Iraq Education Fact Sheets | 2020

Analyses for learning and equity using MICS data

MICS-EAGLE

unicef
for every child

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

What is MICS?

UNICEF launched Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) in 1995 to monitor the status of children around the world. Over the past twenty-five years, this household survey has become the largest source of statistically sound and internationally comparable data on women and children worldwide, and more than 330 MICS surveys have been carried out in more than 115 countries

MICS surveys are conducted by trained fieldworkers who perform face-to-face interviews with household members on a variety of topics. MICS was a major data source for the Millennium Development Goals indicators and continues to inform more than 150 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) indicators in support of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda

MICS has been updated several times with new and improved questions. The current version, MICS6, was deployed in 2017 and is being implemented in 58 countries. MICS6 includes new modules that track SDG4 indicators related to education such as learning (SDG4.1.1), Early Childhood Development and Education (SDG4.2.1 and SDG4.2.2), information and communication technology skills (ICT—SDG4.4.1), and child functioning (child disability—SDG4.5.1), as well as parental involvement in education

What is MICS-EAGLE?

UNICEF launched the MICS-EAGLE (Education Analysis for Global Learning and Equity) Initiative in 2018 with the objective of improving learning outcomes and equity issues in education by addressing two critical education data problems – gaps in key education indicators, as well as lack of effective data utilization by governments and education stakeholders. MICS-EAGLE is designed to:

- Support education sector situation analysis and sector plan development by building national capacity, and leveraging the vast wealth of education data collected by MICS6; and

- Build on the global data foundation provided by MICS6 to yield insights at the national, regional, and global level about ways to ensure each child can reach his or her full potential by reducing barriers to opportunity.

What is profiling?

One of the characteristics of this fact sheet is profiling. Profiling illustrates the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of children in a certain category. Profiling answers questions such as "what percentage of a key population group is male and what percentage is female?" or "what percentage of a key population group lives in rural and what percentage lives in urban areas?" Because profiles examine all children within a key population group, the sum of various characteristics always adds up to 100 per cent

For example, a profile of children not completing primary education will show what the main characteristics of children in the key population group for this indicator are. As primary completion rates look into children aged 5–3 years older than the entry age for children for the last grade of primary school, the target population will be children aged 16–14 years who have not completed primary education. In Iraq, 47 per cent of children of the key population group not completing primary education are male, therefore 53 per cent have to be female. In turn, 57 per cent of children of the target population not completing primary education live in urban areas, therefore 43 per cent live in rural areas

How is this fact sheet structured?

The MICS-EAGLE initiative offers activities at the national, regional, and global level. The seven topics listed below are analyzed through an equity lens (gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, etc.):

Access and Completion

Skills
(learning outcomes, ICT skills and literacy rate)

Inclusive Education
(with a focus on disability)

Early Learning

Out-of-School Children

Repetition and Dropouts
(internal efficiency)

Child Protection
(child labour and child marriage)

Topic 1 Completion

Guiding questions

1. In which level of education is completion rate the lowest?
2. What are the characteristics of children who do not complete each level of education?
3. What regions have the lowest completion rates at each level?
4. What is the profile of children who did not complete each level of education?

Overview

FIGURE 1 Overview of completion rates

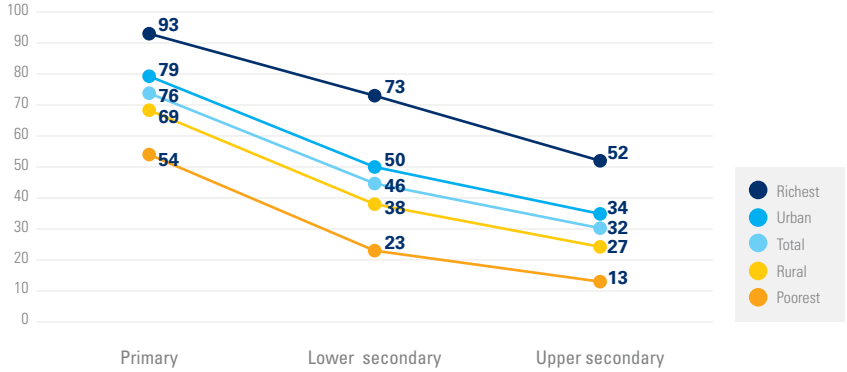


FIGURE 2 Primary education completion rate

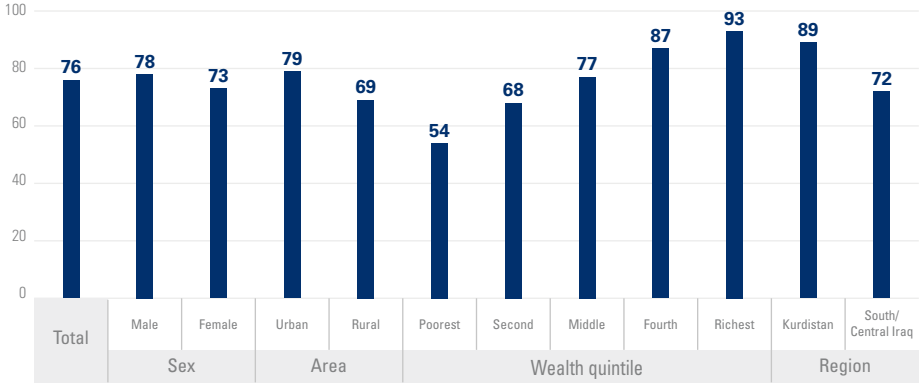


FIGURE 3 Lower secondary education completion rate

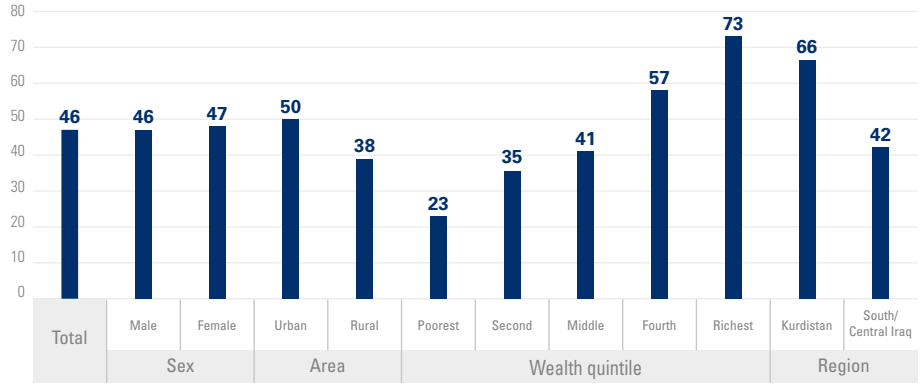
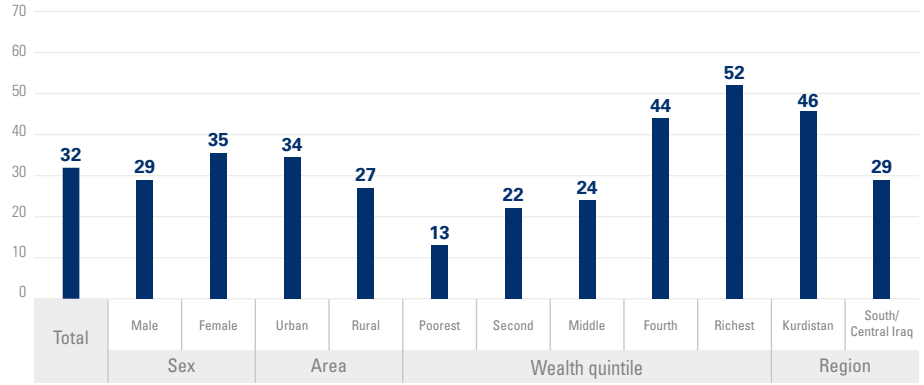
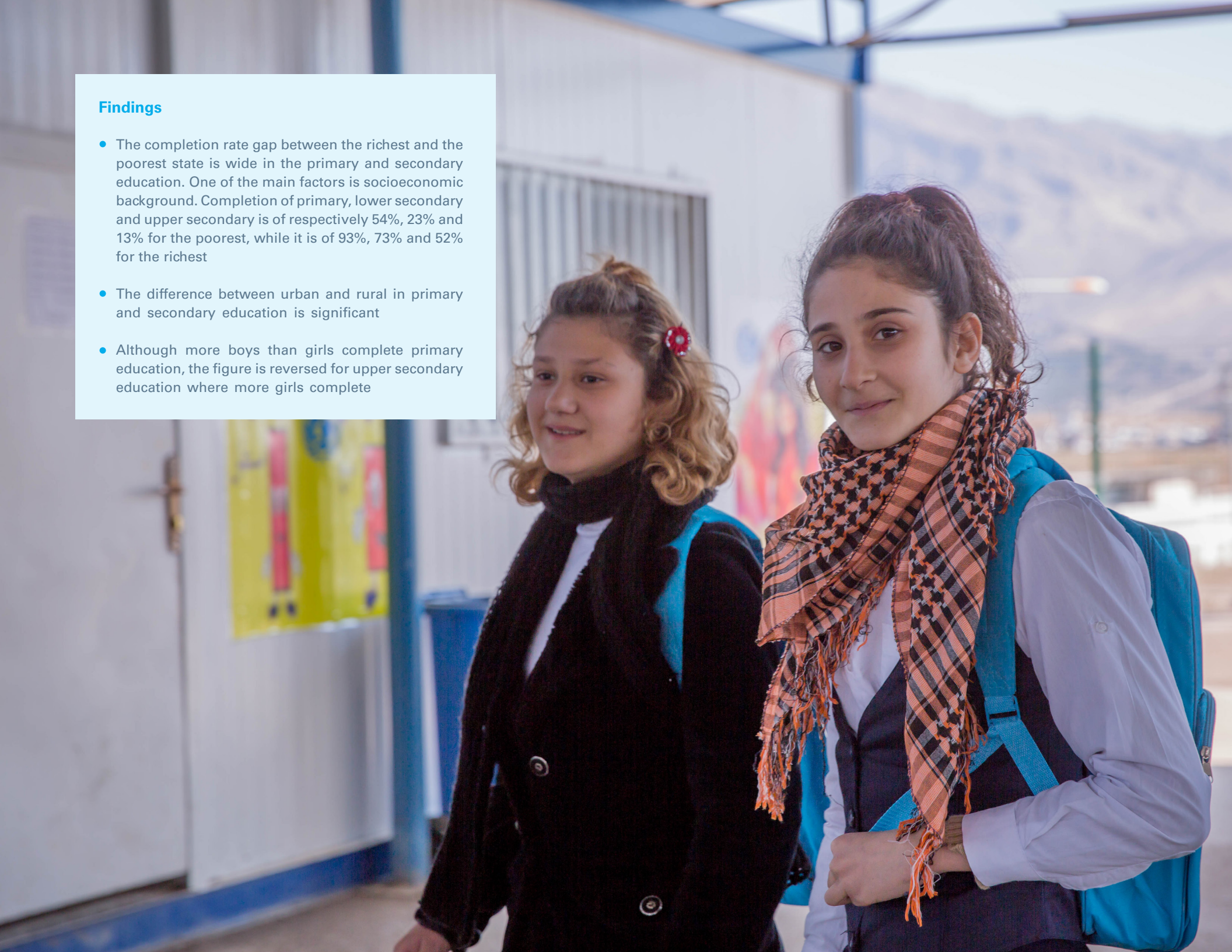


FIGURE 4 Upper secondary education completion rate





Findings

- The completion rate gap between the richest and the poorest state is wide in the primary and secondary education. One of the main factors is socioeconomic background. Completion of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary is of respectively 54%, 23% and 13% for the poorest, while it is of 93%, 73% and 52% for the richest
- The difference between urban and rural in primary and secondary education is significant
- Although more boys than girls complete primary education, the figure is reversed for upper secondary education where more girls complete

Regional disaggregation

FIGURE 5 Primary completion rate

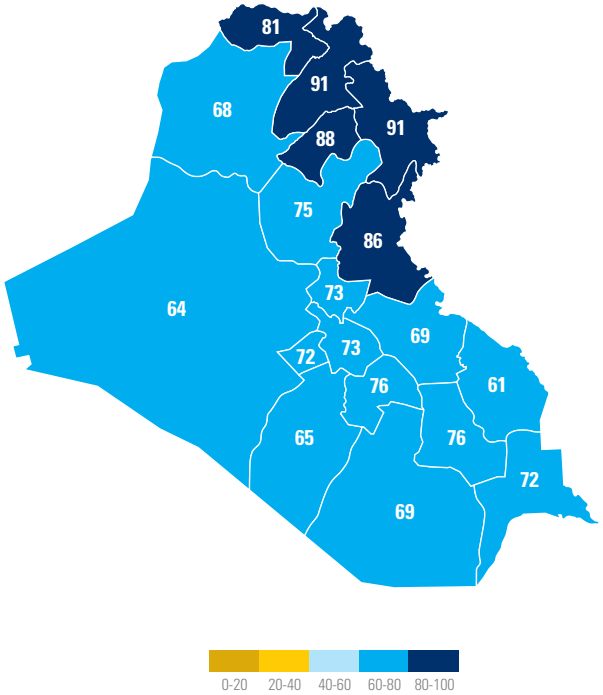


FIGURE 6 Lower secondary completion rate

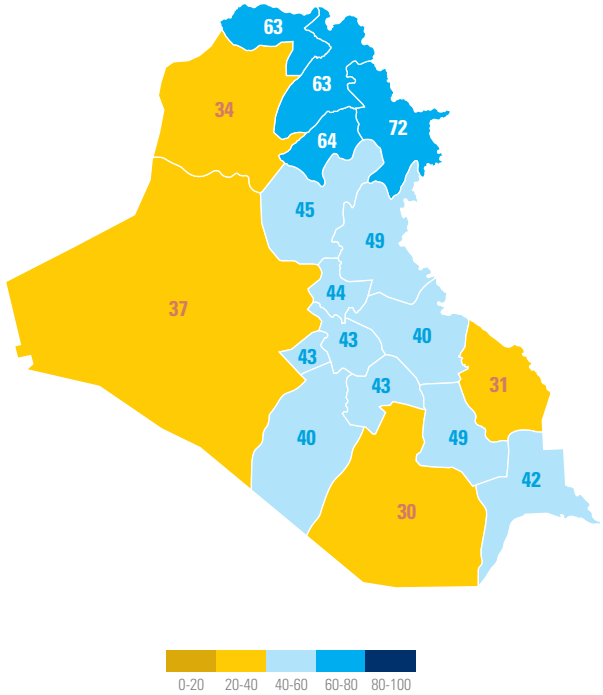
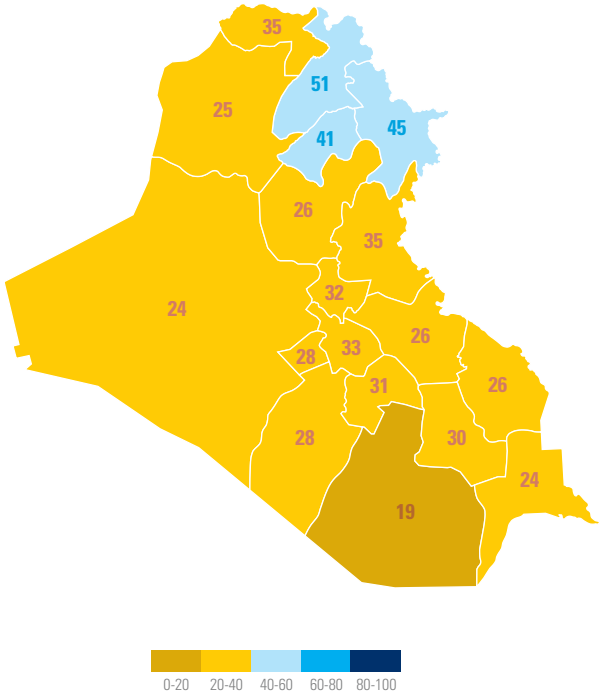


FIGURE 7 Upper secondary completion rate



Findings

- The Northeast areas of the country have much higher completion rates at all levels of education than the south and western parts
- In Muthana and Missan governorates, the gaps in both primary and lower secondary is the widest compared to other governorates in Iraq

Profile of children not completing school

FIGURE 8 Profiling of children who do not complete school, by sex

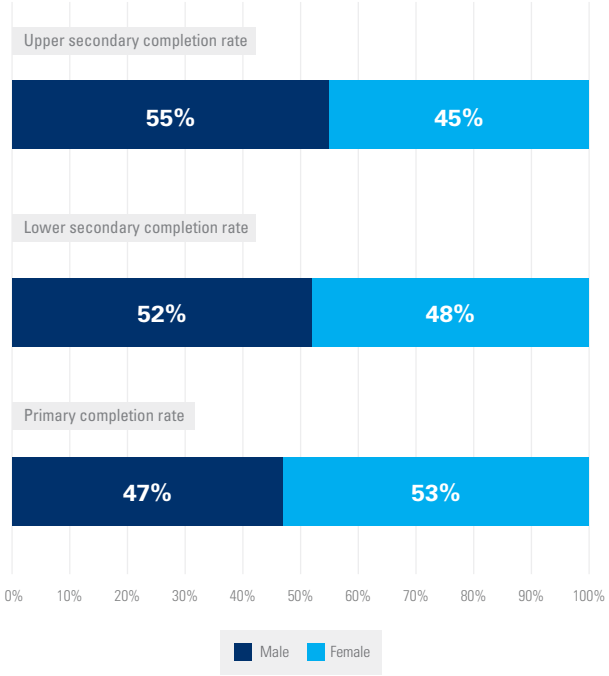


FIGURE 9 Profiling of children who do not complete school, by area

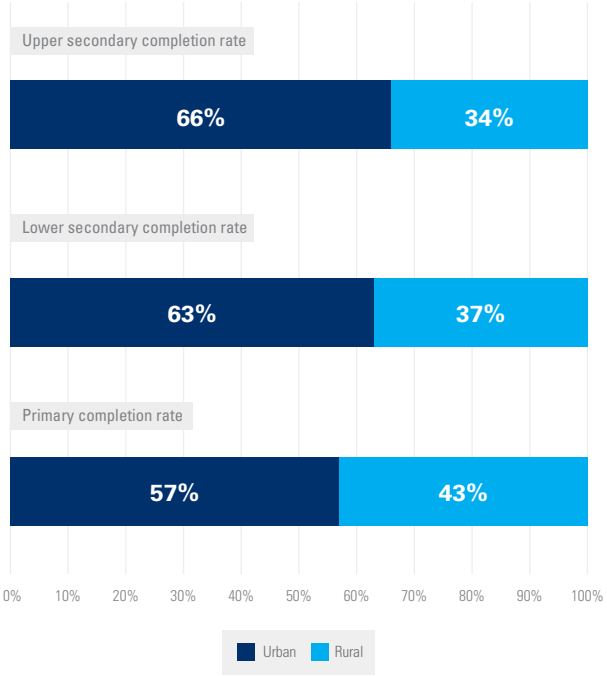
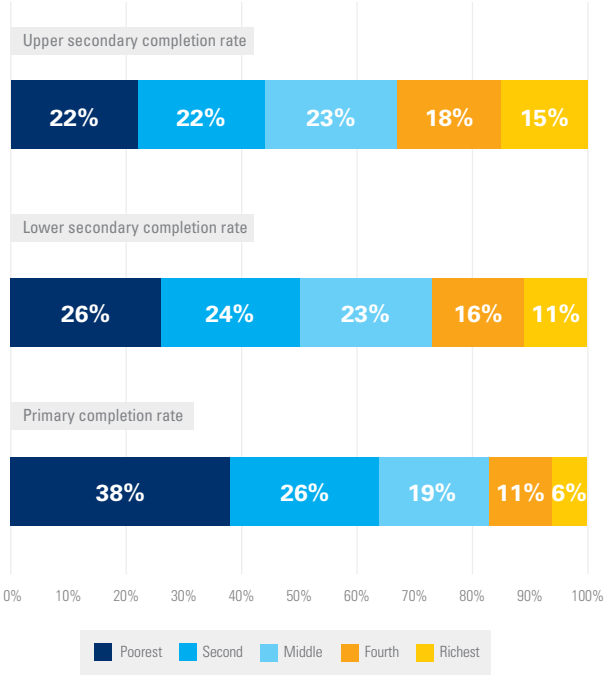


FIGURE 10 Profiling of children who do not complete school, by wealth quintile



Findings

- Among children who do not complete school at primary level, there are more girls than boys, while the figure is reversed for upper secondary
- As the country is more urban, although completion rates are higher in urban areas, most children who did not complete education also live in those areas
- The disparity between the poorest and the richest quantile for not completing primary is wide, especially in primary education, where children from the poorest quintile account to 38% of all children who did not complete school

TABLE 1: Shares & headcounts by various socioeconomic characteristics

		Completion rates (%)			Headcount of children who did not complete		
		Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary
Total		76	46	32	617	1291	1562
Sex	Male	78	46	29	292	663	855
	Female	73	47	35	325	627	707
Area	Urban	79	50	34	354	807	1030
	Rural	69	38	27	263	483	532
Wealth quintile	Poorest	54	23	13	234	341	149
	Second	68	35	22	160	310	345
	Middle	77	41	24	118	296	364
	Fourth	87	57	44	67	205	276
	Richest	93	73	52	38	139	228
Governorate	Duhok	81	63	35	17	34	55
	Nainawa	68	34	25	68	138	144
	Sulaimaniya	91	72	45	12	38	62
	Kirkuk	88	64	41	12	32	40
	Erbil	91	63	51	19	70	92
	Diala	86	49	35	21	70	79
	Anbar	64	37	24	38	61	72
	Baghdad	73	44	32	104	218	267
	Babil	73	43	33	34	67	72
	Karbalah	72	43	28	22	39	52
	Wasit	69	40	26	30	54	62
	Salahaddin	75	45	29	19	44	56
	Najaf	65	40	28	32	52	68
	Qadisyah	76	43	31	21	45	50
	Muthana	69	30	19	22	59	74
	Thiqar	76	49	30	41	86	110
	Misan	61	31	26	42	74	71
	Basrah	72	42	24	63	112	135
Region	Kurdistan	89	66	46	49	141	210
	South/ Central Iraq	73	42	29	568	1149	1353

*Headcounts are based on UNSD statistics, they can be calculated using other data sources if the country requests.

Topic 2 Skills

Guiding questions

1. What is the percentage of each group of young people that are literate?
2. What is the percentage of each group of young people has ICT skills?

Literacy and ICT skills (Women)

FIGURE 10 Youth (15-24 years-old) literacy rates

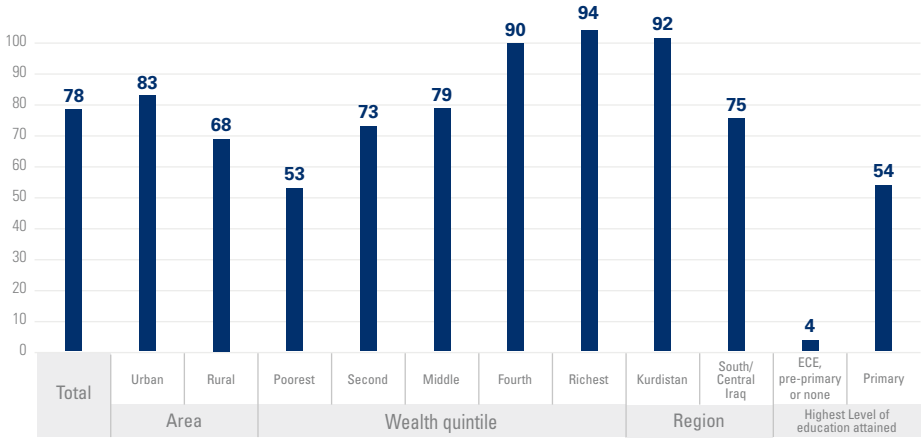
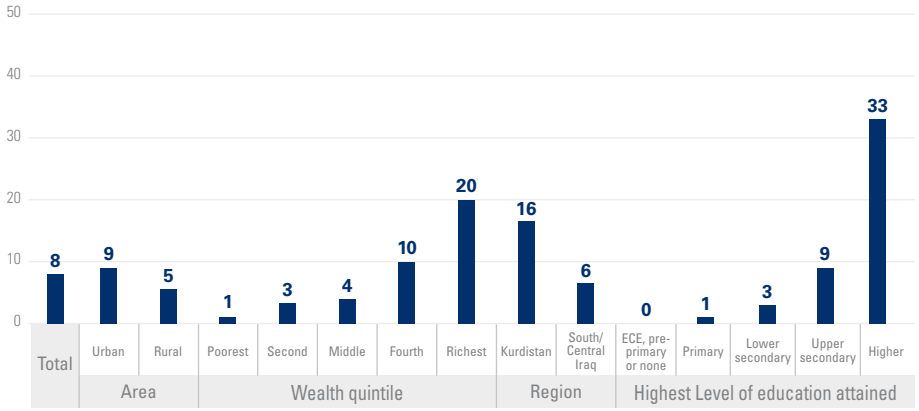


FIGURE 11 Youth (15-24 years-old) ICT skills



Findings

- It can be observed that there is a widening gap between the poorest and the richest stratum of the society in terms of literacy, hence it can be suggested that more emphasis should be placed on the areas where populations are living in the highest levels poverty
- Only 9% those who attained upper secondary schools have the foundational ICT skills, while none of those who did not attend education have such skills. The gap between poorest (1%) and richest (20%) is even wider

Topic 3 Out of School Children

Guiding questions

1. Which level of education has the highest out-of-school children rate?
2. How many children are out of school?
3. What regions have the highest out of school rates?
4. Where do most children out of school live and what is their background?

Overview

FIGURE 12

Overview on out-of-school rates

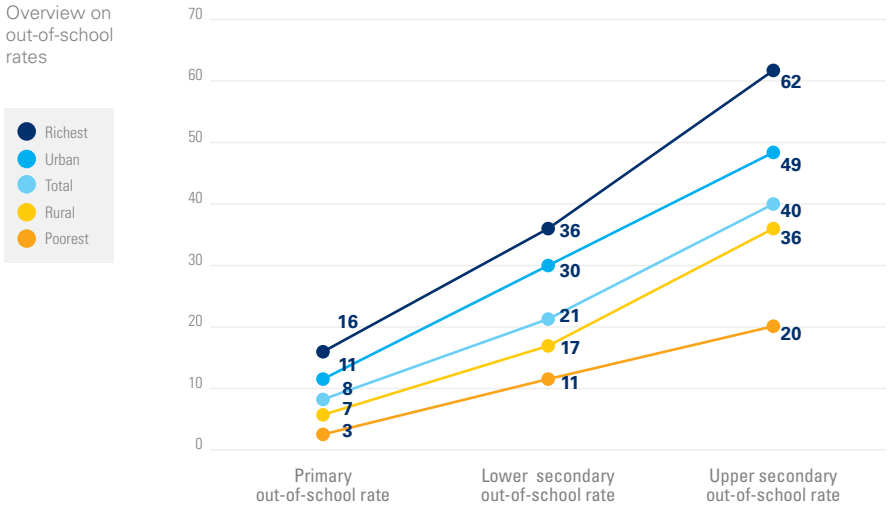
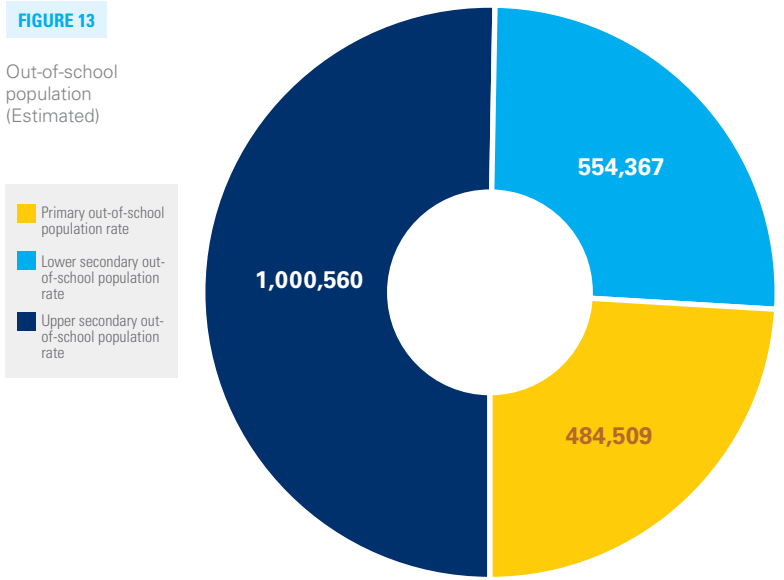


FIGURE 13

Out-of-school population (Estimated)



Findings

- The gap between the poorest and the ricest is very strong for all levels of education, and it widens for upper secondary education where 20% of the poorest are out of school, while out of school rates are 62% for the richest
- There are 2 million out of school children in the country, half of which should be attending primary education

Profile of children not completing school

FIGURE 14 Out-of-school rate for children of primary education age

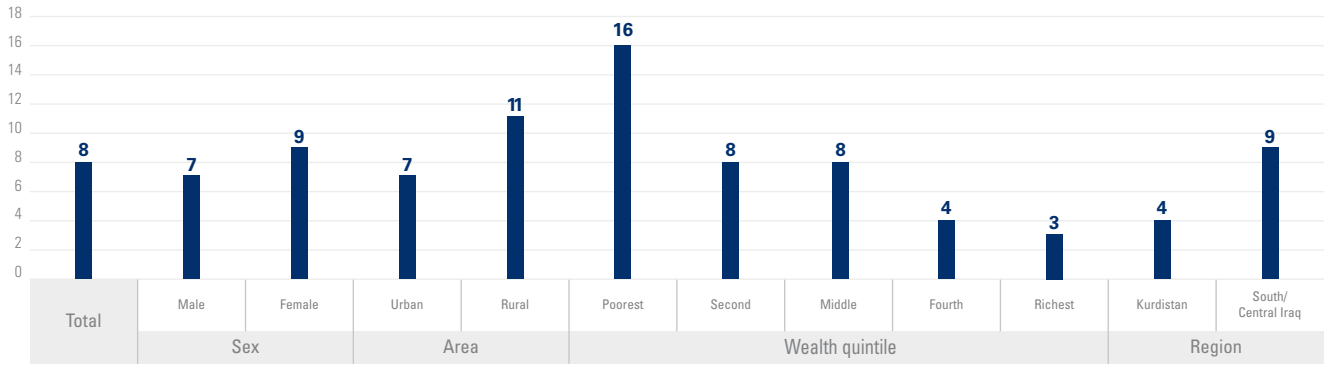


FIGURE 15 Out-of-school rate for children of lower secondary education age

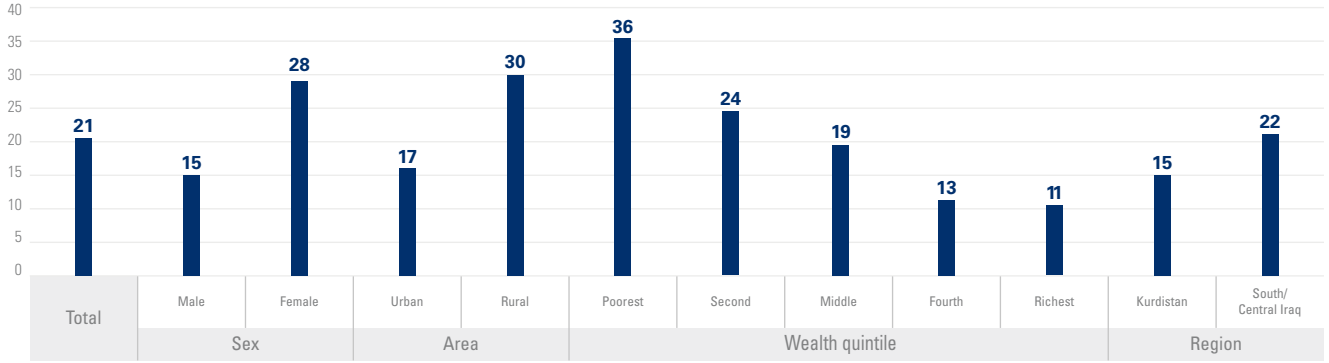
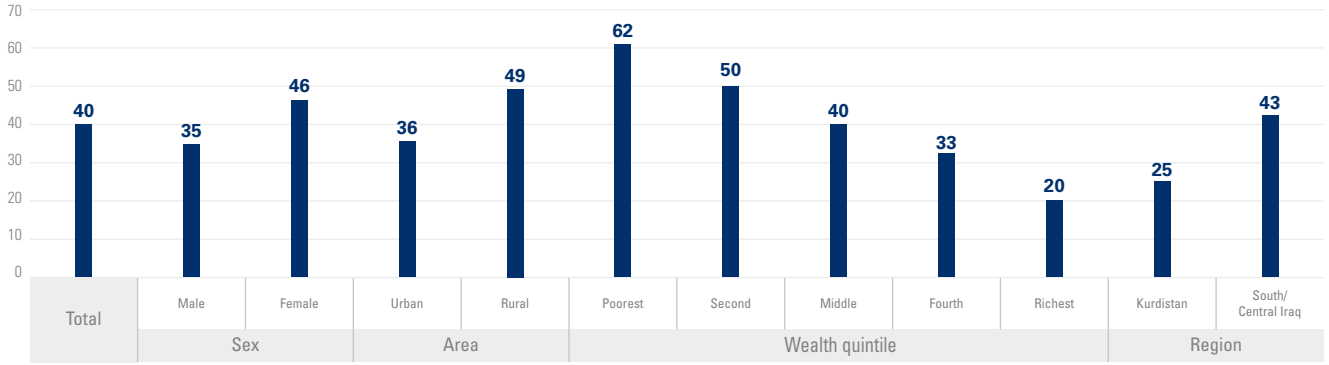


FIGURE 16 Out-of-school rate for children of upper secondary education age



Findings

- For all levels of education, the rate of out of school children is higher for rural than urban areas. Many variables can be in play, including transportation and availability of schools nearby
- Socioeconomic background is also a strong driver of inequality in terms of access to education. While 16% of children of primary school age are out of school among the poorest households, it is the case of only 3% of children from the richest families
- In all levels of education, girls have higher out-of-school rate than boys. This is particularly true for children who should be attending upper secondary education, where 46% of girls are out of school versus 35% of boys

Regional disaggregation

FIGURE 17 Primary out-of-school children

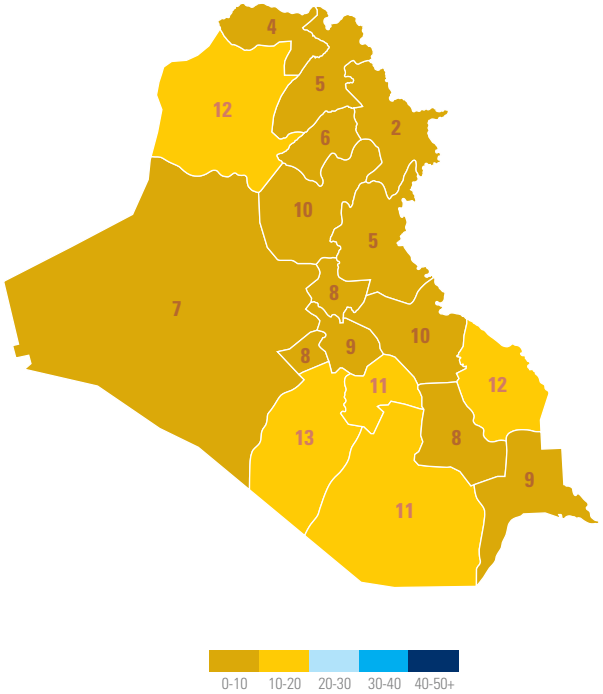


FIGURE 18 Lower secondary out-of-school children

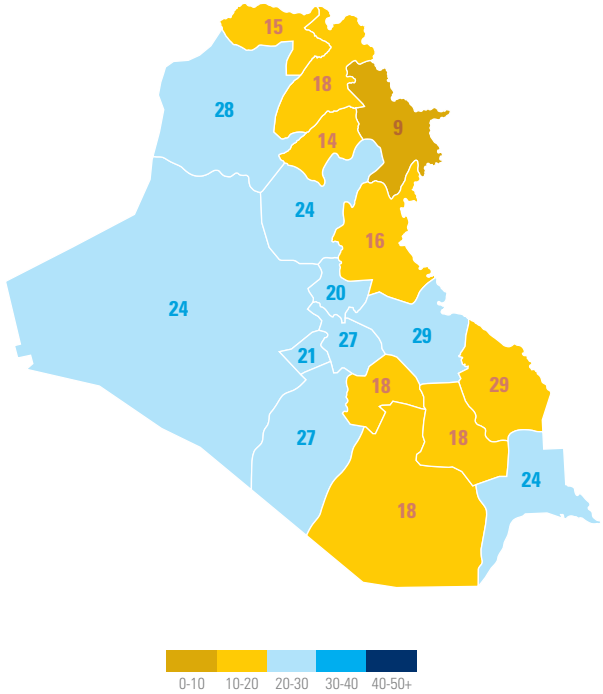
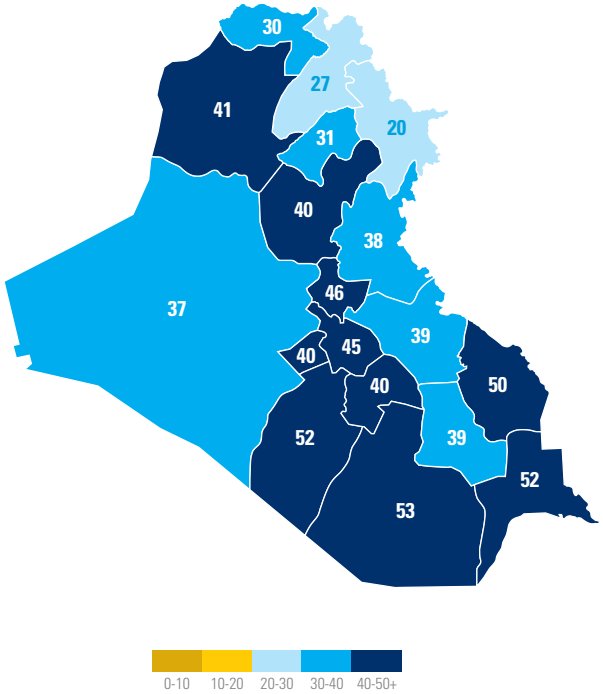


FIGURE 19 Upper secondary out-of-school children



Findings

- The southern provinces of Iraq have many more children out of school as a percentage of the population than the north. The gap between north and south is even more strikingly in Upper secondary education. In Najaf, Muthana and Basrah, for example, more than half of children who should be attending upper secondary education are actually not in school. In contrast, areas of the Northeast such as Duhok Sulaimaniya and Erbil have out of school rates at upper secondary at or below 30%

Profile of children out of school

FIGURE 20 Profiling of children out of school, by sex

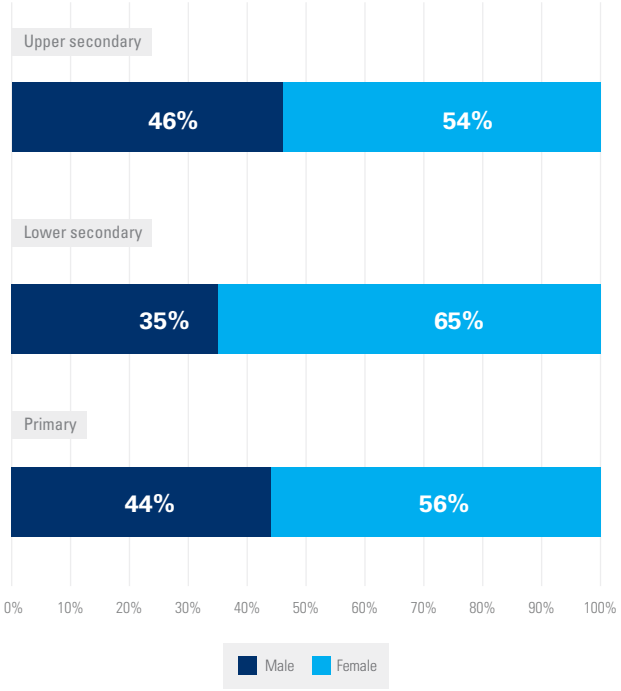


FIGURE 21 Profiling of children out of school, by area

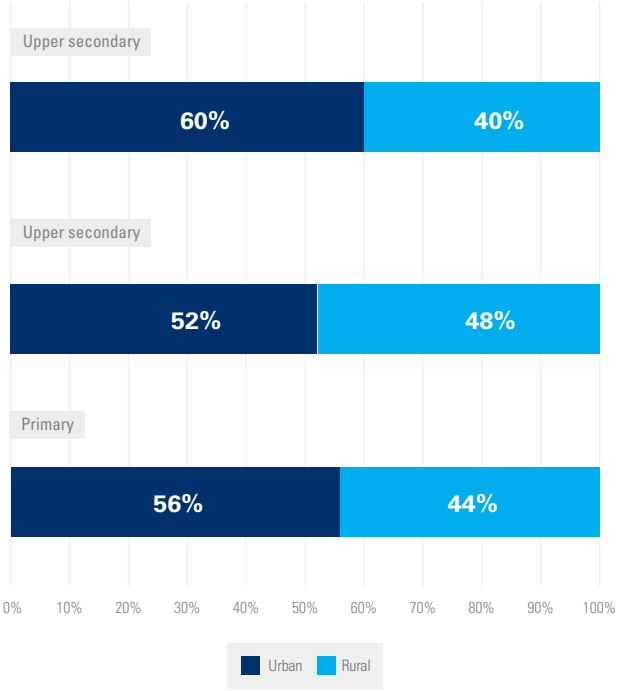
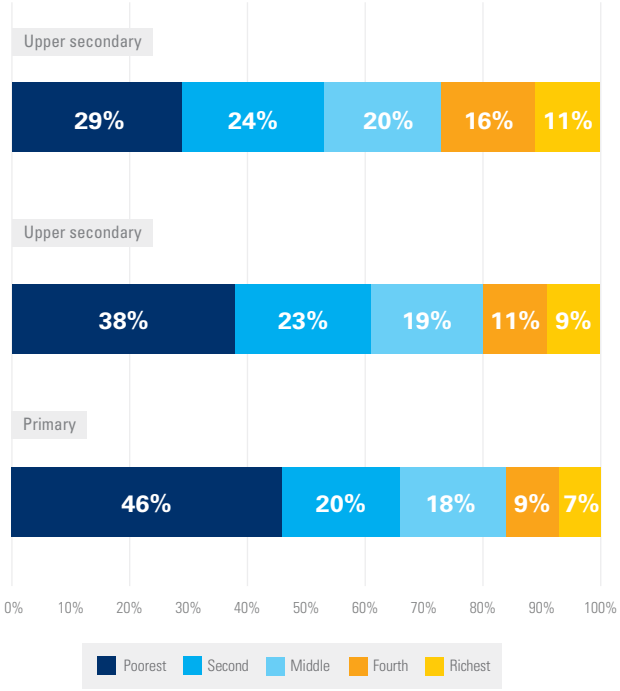


FIGURE 22 Profiling of children out of school, by wealth quintile



Findings

- In all levels of education, more girls than boys are out of school. Children from urban areas also make a slim majority of all children out of school, although out-of-school rates are much higher for rural areas
- Among primary school age children, those from the poorest families are even more overrepresented among children out of school (totally 46%). As more children from other wealth quintiles drop out in secondary education, the proportion of children from primary education decreases

TABLE 2: Shares & headcounts by various socioeconomic characteristics

		Out of school rates (%)			Headcount of children out of school (in thousands)		
		Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary
Total		8	21	40	484	560	997
Sex	Male	7	15	35	215	198	456
	Female	6	28	46	269	361	540
Area	Urban	7	17	36	270	292	601
	Rural	11	30	49	214	267	395
Wealth quintile	Poorest	16	36	62	222	210	289
	Second	8	24	50	98	130	241
	Middle	8	19	40	87	105	201
	Fourth	4	13	33	43	62	157
	Richest	3	11	20	31	51	107
Governorate	Duhok	4	15	30	7	14	27
	Nainawa	12	28	41	72	65	87
	Sulaimaniya	2	9	20	4	12	27
	Kirkuk	6	14	31	15	13	31
	Erbil	5	18	27	21	36	60
	Diala	5	16	38	16	21	51
	Anbar	7	24	37	16	26	35
	Baghdad	8	20	46	72	85	187
	Babil	9	27	45	26	34	52
	Karbalah	8	21	40	12	16	28
	Wasit	10	29	39	17	29	35
	Salahaddin	10	24	40	18	18	30
	Najaf	13	27	52	30	28	46
	Qadisyah	11	18	40	19	15	31
	Muthana	11	18	53	22	16	40
	Thiqar	8	18	39	33	34	65
	Misan	12	29	50	32	33	51
	Basrah	6	24	52	45	54	104
Region	Kurdistan	4	15	25	33	64	116
	South/ Central Iraq	9	22	43	451	497	881

*Headcounts are based on UNSD statistics, they can be calculated using other data sources if the country requests.

Topic 4 Early Learning

Guiding questions

1. Which children are developmentally on track (measured by ECDI)?
2. Which level of education is attended by young children?
3. Do children attend grade 1 at the right age?
4. What is the profile of children not attending ECE?
5. What is the profile of children not developmentally on track (measured by ECDI)?

Overview

FIGURE 23 Early Childhood Development Index (ECDI) for children age 3 to 4

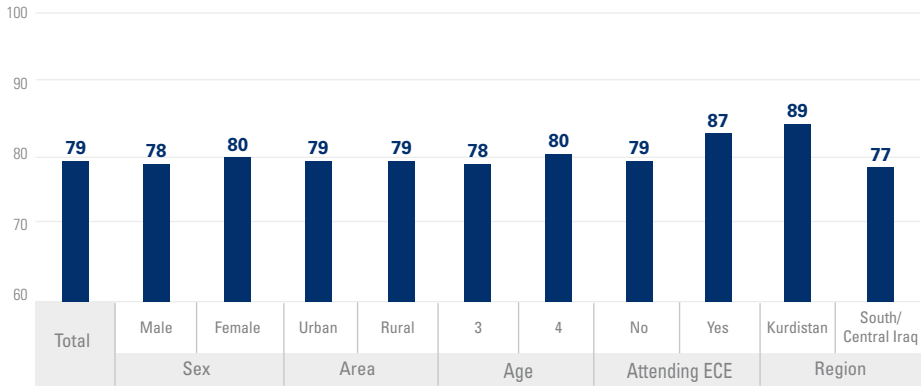


FIGURE 24 Percentage of children age 36-59 months attending early childhood education

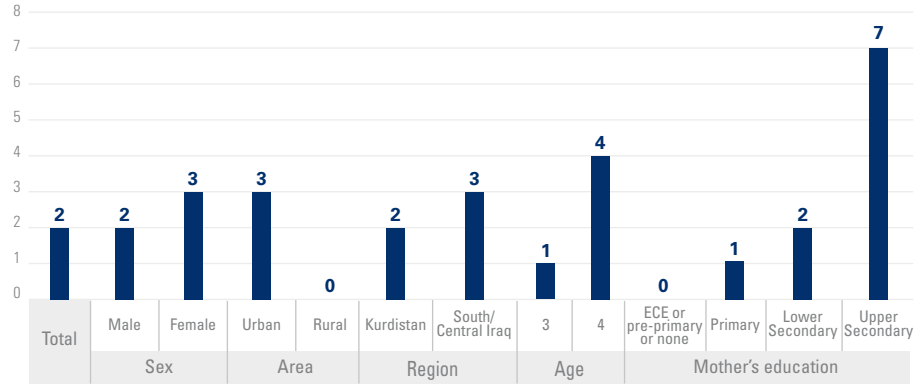


FIGURE 25 Level of education attended by age

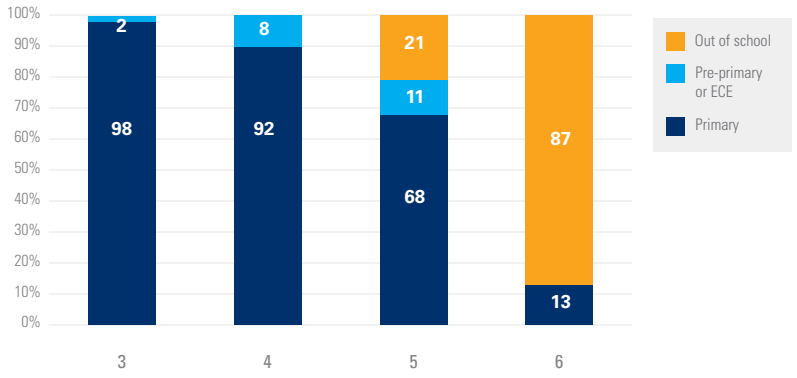
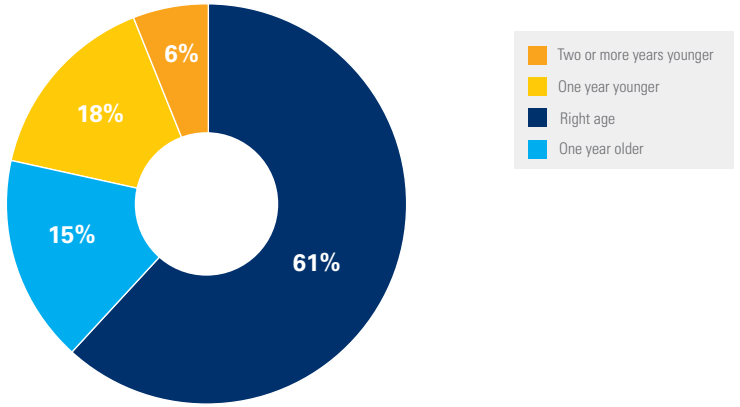
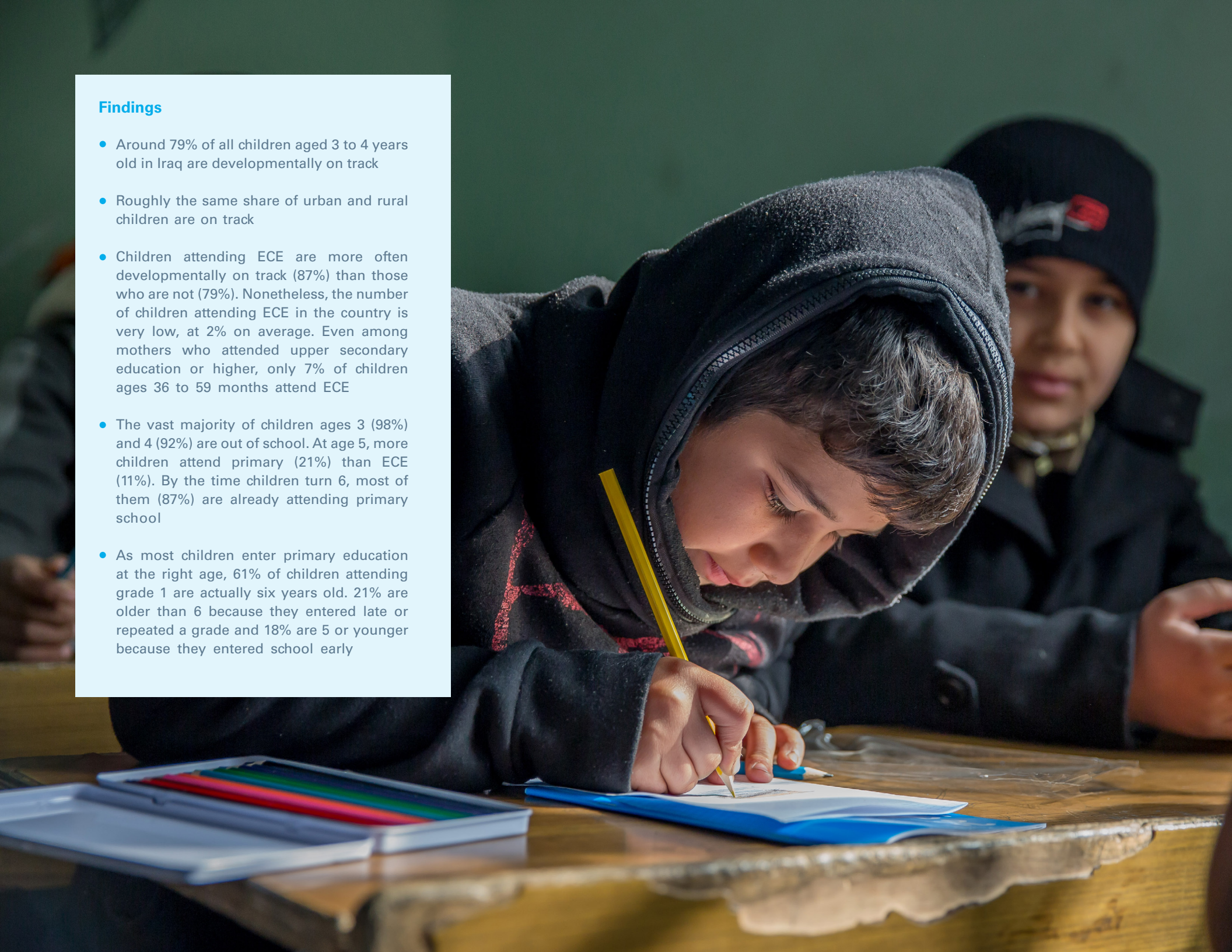


FIGURE 26 Age distribution at grade 1 of primary education





Findings

- Around 79% of all children aged 3 to 4 years old in Iraq are developmentally on track
- Roughly the same share of urban and rural children are on track
- Children attending ECE are more often developmentally on track (87%) than those who are not (79%). Nonetheless, the number of children attending ECE in the country is very low, at 2% on average. Even among mothers who attended upper secondary education or higher, only 7% of children ages 36 to 59 months attend ECE
- The vast majority of children ages 3 (98%) and 4 (92%) are out of school. At age 5, more children attend primary (21%) than ECE (11%). By the time children turn 6, most of them (87%) are already attending primary school
- As most children enter primary education at the right age, 61% of children attending grade 1 are actually six years old. 21% are older than 6 because they entered late or repeated a grade and 18% are 5 or younger because they entered school early

Profile of children not developmentally on track or not attending ECE

FIGURE 27 Profiling of young children aged 3 to 4 not attending ECE or not developmentally on track, by sex

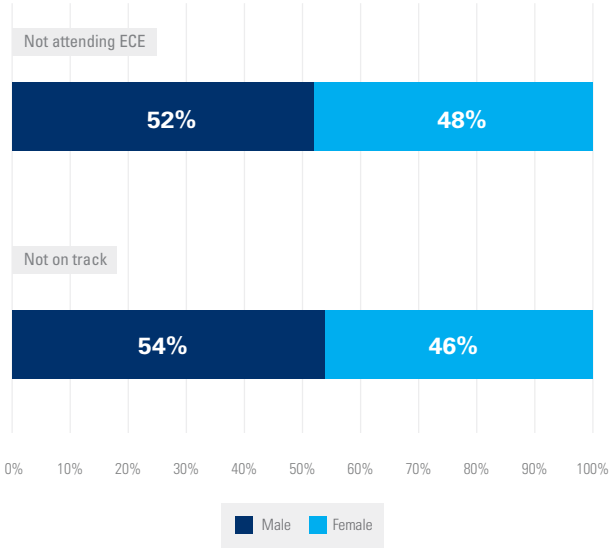


FIGURE 28 Profiling of young children aged 3 to 4 not attending ECE or not developmentally on track, by area

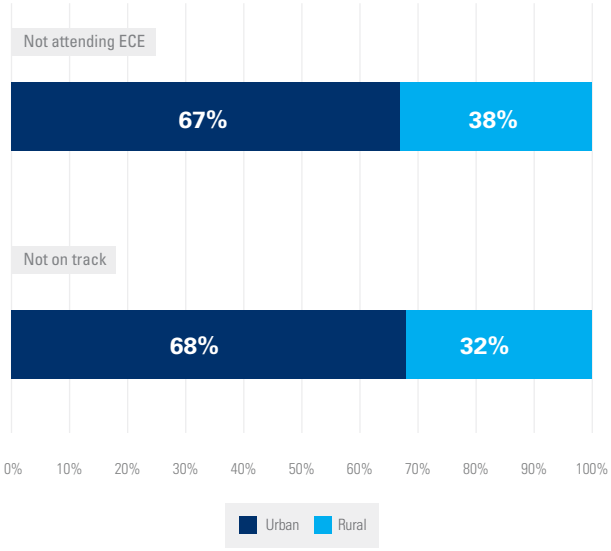
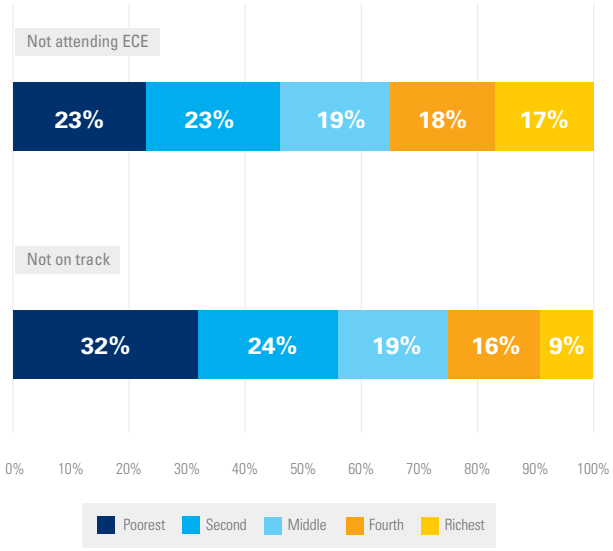


FIGURE 29 Profiling of young children aged 3 to 4 not attending ECE or not developmentally on track, by wealth quintile



Findings

- Boys and girls are similarly on track in terms of ECE attendance and being developmentally on track
- Roughly two third of children not attending ECE (67%) and not developmentally on track (68%) live in urban areas, while the remaining one third live in rural areas
- As many children do not attend ECE or are not developmentally on track, children of all socioeconomic backgrounds figure in these categories. However, children from the poorest families are overrepresented among both categories

TABLE 3: Shares & headcounts by various socioeconomic characteristics

		Share (%) of children (age 3-4)		Headcount of children (in thousands)	
		Not on track on ECDI	Not attending ECE	Not on track on ECDI	Not attending ECE
Total		21	98	451	2128
Sex	Male	22	98	243	1102
	Female	20	97	208	1026
Area	Urban	21	97	305	1420
	Rural	21	100	146	708
Wealth quintile	Poorest	29	100	143	497
	Second	22	99	110	496
	Middle	20	97	84	404
	Fourth	18	96	72	378
	Richest	11	95	41	352
Governorate	Duhok	13	98	9	68
	Nainawa	29	97	63	214
	Sulaimaniya	6	99	5	94
	Kirkuk	21	97	13	59
	Erbil	12	98	25	214
	Diala	15	99	18	116
	Anbar	18	97	14	75
	Baghdad	16	95	54	324
	Babil	25	98	24	93
	Karbalah	8	97	5	61
	Wasit	29	99	19	67
	Salahaddin	32	96	16	51
	Najaf	24	98	22	90
	Qadisyah	28	98	17	19
	Muthana	9	98	7	59
	Thiqar	37	99	68	70
	Misan	21	99	20	182
	Basrah	25	98	48	96
Region	Kurdistan	11	98	25	191
	South/ Central Iraq	23	97	411	1751

*Headcounts are based on UNSD statistics, they can be calculated using other data sources if the country requests.

Topic 5 Repetition and Dropout

Guiding questions

1. At which level or grade have the highest level of repetition and dropout?
2. What is the profile of children who repeat grades?
3. What is the profile of children who drop out of school?

Overview

FIGURE 30 Repetition rate by grade

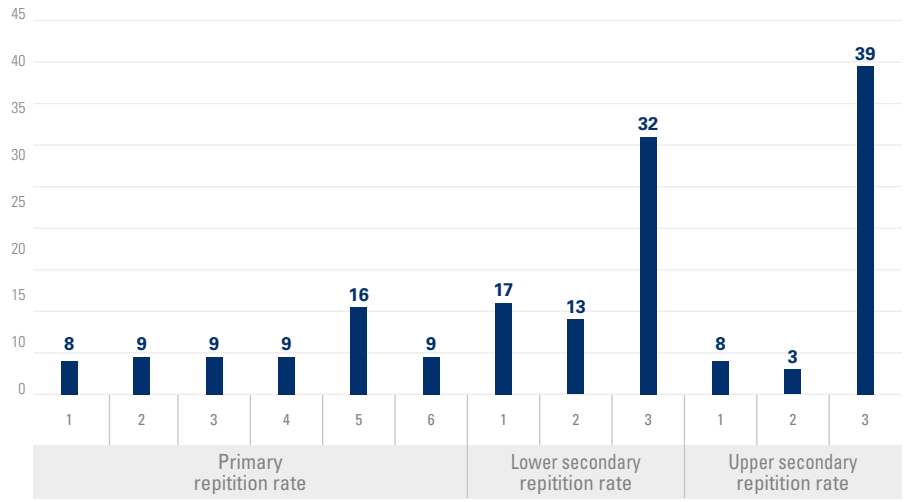
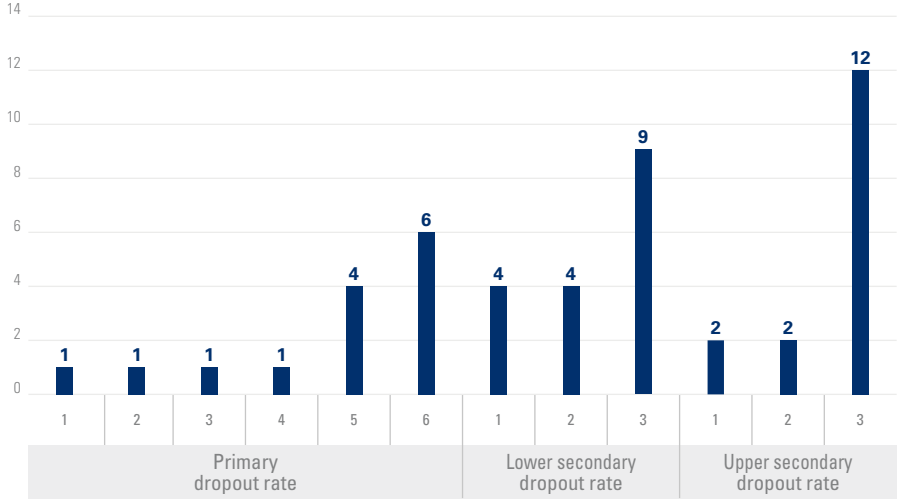


FIGURE 31 Dropout rate by grade



Findings

- In primary school, grade 5 is the one with the highest repetition rate, while in lower secondary and upper secondary education, the final grades have the highest repetition (32% in grade 3 and 39% in grade 6). This can be due to the national standardized examination test, as well as students repeating the same grade so they can get a better result next year
- As for the dropout, the percentage of students dropping out from the last grades of each level is much higher in contrast with other grades of the same level, it could be due to the repetition rates in these grades as students are struggling to pass the standardized national examination, because the cost for repeating a year for the families can be much higher and difficult to bear economically. Nationally, 6% of children drop out at the end of primary, 9% at the end of lower secondary and 12% at the end of upper secondary

Profile of repeaters and dropouts

FIGURE 32 Profiling of repeaters and dropouts, by sex

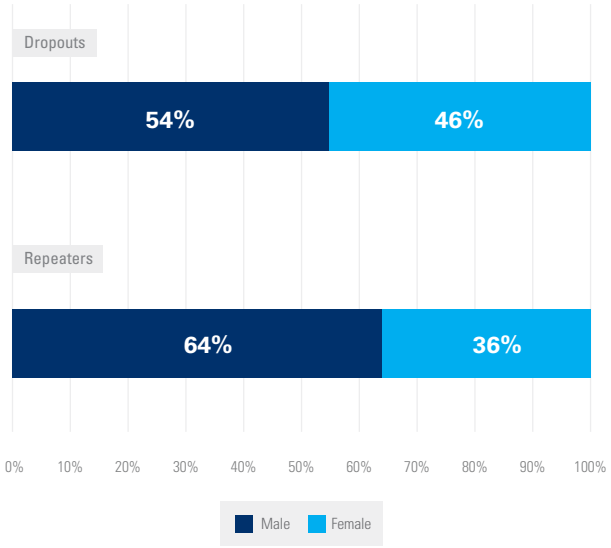


FIGURE 33 Profiling of repeaters and dropouts, by area

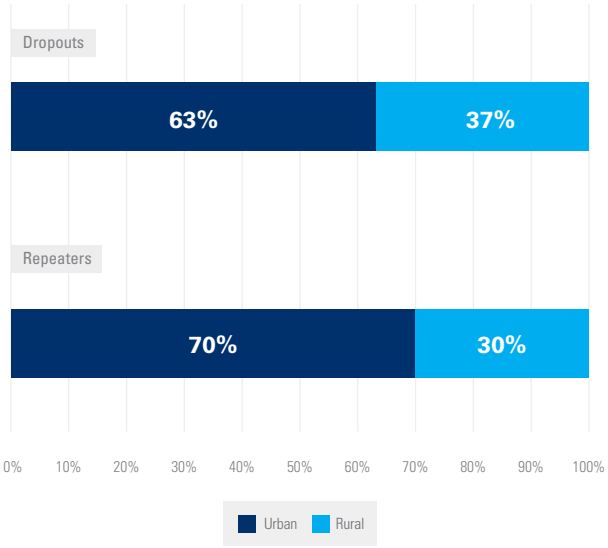


FIGURE 34 Profiling of repeaters and dropouts, by wealth quintile

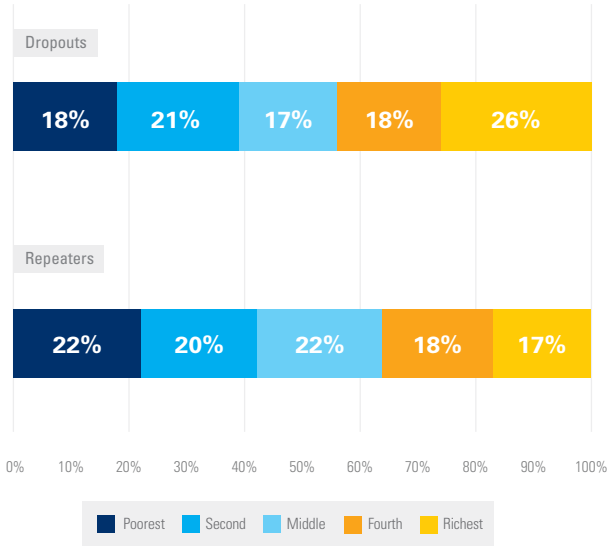
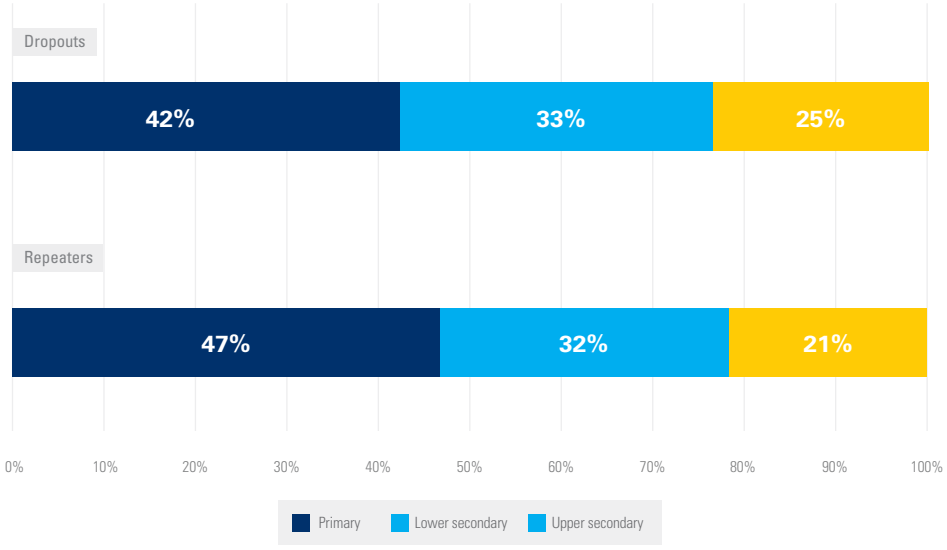


FIGURE 35 Profiling of repeaters and dropouts, by grade



Findings

- More boys than girls repeat and drop out of school
- Among repeaters and dropouts, there is also a large share of urban potentially more urban children were in school in the first place
- Repetition seems to be similarly common among children of the five wealth quintiles. However, richer children are overrepresented among dropouts and one of the reasons might be that their attendance rates are higher and for children to drop out they must have been in school first
- As most students in the country study at primary level, repetition and dropout are also concentrated in that level

TABLE 4: Shares & headcounts by various socioeconomic characteristics

		Rate(%)		Headcount of children (in thousands)	
		Repetition	Dropout	Repeaters	Dropouts
Total		13	4	1367	457
Sex	Male	16	4	881	247
	Female	10	4	487	210
Area	Urban	13	4	951	291
	Rural	14	5	417	466
Wealth quintile	Poorest	17	4	294	79
	Second	14	5	273	94
	Middle	15	4	303	78
	Fourth	11	4	253	86
	Richest	10	5	244	121
Governorate	Duhok	14	5	60	20
	Nainawa	12	3	109	32
	Sulaimaniya	13	5	83	37
	Kirkuk	9	3	39	15
	Erbil	11	7	102	63
	Diala	13	5	81	34
	Anbar	17	3	69	13
	Baghdad	11	3	173	55
	Babil	13	2	61	10
	Karbalah	17	4	51	12
	Wasit	15	5	50	16
	Salahaddin	12	7	39	23
	Najaf	13	3	47	12
	Qadisyah	17	5	53	16
	Muthana	14	3	44	11
	Thiqar	15	2	107	13
	Misan	18	7	71	29
	Basrah	15	5	125	44
Region	Kurdistan	12	6	245	120
	South/ Central Iraq	13	4	1122	337

*Headcounts are based on UNSD statistics, they can be calculated using other data sources if the country requests.

Topic 6 Child Protection

Guiding questions

1. For which groups is early marriage higher and how does it connect to literacy and ICT skills?
2. Which groups of children are more frequently in child labor?
3. How is child labor linked to education attendance?
4. How does child labor explain the profile of children out of school?

Overview

FIGURE 36

Prevalence of child marriage among youth aged 20 to 24 years-old

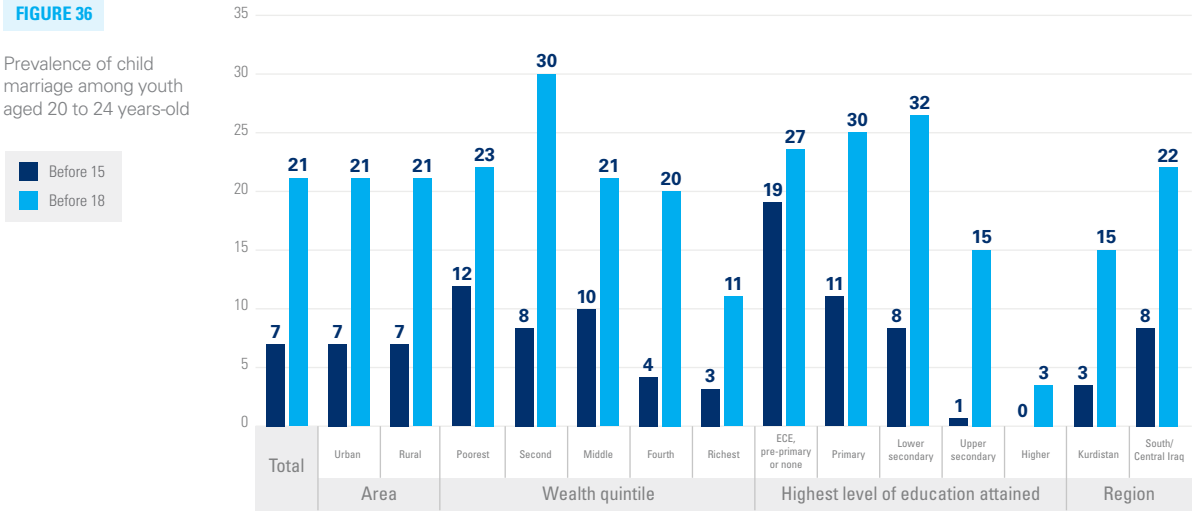
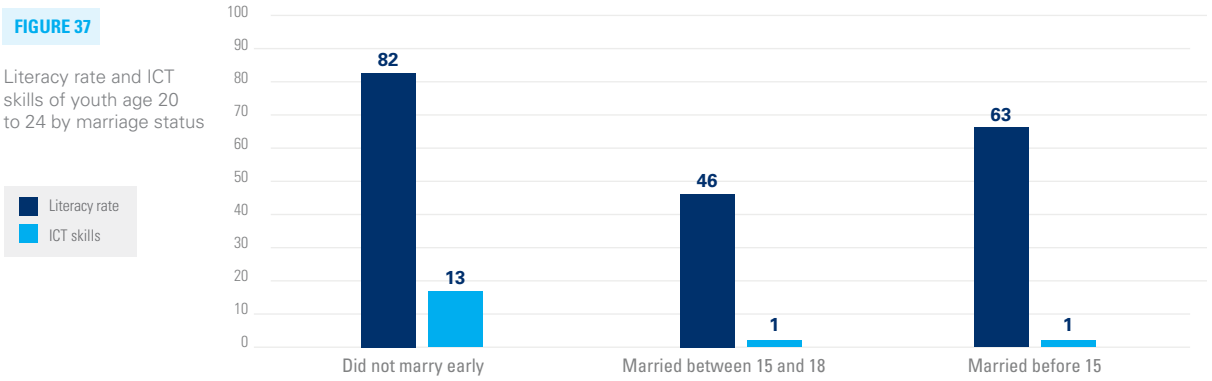


FIGURE 37

Literacy rate and ICT skills of youth age 20 to 24 by marriage status



Findings

- Around 21% of women aged 20-24 years old in the country got married before they were 18 and 7% got married before they were 15
- Women from the poorer 40% of the population (poorest and second quintile) have higher rates of child marriage then the rest
- Surprisingly, although the prevalence of child marriage before the age of 15 is higher among women who did not study at primary level, the child marriage rate at 18 is higher who those whose highest level of education attended is lower secondary school
- Girls who did not marry have much higher literacy levels and ICT skills

Child labor and education

FIGURE 38 Prevalence of child labor for children age 5 to 17

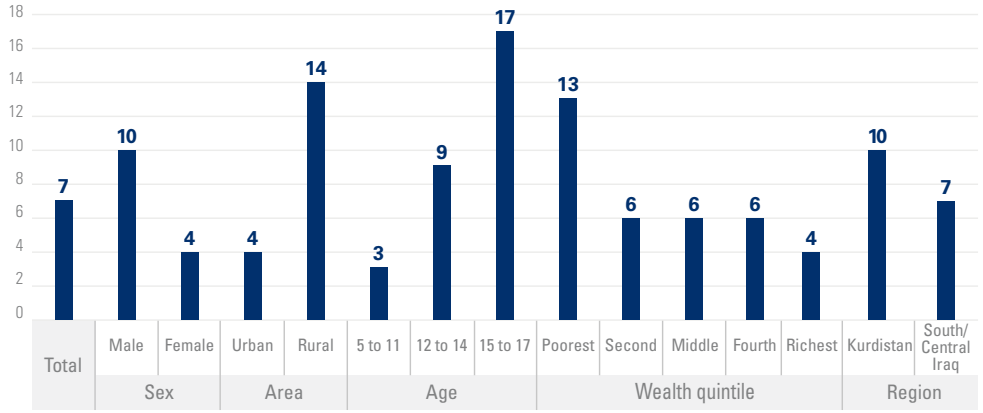
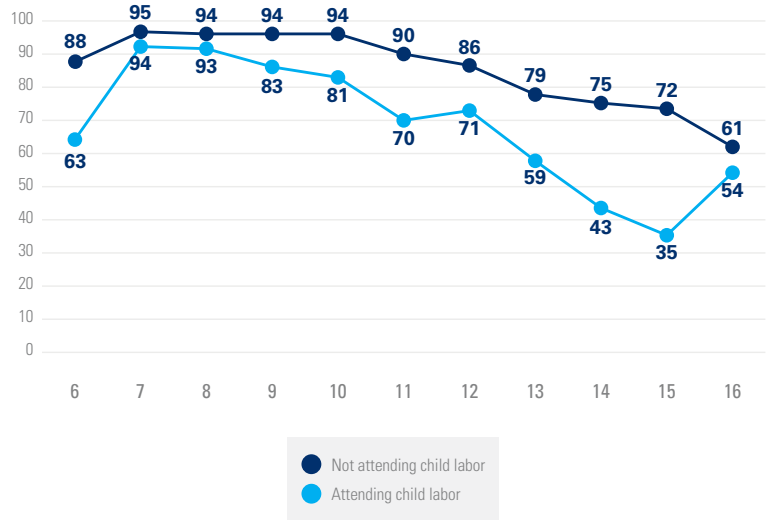


FIGURE 39 School attendance per age and child labor status

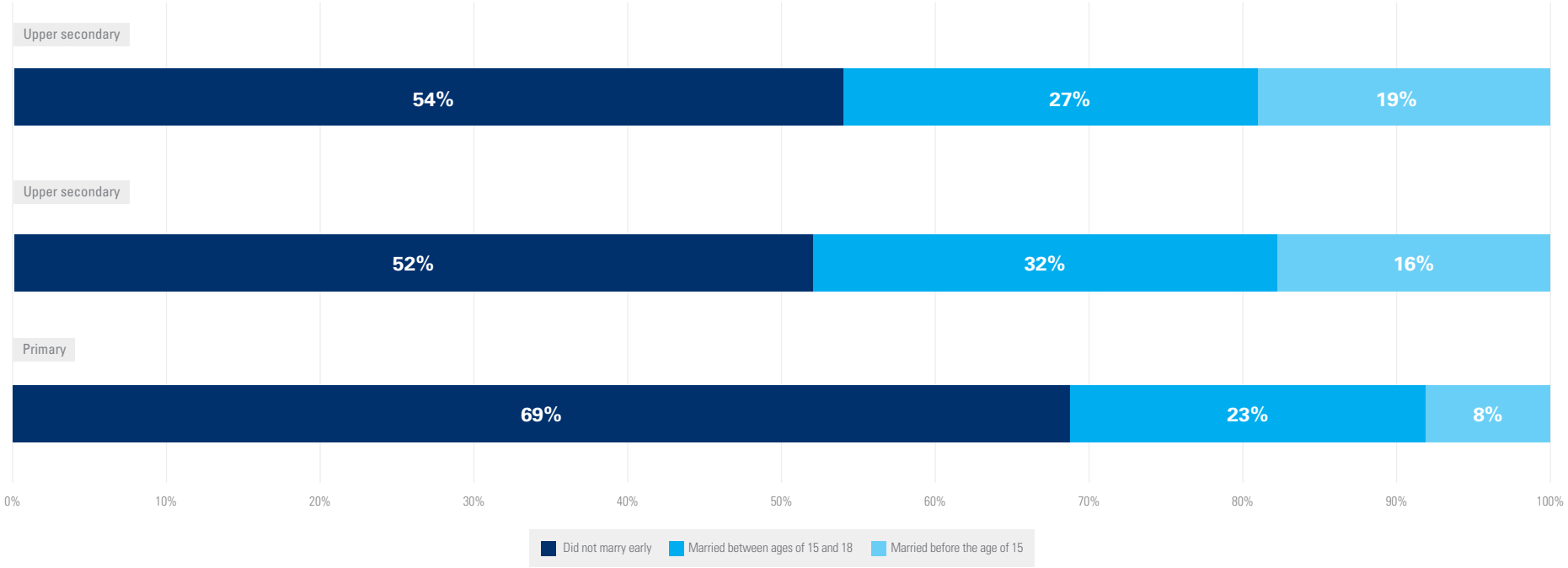


Findings

- A total of 7 per cent of all children aged 5–17 years are engaged in some form of child labor
- The percentage of boys working at the age range (5-17 years) is higher than girls (10% versus 4%)
- In respect to age, we observe that the percentage of those working at the age of 15 to 17 is much higher than other age ranges
- The school attendance rates are higher for children who do not work for those who work, for all ages. School attendance decreases more sharply for those who are not in child labor than for those who are working

Profile of children out of school

FIGURE 40 Profile of uneducated or unskilled youth (20-24 years old) by date of marriage



Findings

- Almost half of all illiterate women in Iraq married before they were 18, a much higher share than their total population
- Among women who never attended school, again almost half married early

Topic 7 Inclusive Education

Guiding questions

1. For what groups of children are disability rates higher?
2. What are the most common disabilities among children?
3. How is disability linked to school attendance?
4. How is disability linked to repetition and dropout?
5. How do disabilities explain the profile of children out of school?

Overview

FIGURE 41 Prevalence of disabilities (children age 5 to 17)

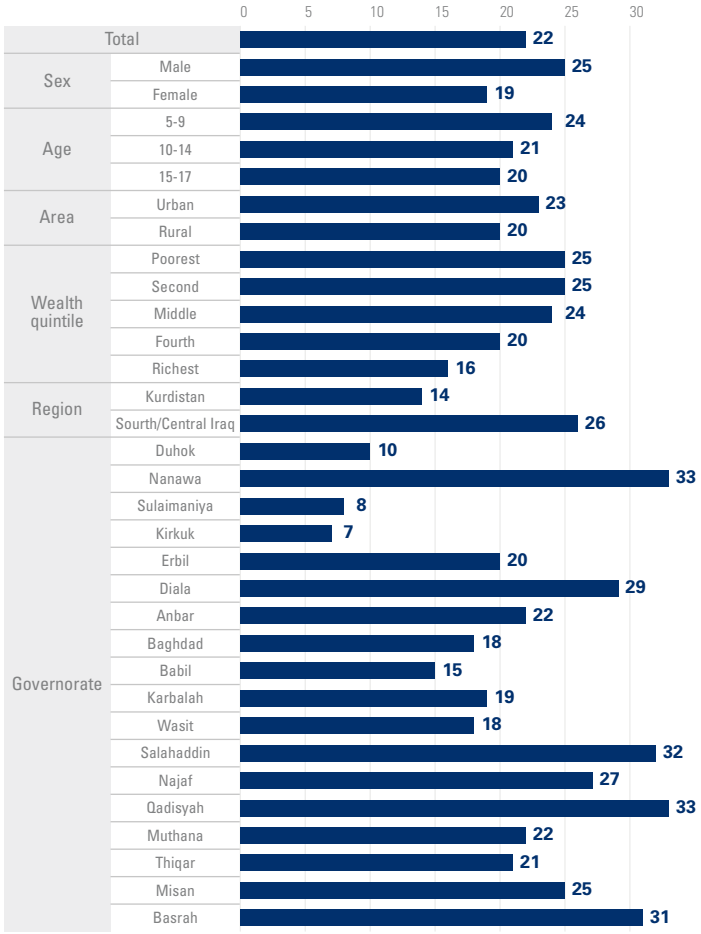
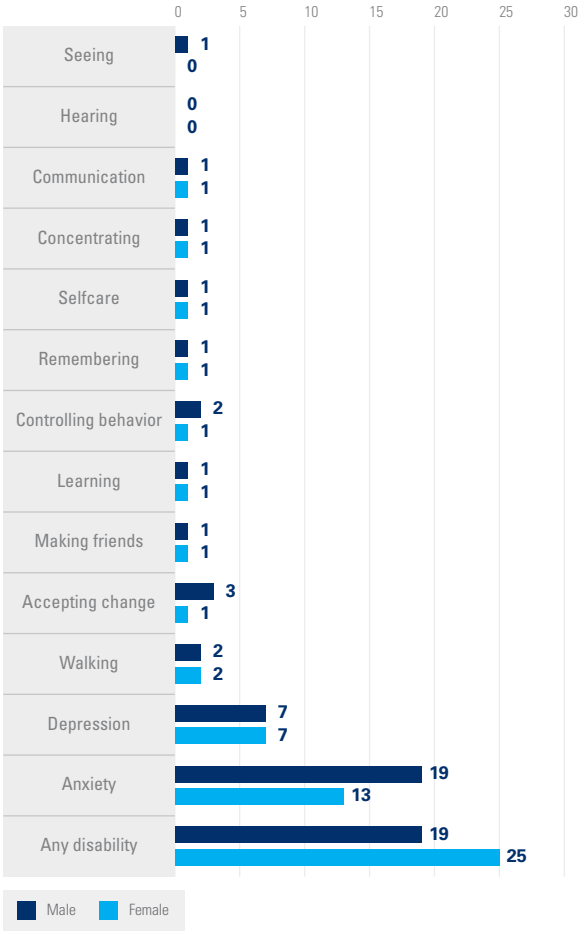


FIGURE 42 Prevalence of types of disabilities (children age 5 to 17)



Findings

- Around 22% of children in Iraq have a disability, most of whom have depression or anxiety. Every other type of disability has a prevalence of 2% of less
- There is an incremental increase in the rate of children with disability age (5-17 years) from the poorest to the richest wealth quantiles
- More cases of disabilities are reported in Ninewa and Qadisiyah compared to other Iraq governorates

Inclusive education (5 to 17 years old)

FIGURE 42

Adjusted net attendance rate by functional difficulties (children age 5 to 17)

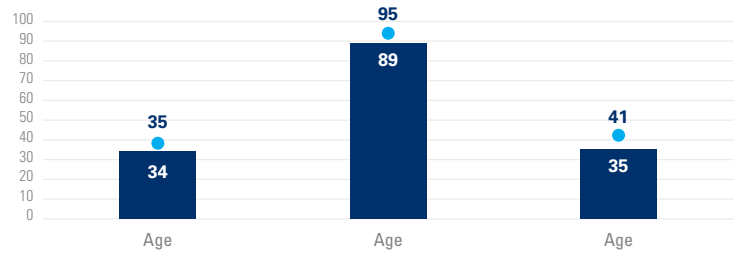
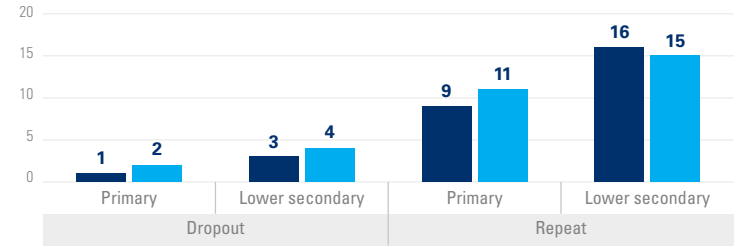


FIGURE 43

Dropout and repetition rates by level of education and functional difficulties (children age 5 to 17)



Findings

- Children with functional difficulties attend school to slightly lower levels than children without disabilities. Furthermore, they have slightly higher dropout rates and repetition rates (in primary education)

Inclusive education (5 to 17 years old)

FIGURE 44

Youth (24-15 years-old) literacy rates

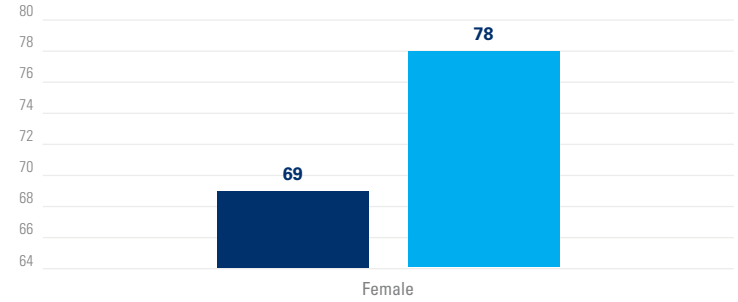
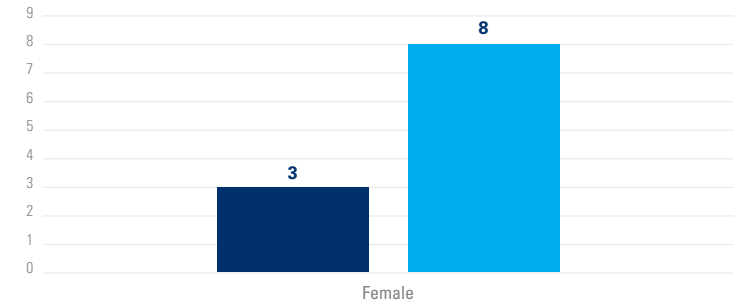


FIGURE 45

Youth (24-15 years-old) ICT skills



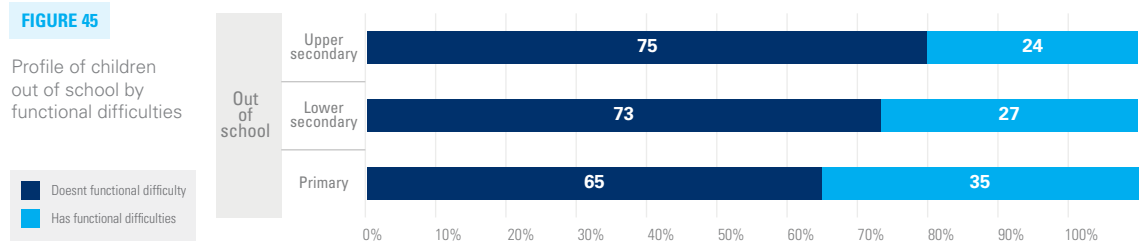
Findings

- The literacy among female with no functional difficulties are higher than the female literacy with any functional difficulties (78% versus 69%)
- The ICT skills for female with no functional difficulties is also higher than of females with any functional difficulties (8% versus 3%)

Profile of children out of school by disability

FIGURE 45

Profile of children out of school by functional difficulties



Findings

- Although children with disabilities are 22% of the population, they form a larger part of children out of school at every level of education, especially at primary level

TABLE 5: Shares & headcounts by various socioeconomic characteristics

	Headcount of children with disabilities (in thousands)					
	Out of school			In school		
	5-9	10-14	15-17	5-9	10-14	15-17
Any disability	526	184	261	823	780	315
Accepting change	56	31	26	83	83	22
Anxiety	420	131	175	653	653	209
Communication	46	23	9	27	27	2
Concentrating	29	18	10	18	18	3
Controlling behavior	41	31	18	61	61	17
Depression	133	79	95	235	235	95
Hearing	18	7	7	10	10	1
Learning	40	21	18	40	40	9
Making friends	38	48	28	26	26	7
Remembering	28	21	10	28	28	5
Seeing	11	18	9	14	14	10
Selfcare	42	26	12	26	26	3
Walking	64	34	25	78	78	45

*Headcounts are based on UNSD statistics, they can be calculated using other data sources if the country requests.

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