

Goal: 2

Achieve Universal Primary Education



Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015

Status at a glance

Will target be reached by 2015?

Probably **Potentially** Unlikely Insufficient data

State of supportive environment

Strong **fair** Weak but improving Weak

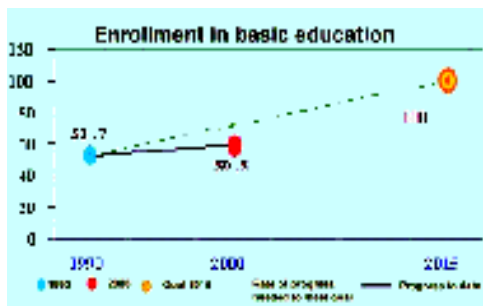
Indicators	1990	2000	2015
Average net enrolment rate in primary education (%)	52.7	59.5	100
Children reaching fifth class (%)	65.3	75.1	100

Source: Ministry of Education

1 Current status and trends

Official and public efforts in the 1990s resulted in an increase in primary education net enrolment rate from 52.7% in 1990 to 59.5% in 2000.

This means that a significant proportion of children at school age (6-14 years) are not enrolled in primary education, and are likely to join the ranks of the illiterate population in the near future.



Average net enrolment rates differ from a governorate to another. The majority of governorates have registered a net enrolment rate of less than 50% as compared to the national net enrolment rate, except for Aden, where the net enrolment rate was 85.7% in the year 2000 compared to 20.8% in Sa'ada governorate. This huge disparity requires tremendous efforts and resources to bridge the enrolment gap.

Gender-based disparity demonstrates itself clearly when comparing the net enrolment rates for boys and girls. The net enrolment rate among girls for the same age-group

(6-14 years) is 44.7%, in comparison with 72.2% for boys.

Moreover, disparity in enrolment rates for the same age group is higher in rural than in urban areas. The enrolment rate among urban girls is 73.2%, as opposed to 29.5% in rural areas. The same applies to boys, whose enrolment rate in urban areas is 89.2%, compared with 78.9% in rural areas. Rural girls are mainly engaged in water fetching and firewood collection.

The data at hand indicates that the highest class repetition rates can be found in the fourth primary class, mainly 14%, while the percentage of students reaching class five was 75.1% in 2000.

The average of failure and class repetition is estimated at 11%. This means that instead of taking nine years to complete the primary stage, it takes classes repeating boys 11 years to complete this stage, while it takes girl students a longer period. This, in turn, is a waste of limited financial and human resources. However, the number of successful students advancing from primary to secondary education has increased from 73.6% in 1990 to 77.1% in 2000. This, by itself, signals a remarkable achievement in the education system.

In conclusion, these indicators suggest that Yemen is still far from achieving the Universal Primary Education goal by 2015, unless major qualitative steps to advance



basic education for both girls and boys are implemented. This, in turn, requires expansion in the construction of school buildings, and improving facilities in school buildings. It also requires increasing the number of female and male teachers and providing them with incentives for rural education, as well as improving quality of education and school curricula.

2 Challenges

Primary education is facing several shortfalls and difficulties, of which:

1. Failure to provide adequate educational services: This is reflected in the sharp disparity between urban and rural areas in terms of provision of educational services, particularly among girls and other factors such as insufficient girls schools, schools location far away from the population concentration and lack of awareness about girls education among rural parents;
2. Poverty: The low levels of income lead to downsizing of families expenditure on children education;
3. Basic Services: Lack of basic services such as water and collection of fire wood has negatively affected girls education in rural areas;
4. Negative attitudes towards girl's education: Data available indicates that 55.3% of girls at school age (6-14 years) were not enrolled at schools, as compared to 22% for boys. This is due to prevailing misconceptions among some Yemeni families that girls' education is not as important as boys' education;
5. Internal inefficiency: Reflected in the form of high drop-out rates and class repetition, both of which are major problems facing the education system;
6. Low quality of curricula: School curricula focus on theoretical fields of knowledge at the expense of skills and practical aspects, thus negatively contributing to the low quality of education and making it irrelevant for future prosperity; and
7. Weak institutional capacity: Inability of primary education to address existing shortfalls such as overcrowded classes in urban areas, poorly-equipped school buildings (40% of schools are not suitable), improper distribution of teachers, lack of female teachers especially in rural areas, shortage of classrooms and shortage of

financial resources badly needed to address shortfalls and carry out the necessary maintenance for existing school buildings and classrooms

3 Supportive environment (policies and programmes)

The Basic Education Strategy outlined the State's commitment to ensure basic education for all school-age children, and to expand and upgrade education in the later stages. The Strategy also reiterated the goal of reforming and developing basic education. Yemen's Strategic Vision (2025) aims at publicizing basic education and introducing structural changes to the educational system, with a view to enabling it to cope with scientific and technological developments and to meet the future educational needs of the country. The Second Five-Year Development Plan has pledged continued State support for the education sector, through the financial allocations for schools construction, and increasing allocations for operations and maintenance of schools. The plan also aimed at increasing the net enrolment rates in the first class by 12% and increasing the gross registration rate to 69.1%.

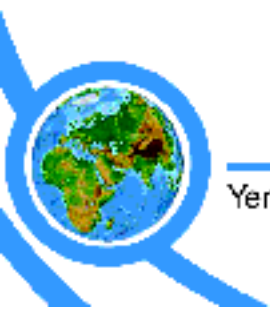
The Poverty Reduction Strategy has also focused on basic education and on making it accessible to all as part of basic human rights. It also stressed the need to raise girls' enrolment rates to 69.1% at the school age (6-14 years) by 2005. The strategy advocates for a 10% increase in public spending on basic education and stresses the need to pursue the educational sector reform.

By adopting these measures and Programmes, Yemen has committed itself to making every possible effort to achieve Universal Primary Education goal, or to come as close as possible by the year 2015, should assistance be forthcoming.

4 Priorities for development assistance

Development assistance priorities should focus on improving the education sector and making basic education compulsory, through the following measures:

1. Develop the educational sector's institutional capacity at all levels, in



- an effort to support the Education Reform Programme, which has already commenced with support from development partners;
2. Improve and expand basic education, with a view to extending it to the rural areas, with particular focus on girls. This entails closer coordination with donors to maximize the utilization of loans and aid for improving the basic education sector;
 3. Increase the number of female teachers with greater focus to rural areas and improve rural teachers' package;
 4. Improve school buildings at all levels with appropriate facilities and increased initiative in rural areas;
 5. Improve basic education curricula including utilization of Information Technology (IT) and training material for teachers; and
 6. Introduce appropriate measures to overcome a problem of overcrowded classrooms, especially in urban areas.

5 Achieving Universal Primary Education: Monitoring and Evaluation Environment

Elements of monitoring environment Assessment	Assessment		
	Strong	Fair	Weak
Data gathering capacities			
Quality of recent survey information			
Statistical tracking capacities			
Statistical analysis capacity			
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms			
Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms			

6 The Financial Resources Needed to Achieve the Goal

Yemen faces several challenges in achieving Universal Primary Education goal as described in the previous section.

The following cost analysis shows the financial resources required to cover the costs of school buildings construction and rehabilitation, recruitment of female and male teachers, purchasing textbooks and furniture, in addition to operation and

maintenance costs. The table below shows the amount of resources required for the period 2001/15.

Resources (in millions US Dollars)	Total		Annual Average	
	2001-2005	2006-2015	2001-2005	2006-2015
Total resources required	6,873	22,479	1,375	2,248
Total public expenditure	2,193	7,048	439	705
Additional resources required (financial gap)	4,680	15,431	936	1,543

