Students are under age for the grade if they are younger than the official target age for the grade. Students are on time if they are at the official age for the grade, or are one year older than the official age. Students are over age if they are two or more years older than the official age for the grade. For example, if the official entry age for grade 1 is 6, a student age 5 or younger is under age, a student age 6-7 is on time, and a student age 8 or older is over age.

The percentage of students on time for the grade attended is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{number of grade X students who are at the target entry age for the grade or one year older}}{\text{total number of students attending grade X}}$$

Primary School Repetition Rates

$$\frac{\text{number of students repeating grade X in year 2}}{\text{number of students attending grade X in year 1}}$$

Repetition rates measure the percentage of students in a given grade who also attend that same grade in the following school year. These rates are calculated from data on children's school attendance for two school years in a row. For instance, if a student is in grade 3 at the time of the survey, and was also in grade 3 during the previous school year, the student is repeating that grade.

Primary School Dropout Rates

$$\frac{\text{number of students in grade X in year 1 who no longer attend school in year 2}}{\text{number of students attending grade X in year 1}}$$

Dropout rates measure the percentage of students who left school after attending a particular grade. These rates are calculated from data on children's school attendance for two school years in a row. For instance, if a student did not attend school during the school year during which the survey was conducted, but attended grade 1 in the previous school year, then that student dropped out of school.

Survival Rates to Grade 5 and to the Last Year of Primary School (using the Reconstructed Cohort Method of UNESCO)

The survival rate estimates the percentage of students attending grade 1 in a given year that is expected to reach a subsequent grade, with or without repetition. The survival rate is calculated using rates of promotion, dropout, and repetition for a given school year. This projection is based on several assumptions, including: a) that there are no new entrants to the school system (including dropouts returning to school); b) that at any grade, the same promotion, repetition, and dropout rates apply to all students, regardless of whether a student is in the grade for the first time or is repeating; c) that the same promotion, repetition and dropout rates observed during one school year apply for all students when they attend that same grade; and d) that the number of times students may repeat a grade is defined. The survival rate estimates presented in these profiles allow for students to attend a grade four times, after which it is assumed that the students drop out of school.

For a detailed flowchart of the calculation of this indicator, refer to the "Education for All: The Year 2000 Assessment Technical Guidelines" published by UNESCO (also see the web site at www.education.unesco.org/efa).

Schooling Status of Youth Age 6-24

For each age, from age 6-24, the percentage attending school:

$$\frac{\text{number of people age 6 attending school, at any level}}{\text{number of people age 6 in the population}}$$

For each age, from age 6-24, the percentage who have left school:

$$\frac{\text{number of people age 6 who used to attend school, but have dropped out}}{\text{number of people age 6 in the population}}$$

For each age, from age 6-24, the percentage who have never attended school:

$$\frac{\text{number of people age 6 who have never attended school}}{\text{number of people age 6 in the population}}$$

Schooling status indicates the percentage of children and youth, by age, who attend school (at any level), have dropped out of school, or who have never attended school. Added together, these percentages total 100% for each age.

Age-Specific Attendance Rate (ASAR)

For each age, from age 6-24:

$$\frac{\text{number of people age 6 attending school, at any level}}{\text{number of people age 6 in the population}}$$

The ASAR indicates the percentage of a given age cohort attending school—regardless of the level attended (primary, secondary, or higher). The ASAR cannot exceed 100%, and the closer it is to 100%, the higher the participation of that age group in the population.

Adult Primary and Secondary School Completion Rates

Primary

$$\frac{\text{number of people age 15 or older who have completed the last grade of primary (or higher)}}{\text{number of people age 15 or older in the population}}$$

Secondary

$$\frac{\text{number of people age 20 or older who have completed the last grade of secondary (or higher)}}{\text{number of people age 20 or older in the population}}$$

The completion rates presented here are indicators of the level of primary or secondary school completion among those who are beyond primary or secondary school age. Those in the numerator have either completed the specified level of schooling or attended school at a higher level. In other words, the percentage of adults who have completed primary school includes those who have attended secondary school or a higher level of schooling. Note that the calculation of this indicator differs from the calculation of the Primary and Secondary Completion Rates.

Adult Educational Attainment by Level of Schooling Attended

For each level of attainment:

$$\frac{\text{number of people age 20 or older who never attended school}}{\text{number of people in the population age 20 or older}}$$

These indicators present the percentage of the adult population age 20 or older that has never attended school, attended primary school, or attended secondary school or higher. Results are presented in five-year age ranges, and for age 65 or older. Within each age range, the percentages, added together, total 100%. This indicator is useful in tracking changes in attainment by age group, gender, and other sub-groups.

Adult Literacy

Women (and in many countries, also men) age 15-49¹ who never attended school and those who left school before reaching secondary school were asked to assess their literacy or to demonstrate literacy. If respondents were asked to report on their literacy, the question was: “Can you read and understand a letter or newspaper easily, with difficulty, or not at all?” People who said they can read easily or with difficulty were grouped together as literate. If literacy was tested, which is the case with most recent surveys, respondents were asked to read (in a language in which they were likely to be literate) a short simple statement about everyday life. If the respondent could read part or all of the sentence, or had attended secondary school or higher, the respondent was classified as literate.

¹ The age range for men is often different from that of women, and is most commonly age 15-54 or 15-59.

Contact Information

Information about DHS EdData may be obtained from several sources, including:

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Additional information about DHS EdData and these country education profiles may be obtained by writing to: DHS EdData, ORC Macro, 11785 Beltsville Drive, Suite 300, Calverton, MD 20705 (Telephone: 301-572-0200; Fax: 301-572-0983; Email: reports@orcmacro.com; Website: <http://www.dhseddata.com>).

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