

DHS ED DATA
EDUCATION PROFILE

Malawi

1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002



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 twelve country profiles for sub-Saharan Africa (Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, 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, Turkmenistan, 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.

Malawi

DHS EdData Education Profile: 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002

The Malawi Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) were conducted in 1992, 1996, and 2000; a DHS EdData Survey was conducted in 2002.¹ Having data from four surveys allows for an analysis of changes in the educational setting over time. The timing of the Malawi surveys allows for particularly interesting comparisons: the first survey was conducted before, and the second survey shortly after, Free Primary Education (FPE) came into effect in 1994. The third and fourth surveys allow for points of comparison several years beyond the start of FPE.

Key Findings

Over the years between 1992 and 2002, rates of primary school attendance increased.

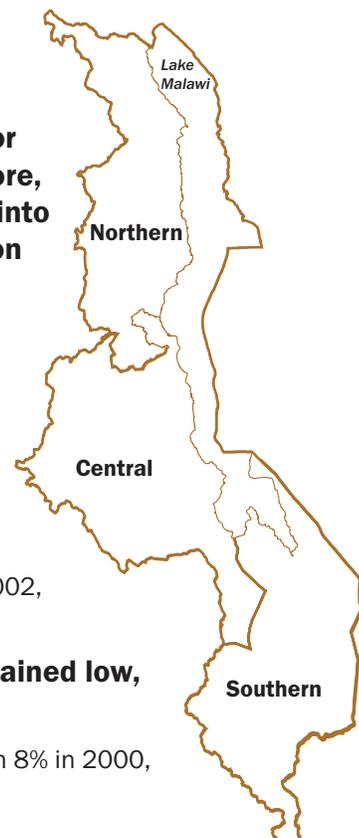
- In 2002, 81% of children age 6–13 in Malawi attended primary school, up from 78% in 2000, 69% in 1996, and 58% in 1992.
- School-age males and females were almost equally likely to attend primary school in 2002, 2000, and 1992.

At the secondary level, rates of attendance among youth age 14–17 remained low, and fluctuated slightly over time.

- In 2002, 9% of secondary school-age youth attended secondary school, compared with 8% in 2000, 5% in 1996, and 8% in 1992.
- Attendance rates among youth age 14–17 were similar for male and female youth.

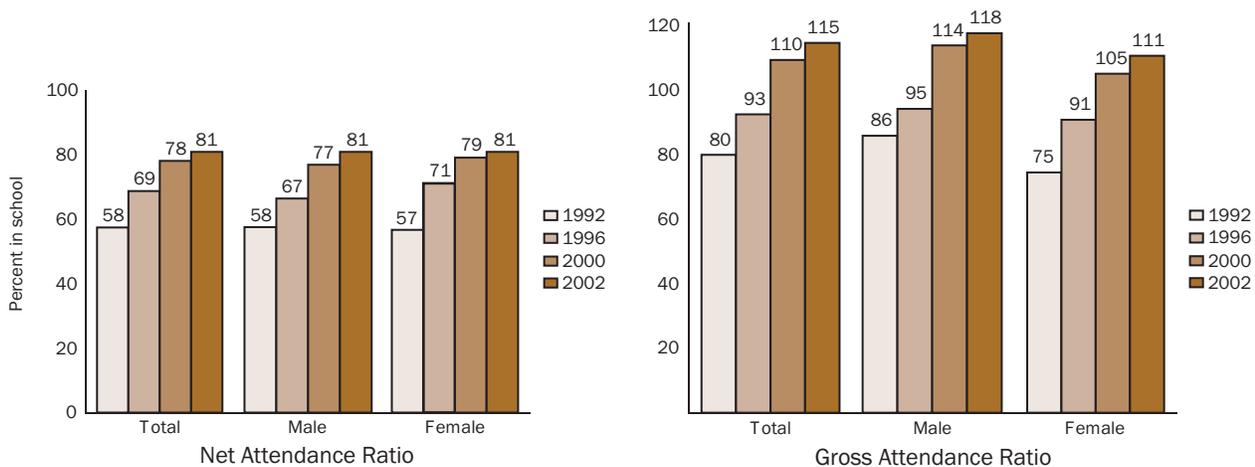
Adult educational attainment and literacy have increased over time. However, sizeable gender disparities remain.

- In 2002, 23% of the population age 15 and older had completed primary school, up from 16% in 1992. Men were twice as likely as women to have completed primary school in 2002.
- In 2002, 7% of the population age 20 and older had completed secondary school, up slightly from 3% in 1992. In 2002, men were three times as likely as women to have completed secondary school.
- 56% of women age 15–49 were literate in 2000, compared with 79% of men age 15–54.



¹ The 1992 survey was administered to 5,323 households and 4,849 women age 15–49 and 1,151 men age 20–54 from those households. The 1996 survey was administered to 2,798 households, 2,683 women age 15–49, and 2,658 men age 15–59. The 2000 survey was administered to 14,213 households, 13,220 women age 15–49, and 3,092 men age 15–54. The 2002 DHS EdData Survey was administered to 3,290 households and 2,048 parent/guardians.

Primary School Attendance Ratios: 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2002



Source: MDHS 1992, 1996, 2000; MDES 2002

The net attendance ratio (NAR) is the percentage of the official primary school-age population (age 6–13 in Malawi) 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 population.

Primary Net Attendance Ratio (NAR)

The percentage of children age 6–13 attending primary school increased by 23 percentage points between 1992 and 2002.

- In 2002, 81% of school-age children in Malawi attended primary school, up from 78% in 2000, 69% in 1996, and 58% in 1992.

School-age males and females were almost equally likely to attend primary school in 2002, 2000, and 1992.

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 all four surveys, more than 1 in 4 primary school students was found to be outside (either younger than or older than) the official school age range of age 6–13.

- In 2002, students over or under the official primary school age range made up 30% ($(\text{GAR } 115 - \text{NAR } 81) / \text{GAR } 115$) of the primary school population.

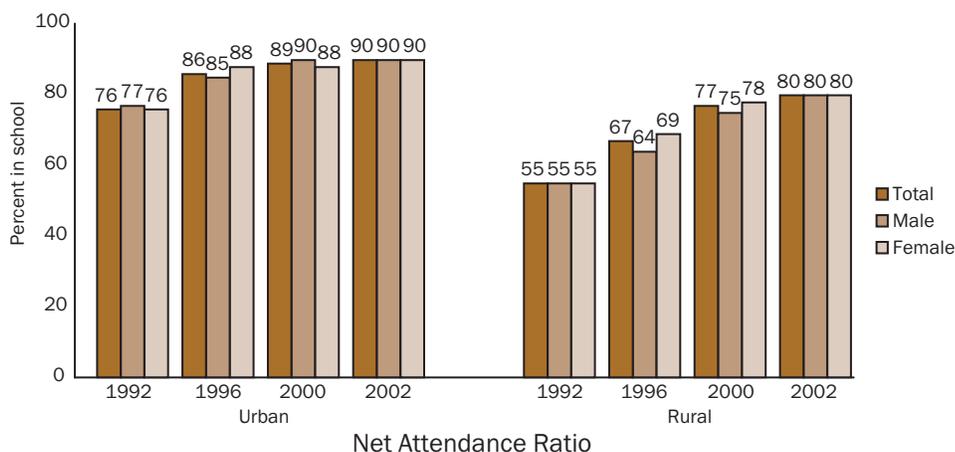
In 2002, 2000, 1996, and 1992, among youth of all ages, males were more likely than females to attend primary school.

- In 2002, the gross attendance ratio (GAR) among males was 118, compared with 111 among females.

Primary School Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) by Urban/Rural: 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002

In 2002, children age 6–13 in urban areas were more likely to attend primary school than children in rural areas, but this urban-rural disparity declined between 1992 and 2002.

- In 2002, 90% of children age 6–13 in urban areas attended primary school, compared to 80% in rural areas. This 10 percentage point urban-rural difference is an improvement from 2000 (12 percentage points), 1996 (19 percentage points), and 1992 (21 percentage points).

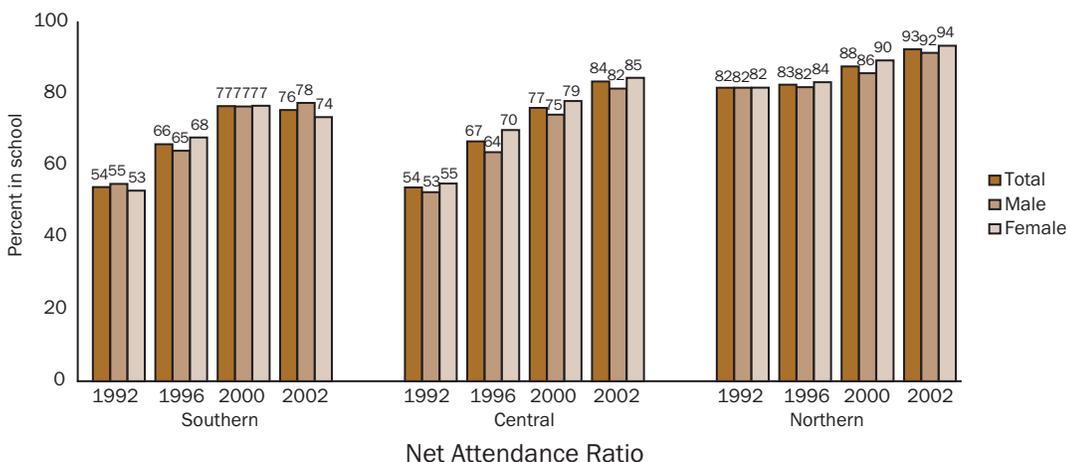


Primary School Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) by Region: 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002

In 2002, the rate of primary school attendance was highest in the Northern region. Regional disparities were less extreme in 2002 compared to ten years earlier in 1992.

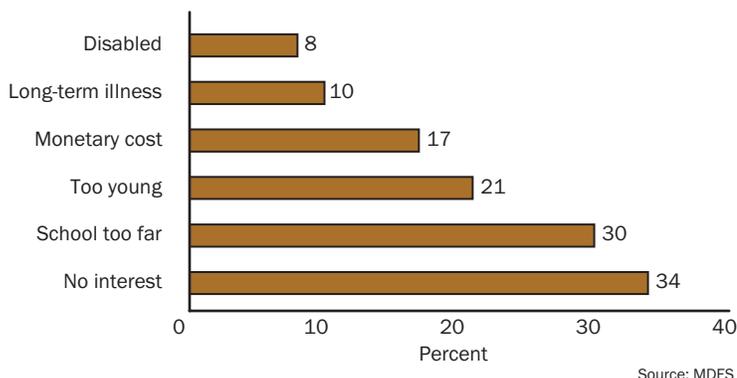
- In 2002, 76% of children age 6–13 attended primary school in the Southern region and 84% attended in the Central region, up from 54% (both regions) in 1992. In all four surveys, attendance rates were found to be highest in the Northern region, but have increased less over the decade—from 82% in 1992 to 93% in 2002.

In 2002, the percentage of school-age children attending primary school was slightly higher for males than for females in the Southern region.



Selected Factors in Not Attending School in 2002, among Children Who Have Never Attended School: 2002²

The 2002 DHS EdData Survey collected information from parent/guardians about why children who had never attended school did not attend school during the 2002 school year. The most commonly cited reason for a child not attending school was the child's lack of interest.

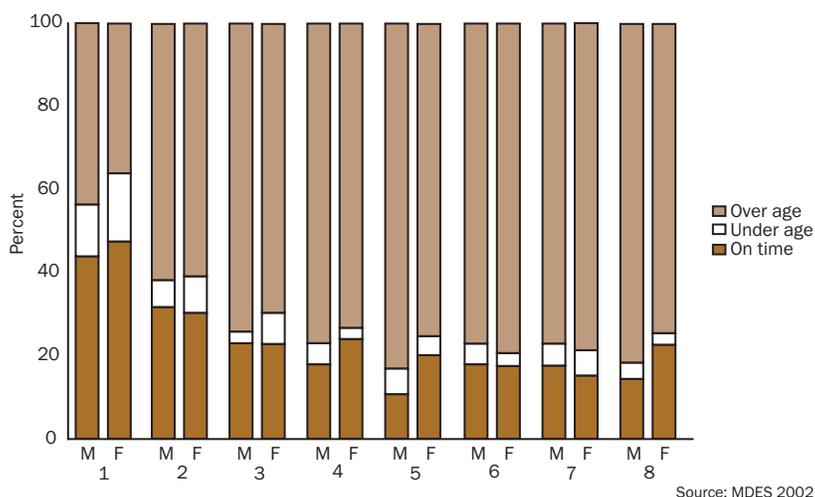


Source: MDES 2002

- 34% of children who had never attended school did not attend in 2002 because, according to their parents, the child was not interested in attending.
- Distance to school was cited as a factor in non-attendance for 30% of children.
- The parent's perception that a child was too young or not ready to attend school was listed as a reason for children not attending school for 21% of children.
- The monetary cost of schooling was cited as a factor for 17% of children.

² This figure shows the percentage of children for whom each factor partly explains the reasons for not attending school according to the child's parent/guardian. For each child, more than one factor may have been involved. As a consequence, percentages do not add to 100.

Over-age, Under-age, and On-time Students in Primary School: 2002



Source: MDES 2002

In 2002, 40% of grade 1 and 79% of grade 8 students were over age for the grade attended.

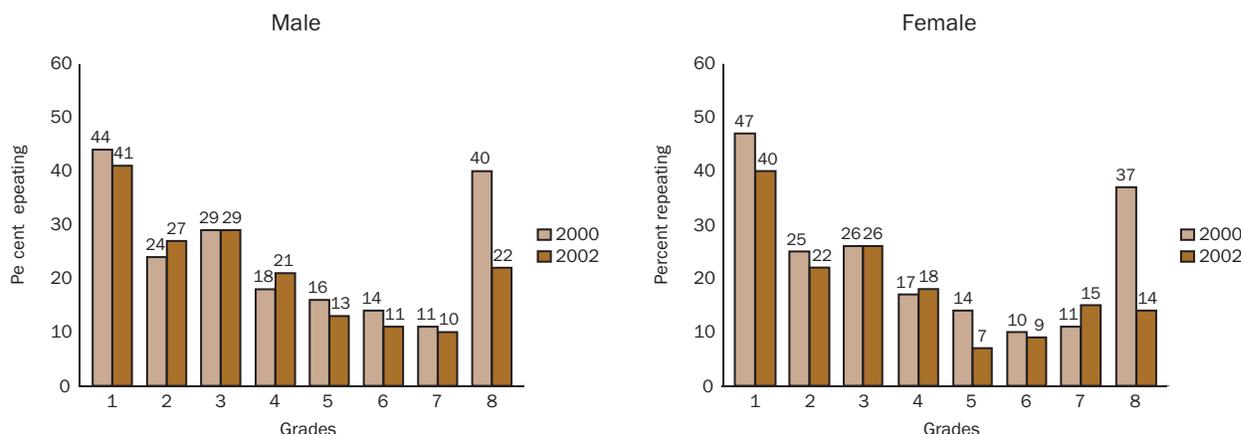
- In all four surveys, the percentage of students over age in grades 1 and 8 remained relatively constant (data from 1992, 1996, and 2000 not shown).
- In general, in 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002, male students were more likely than female students to be over age for the grade attended.

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 Malawi, 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: 2000 and 2002³

The percentage of males and females repeating grades was substantial in both 2000 and 2002, although there was a notable decline from 2000 to 2002 in the grade 8 repetition rate.

- In both 2000 and 2002, roughly 4 in 10 male and female students attending grade 1 were repeating that grade.
- In 2002, 22% of male and 14% of female students were repeating grade 8. These rates are an improvement from 2000, when 40% of male and 37% of female students were repeating that grade.

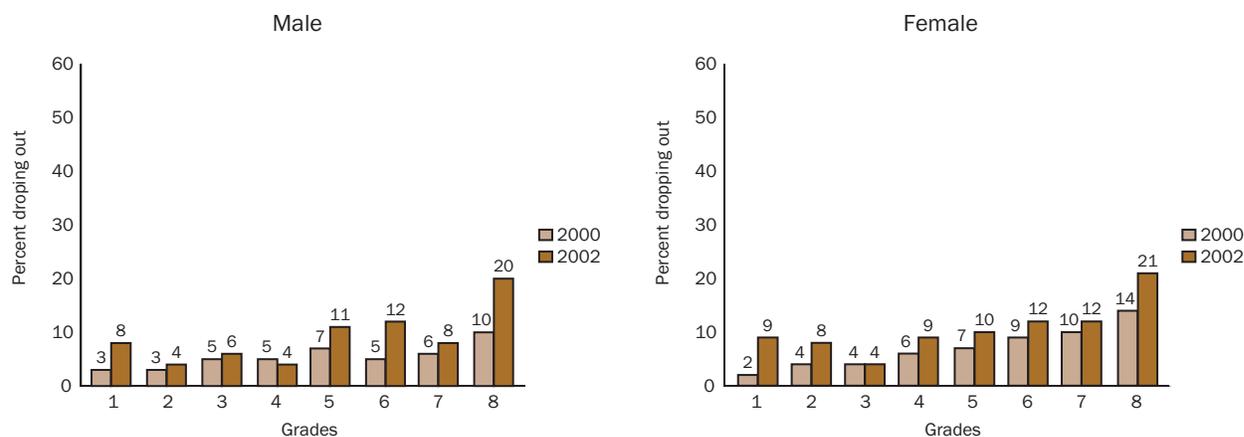


Source: MDHS 2000, MDES 2002

Primary School Dropout: 2000 and 2002³

The percentage of males and females dropping out of school was generally higher in 2002 than 2000.

- In 2002, the grade 1 dropout rate was 8% for males and 9% for females, up from 3% and 2% in 2000.
- From 2000 to 2002, the dropout rate in the final grade of primary school increased from 10% to 20% for males and from 14% to 21% for females.

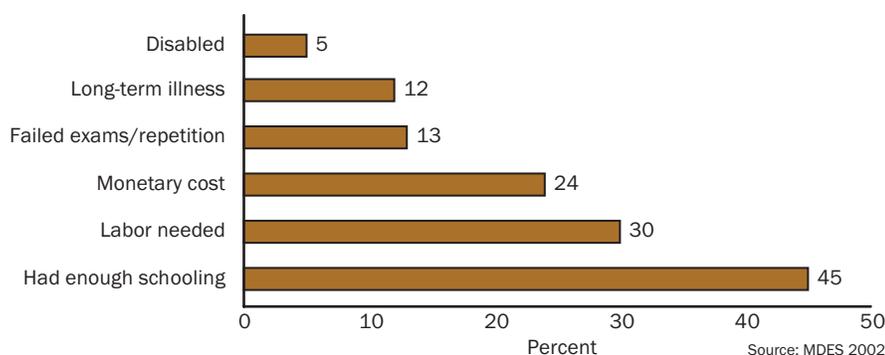


Source: MDHS 2000, MDES 2002

³ Repetition and dropout data are not available from the 1992 and 1996 surveys.

Selected Factors in Primary School Dropout: 2002⁴

The 2002 DHS EdData Survey collected information from parent/guardians about why children had dropped out of school. For nearly half of children who had dropped out of school, the perception that the child had completed enough schooling or no longer wanted to attend school, was a factor in dropping out.



- A child having completed enough schooling or no longer wanting to attend school was the most commonly cited reason (45%) for a child dropping out of school.
- The need for a child to do work in support of the household was a factor in dropout for 30% of children who had dropped out of school.
- For 1 in 4 dropouts, parents cited the monetary cost of schooling as a contributing factor.

⁴ This figure shows the percentage of children for whom each factor partly explains the reasons for dropping out according to the child's parent/guardian. For each child, more than one factor may have been involved. As a consequence, percentages do not add to 100.

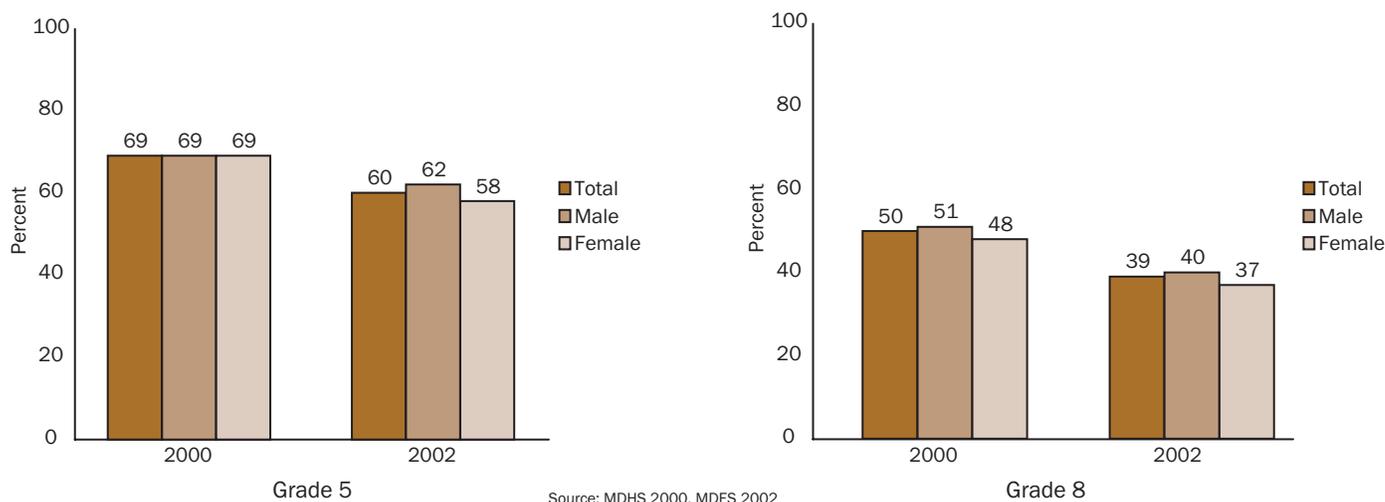
Survival to Grades 5 and 8: 2000 and 2002⁵

In 2002, 60% of primary school students who entered grade 1 could be expected to reach grade 5, with or without grade repetition. However, just 39% of those who entered grade 1 could be expected to reach grade 8.

- 62% of male and 58% of female students attending grade 1 could be expected to reach grade 5, while 40% of male and 37% of female students could be expected to reach grade 8.
- In urban areas, 76% of students attending grade 1 could be expected to reach grade 5 and 64% could be expected to reach grade 8, compared with 58% and 35% in rural areas (data not shown by urban-rural residence).

The projected survival rates in 2002 were lower than those projected in 2000, due largely to the increase in dropout rates by grade.

- In 2000, it was estimated that 69% of those entering grade 1 would reach grade 5 (versus 60% in 2002), and 50% would reach grade 8 (versus 39% in 2002).



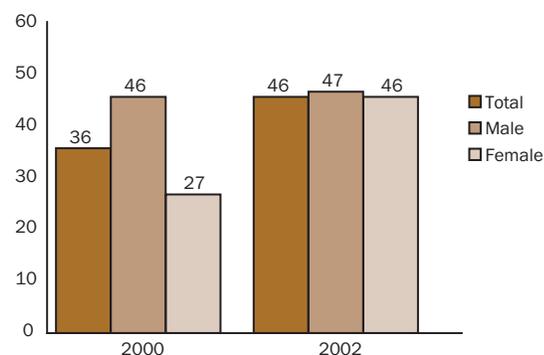
Survival rates use dropout and repetition rates to estimate the percentage of students starting grade 1 who will reach a subsequent grade. The calculation allows for a student to repeat a grade up to three times before assuming that the student then drops out (see Appendix for further detail).

⁵ Data on survival rates are not available from the 1992 and 1996 surveys.

Primary Completion Ratio: 2000 and 2002

Between 2000 and 2002, the overall primary school completion ratio increased. Among females, the primary school completion ratio increased dramatically, while the primary school completion ratio among males changed little.

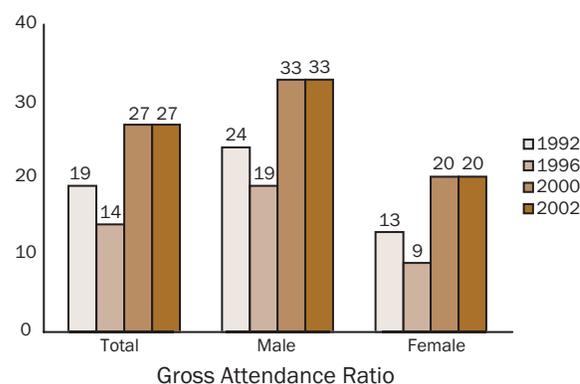
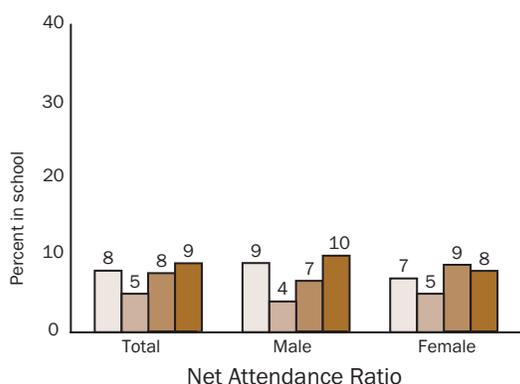
- In 2002, the primary school completion ratio was 46, compared to 36 in 2000.
- The completion rate among females rose from 27 in 2000, to 46 in 2002, suggesting an increase in persistence to the last grade of primary school. Among males, the primary school completion ratio was 46 in 2000, and 47 in 2002.



Source: MDHS 2000, MDES 2002

The Primary Completion Ratio is the total number of new entrants to the last grade of primary school, expressed as a percentage of the population of the target age for the last grade of primary. This ratio is a proxy for the completion of primary schooling. A high Completion Ratio indicates broad coverage of the school-age population, and a high degree of persistence to the end of primary. Because the Completion Ratio is not a percentage, it may exceed 100. Note that the calculation of this indicator differs from the calculation of the Adult Primary Completion Rate.

Secondary School Attendance Ratios: 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002



Source: MDHS 1992, 1996, 2000; MDES 2002

The net attendance ratio (NAR) is the percentage of the official secondary school-age population (age 14–17 in Malawi) 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 population.

Secondary Net Attendance Ratio (NAR)

The percentage of youth age 14–17 attending secondary school dropped from 1992 to 1996 before rebounding in 2000.

- In 2002, 9% of secondary school-age youth attended secondary school, compared to 8% in 2000, 5% in 1996, and 8% in 1992.

Secondary Gross Attendance Ratio (GAR)

Among students of all ages (gross attendance), rates of secondary attendance increased from 19 in 1992, to 27 in 2002. Despite increases in the gross attendance ratio over time, a gender disparity in favor of males persisted at the secondary level.

- In 2002, the gross attendance ratio (GAR) among males was 33, compared with 20 among females.

Secondary School Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) by Urban/Rural: 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002

In all four surveys, youth age 14–17 in urban areas were found to be much more likely than those in rural areas to attend secondary school.

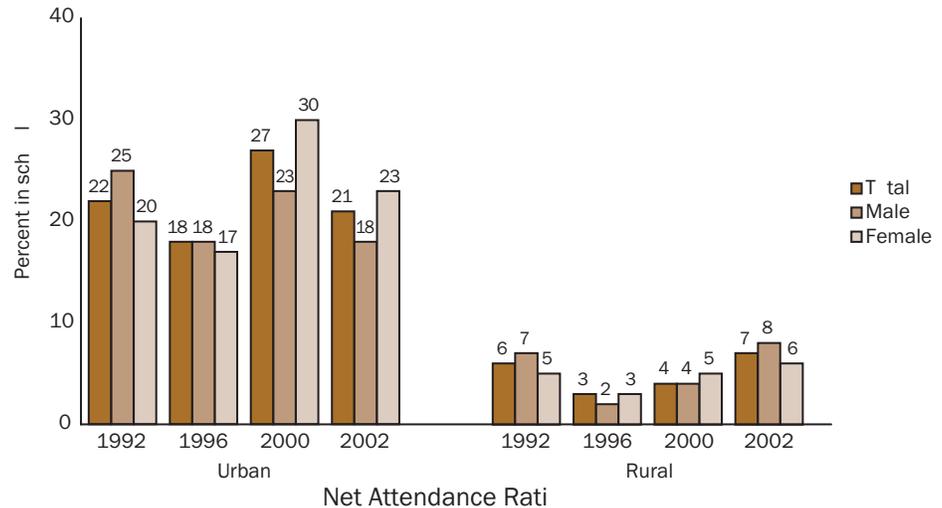
- In 2002, 21% of urban youth age 14–17 attended secondary school, compared to only 7% in rural areas.

From 1992 to 2002, in urban areas, rates of secondary school attendance among youth age 14–17 fluctuated.

- In urban areas, the rate of attendance among school-age youth was 22% in 1992, 18% in 1996, 27% in 2000, and 21% in 2002.

Similarly, the net attendance ratio in rural areas fluctuated slightly between 1992 and 2002.

- In rural areas, the rate of secondary attendance among school-age youth ranged from 3% in 1996 to 7% in 2002.



Source: MDHS 1992, 1996, 2000; MDES 2002

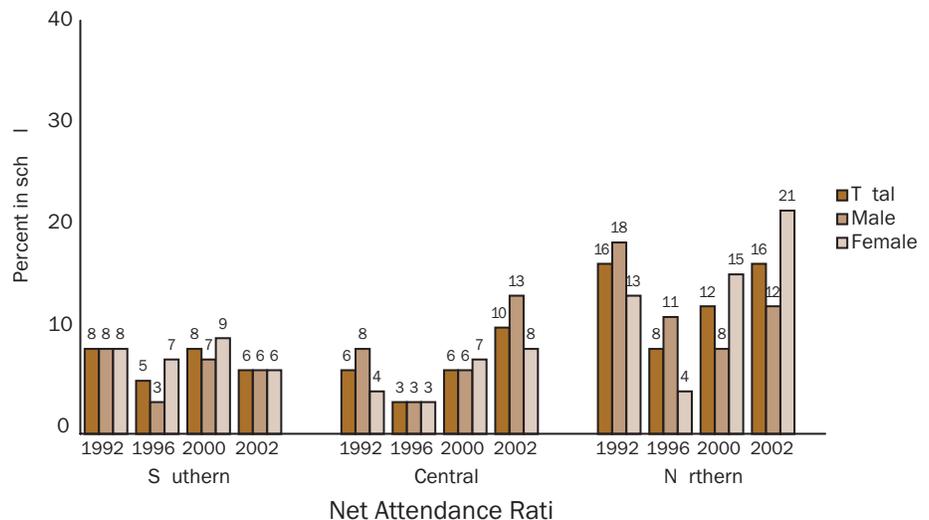
Secondary School Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) by Region: 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002

Secondary school net attendance ratios are low in all three regions in Malawi but are highest in the Northern region.

- In 2002, the secondary school net attendance ratio was 6% in the Southern region, 10% in the Central region, and 16% in the Northern region.
- Between 1992 and 2002, attendance decreased slightly in the Southern region (2 percentage points), and increased slightly in the Central region (4 percentage points).

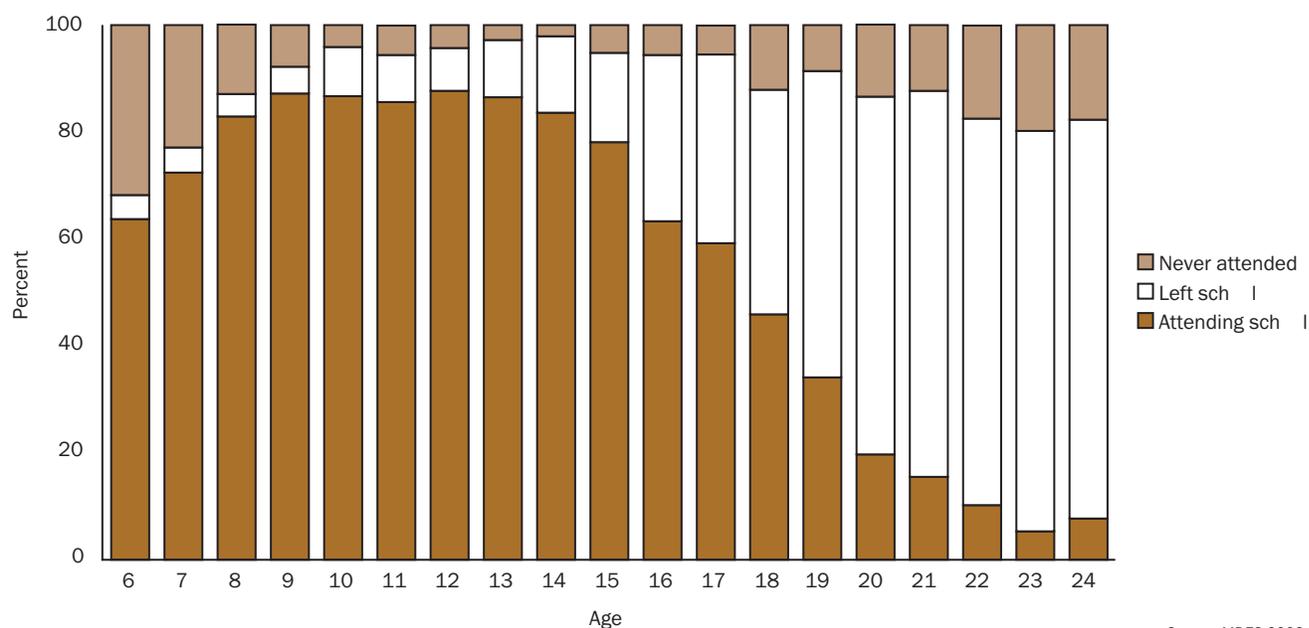
In 2002, there were no gender differences in the Southern region, but notable differences in the Central and Northern regions.

- Female youth age 14–17 in the Northern region were considerably more likely to attend secondary school than their male counterparts (21% versus 12%).



Source: MDHS 1992, 1996, 2000; MDES 2002

Schooling Status of Youth Age 6–24: 2002



Between 1992 and 2002, the percentage of youth attending school at the pre-primary, primary, secondary, or post-secondary levels increased (data from 1992, 1996, and 2000 not shown).

- Between 1996 and 2000, the percentage of youth attending school increased at each age from 6 to 24. However, between 2000 and 2002, the percentage of youth attending school at each age from 6 to 24 changed minimally.
- In 2002, the peak age of attendance was 12 with 88% of children age 12 attending school; the peak age range was 9–13.

The percentage of youth who had never attended school declined steadily from 1992 to 2002.

- In 2002, 31% of 6-year-olds had never attended school, down from 47% in 2000, 58% in 1996, and 66% in 1992.

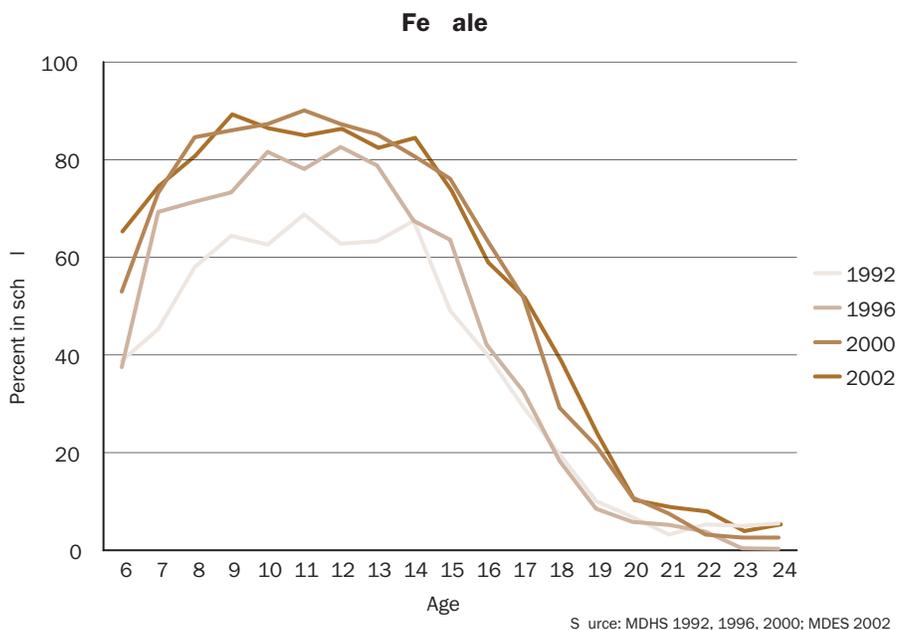
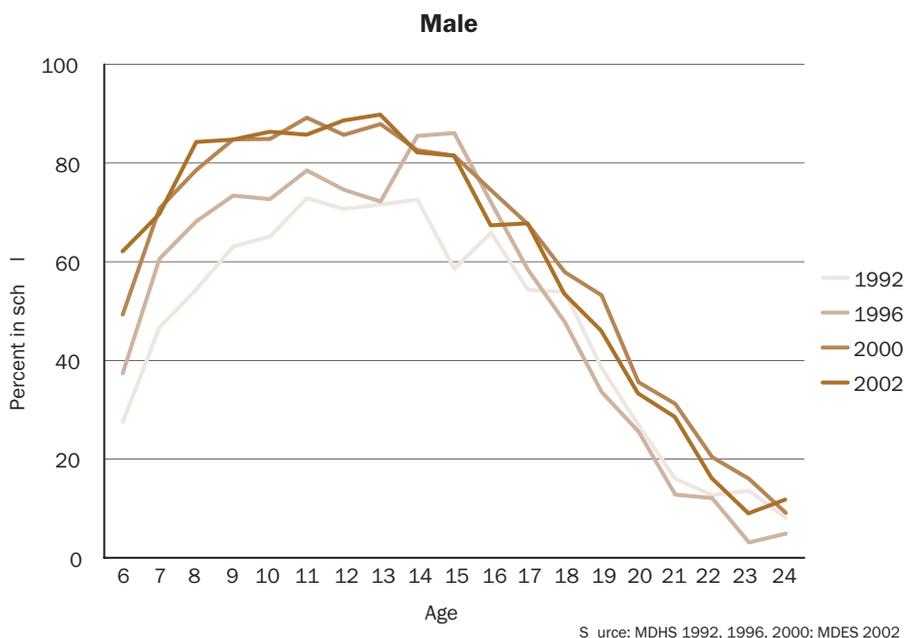
Age-Specific Attendance Rate by Sex: 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002

In 2002, the percentage of males and females attending school at any level was roughly the same up to age 14. Between ages 15 and 24, rates of attendance among female youth dropped below male attendance rates.

- In 2002, for both male and female youth, attendance peaked at 90%, at age 13 for males and at age 9 for females.
- The largest gender gap was at age 20, with male attendance at 33% and female attendance at 9%.

From 1996 to 2002, the rates of school attendance at any level increased for females at each age between 6 and 24; attendance rates increased for males at each age between 6 and 13.

- Between 1992 and 2002, female attendance increased markedly (from 29% to 51%) among 17-year-olds.
- In 2002, attendance rates remained low among older youth, with attendance rates declining around age 18 for both males and females.



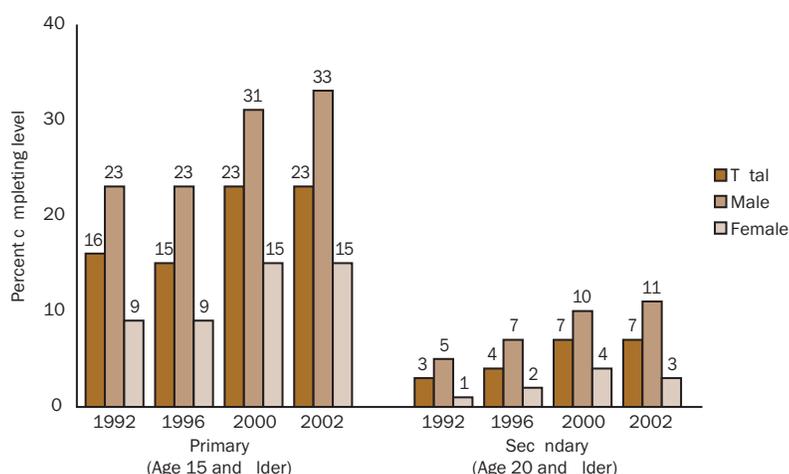
Adult Primary and Secondary School Completion Rates: 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002

Between 1992 and 2002, the percentage of the population age 15 and older that had completed primary school increased substantially. In spite of the increase, men remained more than twice as likely as women to have completed primary school.

- In 2002, 23% of the population 15 and older had completed primary school, up from 16% in 1992. In 2002, 33% of men and 15% of women had completed primary school.

The percentage of the population 20 and older that had completed secondary school increased slightly between 1992 and 2002. Again, the gender gap persisted despite the increase.

- The percentage of the population age 20 and older that completed secondary school increased from 3% to 7% between 1992 and 2002.
- In 2002, men were much more likely than women to have completed secondary school; 11% of men had completed the secondary level, compared to only 3% of women.



Source: MDHS 1992, 1996, 2000; MDES 2002

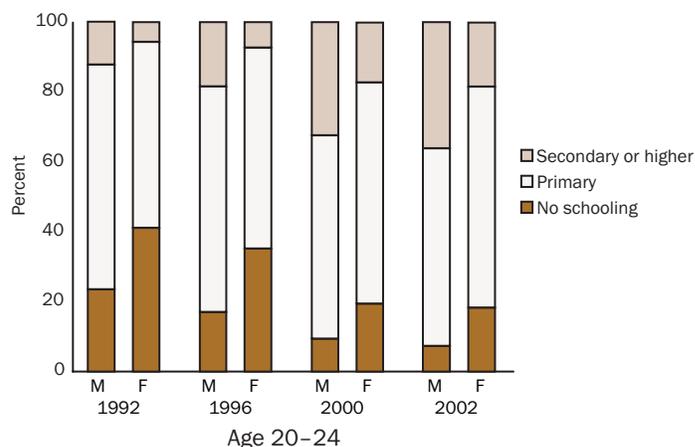
Adult Educational Attainment: 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002

Between 1992 and 2002, educational attainment increased steadily for adults age 20–24.

- In 1992, 23% of men age 20–24 had never attended school, compared with 17% in 1996, 9% in 2000, and 7% in 2002.
- In 1992, 41% of women age 20–24 had never attended school, compared with 35% in 1996, 19% in 2000, and 18% in 2002.

Primary school attainment has increased steadily for women. For men, primary school attainment has remained roughly the same while secondary attainment has climbed steadily.

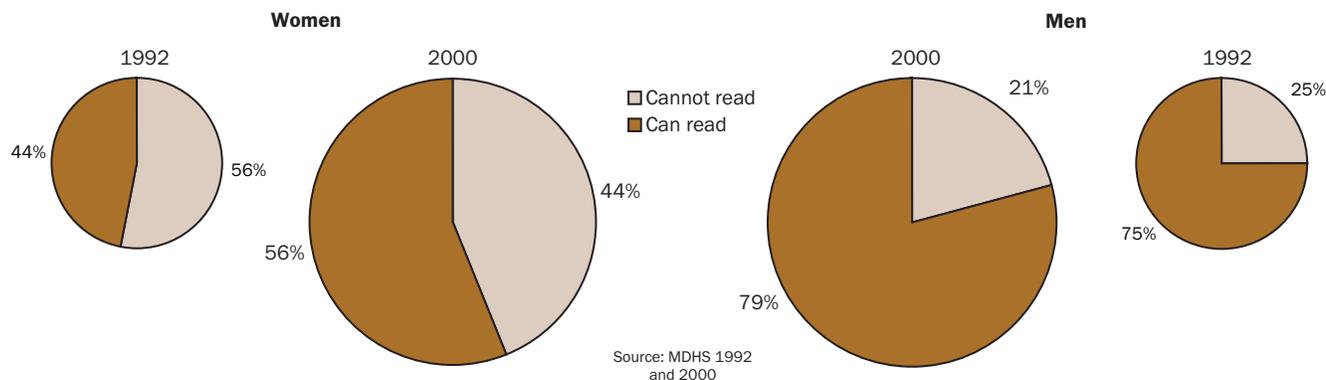
- Among women age 20 and older, in 1992, 42% had attended primary school or higher, compared with 49% in 1996, and 60% in 2000 and 2002 (data not shown for all age groups).
- Among men age 20 and older, in 1992, 74% had attended primary school or higher, compared with 76% in 1996, 82% in 2000, and 83% in 2002. At the same points in time, 10%, 13%, 20%, and 21% had attended secondary school or higher.



Source: MDHS 1992, 1996, 2000; MDES 2002

Literacy Among Women Age 15–49 and Men Age 15–54: 1992 and 2000

In 2000, 56% of women could read, compared to 79% of men. Between 1992 and 2000, women's literacy increased substantially, from 44% to 56%, and men's literacy increased slightly, from 75% to 79%⁶.

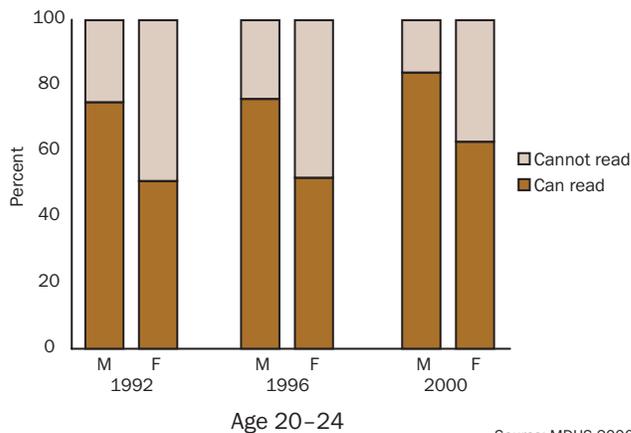


⁶ Among men and women who never attended school and those who attended primary school, literacy was self-reported in 1992 and 1996, and tested in 2000. In 2000, literacy was tested by asking the respondent to read a sentence in a language in which he/she was likely to be literate. Men and women who attended 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 (1992) or who were able to read (2000).

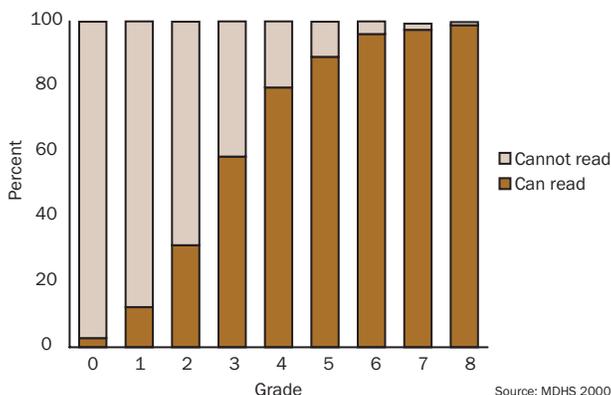
Literacy by Age: 1992, 1996, and 2000

Literacy has been increasing among adults.

- In 1992, 51% of women age 20–24 could read, compared with 52% in 1996, and 63% in 2000.
- In 2000, literacy was relatively high among men in all age ranges, from 72% among men age 45–49 to 84% among men age 20–24 (data not shown for all age ranges). Literacy among women varied more widely, ranging from 31% among women age 45–49 to 75% among women age 15–19.



Women's Literacy by Years of Primary School Completed: 2000



In 2000, 80% of women who had completed grade 4 could read and 99% of those who had completed grade 8 could read.

- Over time, the percentage of grade 4 completers who are literate has declined—from 92% in 1992 and 1996, to 80% in 2000 (data from 1992 and 1996 not shown).
- Between 1992 and 2000, there has been little change in the percentage of grade 8 completers who are literate.

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).

Primary School Completion Ratio

$$\frac{\text{number of new entrants (of any age) to the last grade of primary school}}{\text{number of people in the population at the target age for the last grade of primary school}}$$

The Primary Completion Ratio is the total number of new entrants to the last grade of primary school, expressed as a percentage of the population of the target age for the last grade of primary. This ratio is a proxy for the completion of primary schooling, and indicates both the degree of coverage in the school system and student attainment. A high Completion Ratio indicates broad coverage of the school-age population, and a high degree of persistence to the end of primary. Because the Completion Ratio is not a percentage, it may exceed 100. Note that the calculation of this indicator differs from the calculation of the Adult Primary Completion Rate.

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.

¹The 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:

John Hatch, USAID/EGAT/ED, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20523-4600 (Telephone: 202-712-0147; Email: jhatch@usaid.gov).

Elizabeth Appiah, USAID/EGAT/ED, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20523-4600 (Telephone: 202-712-5937; Email: eappiah@usaid.gov).

Tracy Brunette, USAID/AFR/SD, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20523-4600 (Telephone: 202-712-1847; Email: tbrunette@usaid.gov).

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>).

The Malawi Education Profile was created under the auspices of DHS EdData, a USAID activity dedicated to providing accurate and timely data for education policy and program planning, monitoring, and evaluation (contract number HNE-I-00-99-00298-00).

Suggested citation for this document: ORC Macro. 2004. *DHS EdData Education Profile: Malawi*. DHS EdData Education Profiles. Calverton, Maryland, USA: ORC Macro.

