# Iraq Education Fact Sheets | 2020

Analyses for learning and equity using MICS data

MICS-EAGLE



# **Acknowledgements**

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# 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, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, etc.):







**Skills** (learning outcomes, ICT skills



**Inclusive Education** (with a focus on disability)



**Early Learning** 

and literacy rate)



**Out-of-School Children** 



Repetition and Dropouts (internal efficiency)

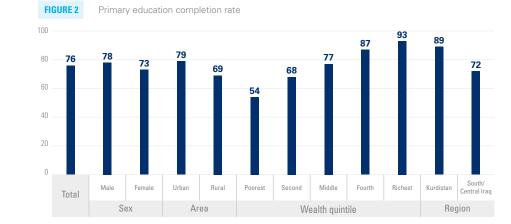


**Child Protection** (child labour and child marriage)

Topic 1	Completion			
Guiding questions	<ol> <li>In which level of education is completion rate the lowest?</li> </ol>	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 3** Lower secondary education completion rate

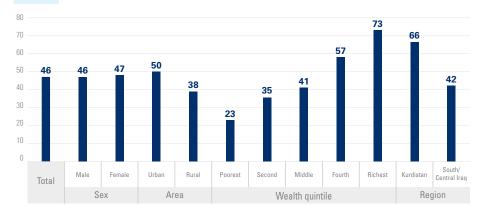
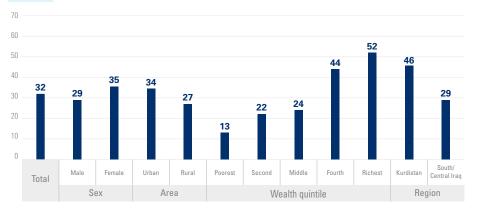


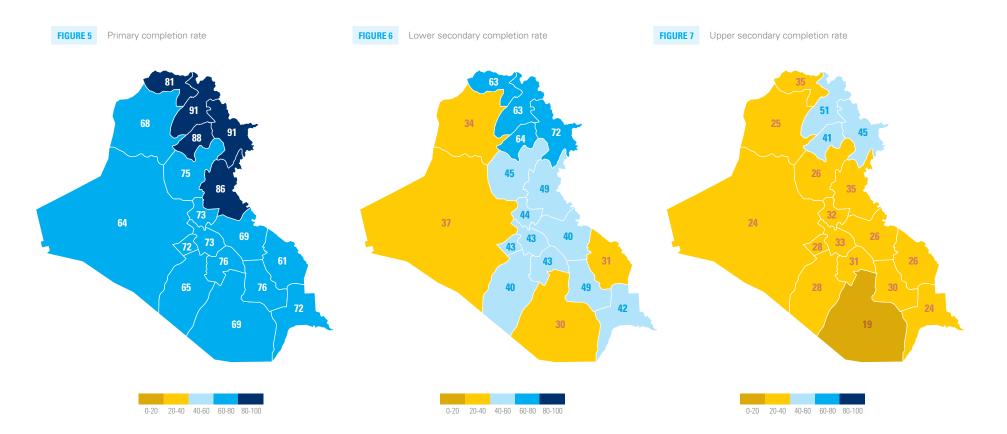
FIGURE 4 Upper secondary education completion rate



- The completion rate gap between the richest and the poorest household is wide for primary and secondary education. Completion rates of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary are respectively 54%, 23% and 13% for the poorest households, while it is of 93%, 73% and 52% for the richest
- The difference between urban and rural area for 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

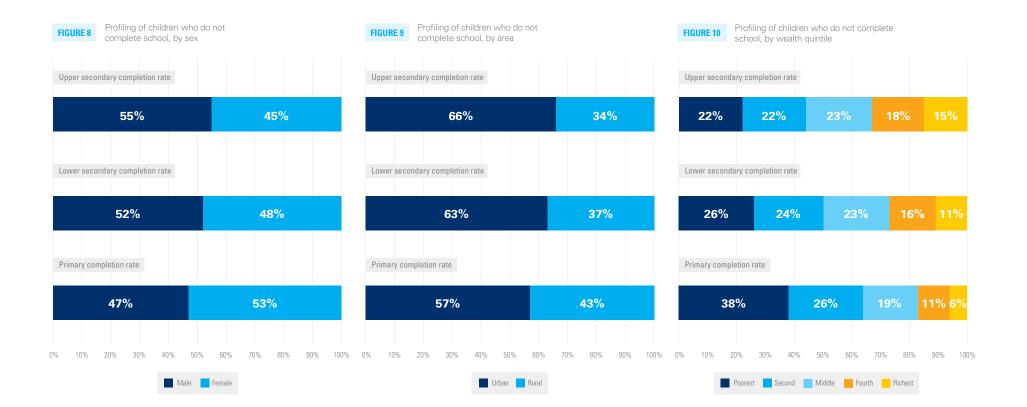
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- The northeast areas of the country have much higher completion rates at all levels of education than the south and western parts
- In Muthana and Missan governorates, the completion rates in both primary and lower secondary are the widest compared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





- Although completion rates are higher in urban areas than rural areas for all stages of education, given that more people reside in urban areas a greater number of children who don't complete school live in urban areas
- The disparity between the poorest and the richest quintiles for school completion is wide, especially at primary education, where children from the poorest quintile account for 38% of all children who did not complete school

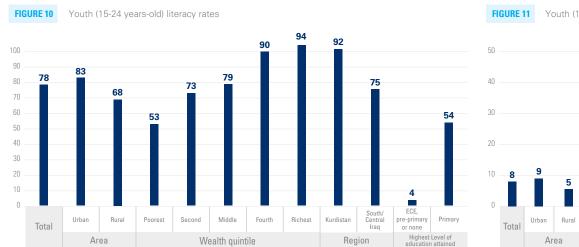


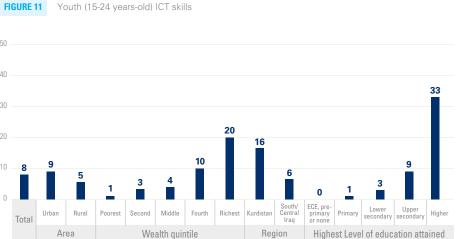
		C	Completion rates (%)		Headcount o	Headcount of children who did not complete		
		Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	
Т	otal	76	46	32	617	1291	1562	
Carr	Male	78	46	29	292	663	855	
Sex	Female	73	47	35	325	627	707	
	Urban	79	50	34	354	807	1030	
Area	Rural	69	38	27	263	483	532	
	Poorest	54	23	13	234	341	149	
	Second	68	35	22	160	310	345	
	Middle	77	41	24	118	296	364	
Wealth quintile	Fourth	87	57	44	67	205	276	
	Richest	93	73	52	38	139	228	
	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	
Governorate	Babil	73	43	33	34	67	72	
Governorate	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	
Deview	Kurdistan	89	66	46	49	141	210	
Region	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	<ol> <li>What is the percentage of each group of young people that are literate?</li> </ol>	2. What is the percentage of each group of young people has ICT skills?

#### Literacy and ICT skills (Women)

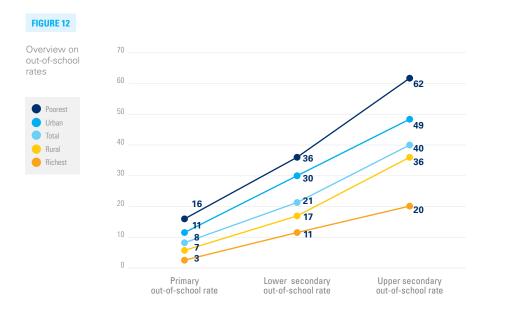


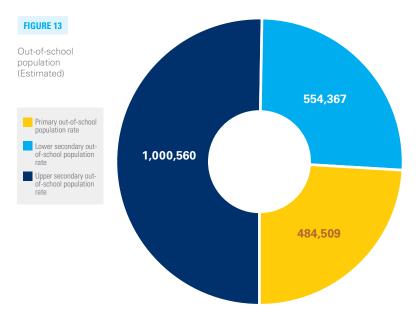


- It can be observed that there is a widening literacy skills gap between the poorest and the richest strata of the society, hence it is suggested that more emphasis should be placed on the areas where populations are living in the highest levels of poverty
- Only 9% those who attained upper secondary school certificate have foundational ICT skills, while those who did not attend compulsory education have no such skills. There is an even wider gap in foundational ICT skills seen for children from the poorest (1%) compared to the richest households (20%)

Topic 3	Out of School Children			
Guiding questions	<ol> <li>Which level of education has the highest out-of-school children rate?</li> </ol>	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**



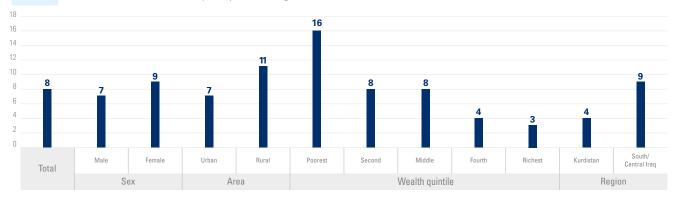


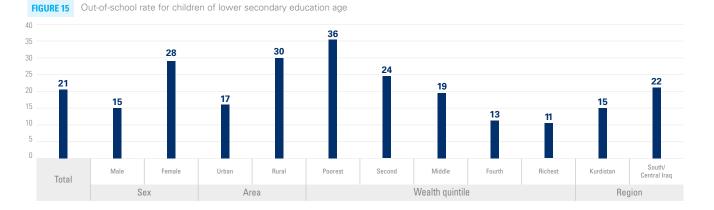
- The gap in education participation between the poorest and the richest is very strong for all school levels, but it widens for upper secondary education where 62% of the poorest are out of school, while the out of school rate is 20% for the richest
- There are 2 million out of school children in the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



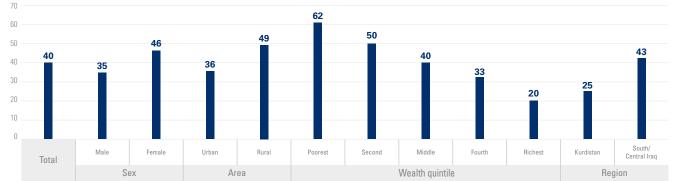
#### Profile of children not completing school

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

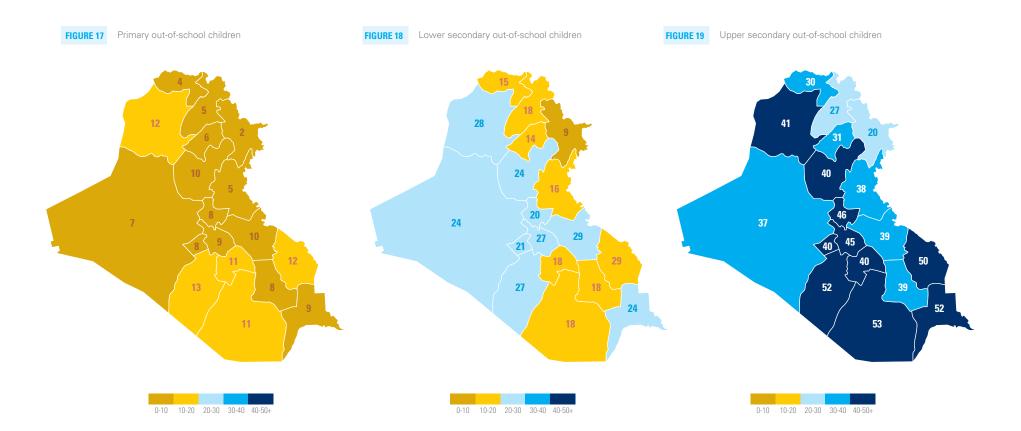




# FIGURE 16 Out-of-school rate for children of upper secondary education age



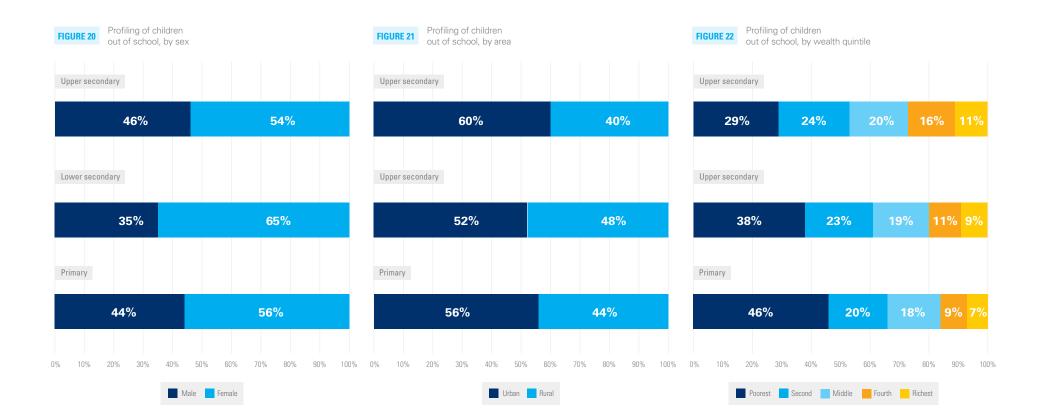
- For all levels of education, the rate of out of school children is higher for rural than urban areas. Many variables can be in play, including transportation and availability of schools nearby
- Socioeconomic background is also a strong driver of inequality access to education. While 16% of children 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 a higher out-ofschool rate than boys. This is particularly true for children who should be attending lower secondary education, there is 13 percent point gap of girls are out of school versus 15% of boys. However, the out of school rate continue to grow in upper secondary where 46% of girls and 35% of boys are out of school (a gap of 11%)



• 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



- In all levels of education, more girls than boys are out of school. Children from urban areas also make a majority of all children out of school, with out-of-school rates being higher for rural areas
- Among primary school age children, those from the poorest families are 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

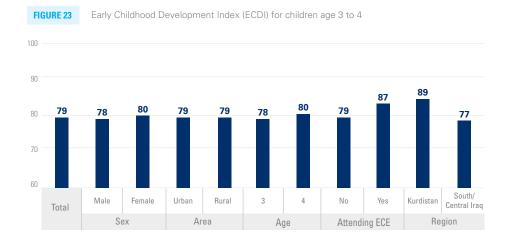
# TABLE 2: Shares & headcounts by various socioeconomic characteristics

		C	out of school rates (	%)	Headcount of c	hildren out of scho	ol (in thousands)
		Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary
Т	otal	8	21	40	484	560	997
Sex	Male	7	15	35	215	198	456
Sex	Female	6	28	46	269	361	540
	Urban	7	17	36	270	292	601
Area	Rural	11	30	49	214	267	395
	Poorest	16	36	62	222	210	289
	Second	8	24	50	98	130	241
We althe autientile	Middle	8	19	40	87	105	201
Wealth quintile	Fourth	4	13	33	43	62	157
	Richest	3	11	20	31	51	107
	Duhok	4	15	30	7	14	27
	Nainavva	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
Governorate	Babil	9	27	45	26	34	52
Governorate	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
Deni	Kurdistan	4	15	25	33	64	116
Region	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 question	1. Which children are developmentally on track (measured by ECDI)?2. Which level of education is attended 

# **Overview**





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

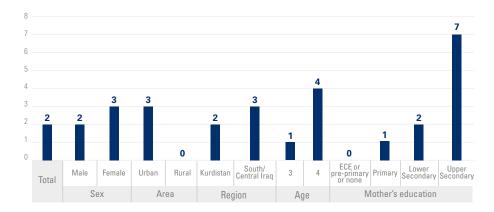


FIGURE 25 Level of education attended by age

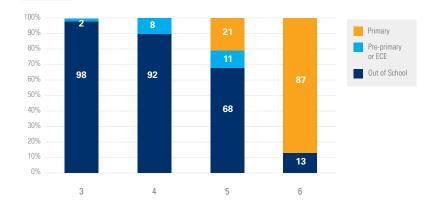
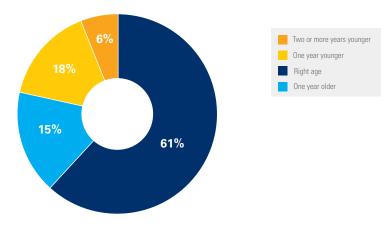
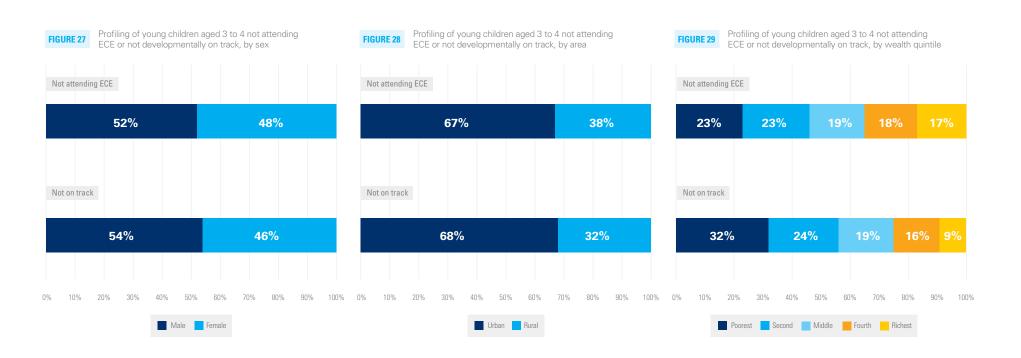


FIGURE 26 Age distribution at grade 1 of primary education



- 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
- 61% of children enter primary education at the right age, six years old. Whereas 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



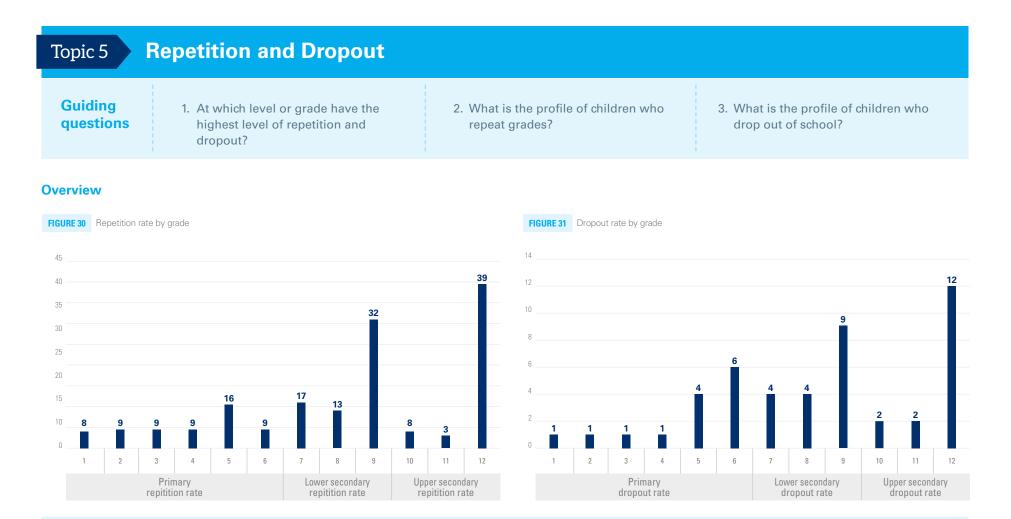
- Boys and girls are at similarly levels in terms of ECE attendance and being developmentally on track
- Roughly two thirds of children not attending ECE (67%) are not developmentally on track (68%) live in urban areas, while the remaining one third live in rural areas
- As many children do not attend ECE or are not developmentally on track. Of these, 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

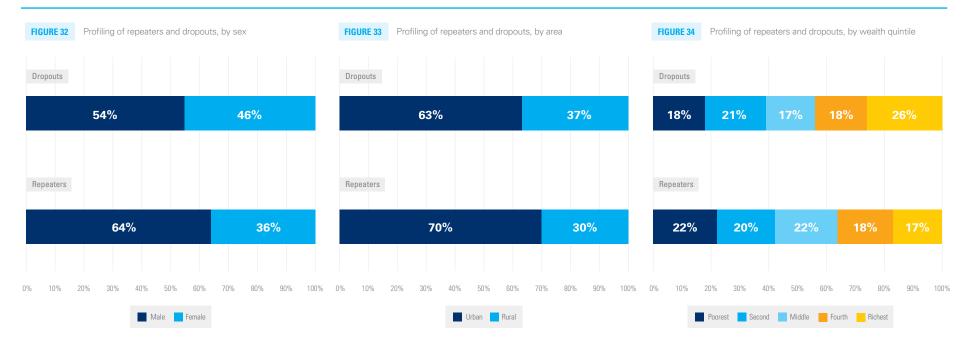
		Share (%) of ch	ildren (age 3-4)	3-4) Headcount of children (i	
		Not on track on ECDI	Not attending ECE	Not on track on ECDI	Not attending ECE
Т	otal	21	98	451	2128
C	Male	22	98	243	1102
Sex	Female	20	97	208	1026
	Urban	21	97	305	1420
Area	Rural	21	100	146	708
	Poorest	29	100	143	497
	Second	22	99	110	496
A/	Middle	20	97	84	404
Wealth quintile	Fourth	18	96	72	378
	Richest	11	95	41	352
	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
<b>a</b>	Babil	25	98	24	93
Governorate	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
B :	Kurdistan	11	98	25	191
Region	South/ Central Iraq	23	97	411	1751

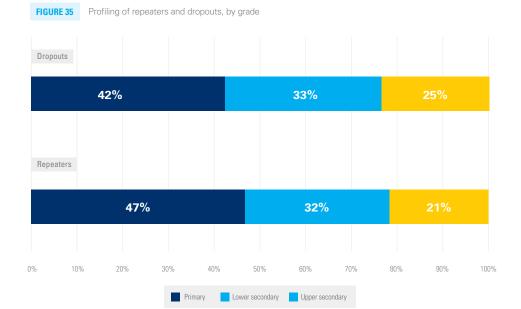
\*Headcounts are based on UNSD statistics, they can be calculated using other data sources if the country requests.



- In primary school, grade 5 has the highest repetition rate, while in lower secondary and upper secondary education, the final grades have the highest repetition (32% in grade 9 and 39% in grade 12). 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, this could be due to the students who are struggling to pass the standardized national examination, where the cost for repeating a year for some families can be difficult to bear. 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**





- More boys than girls repeat school years and drop out of school
- Among repeaters and dropouts, there is also a large share of urban households although more urban children were in school in the first place
- Repetition seems to be similarly common among children of the five wealth quintiles. With the exception of richer children who 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

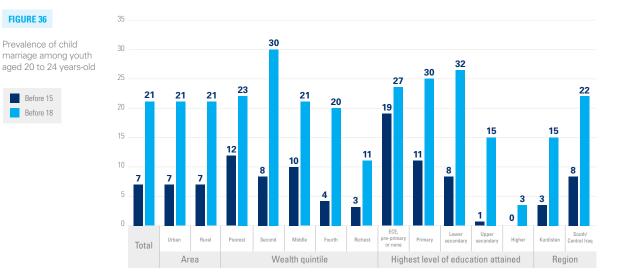
# TABLE 4: Shares & headcounts by various socioeconomic characteristics

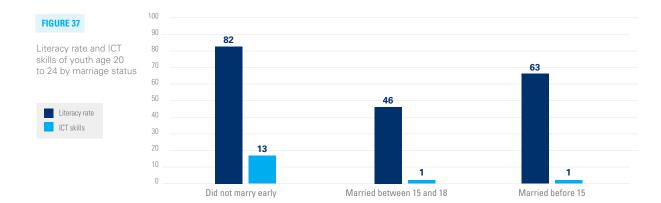
		Rate(%)		Headcount of children (in thousands)		
		Repetition	Dropout	Repeaters	Dropouts	
Т	otal	13	4	1367	457	
Carr	Male	16	4	881	247	
Sex	Female	10	4	487	210	
	Urban	13	4	951	291	
Area	Rural	14	5	417	466	
	Poorest	17	4	294	79	
	Second	14	5	273	94	
A/	Middle	15	4	303	78	
Nealth quintile	Fourth	11	4	253	86	
	Richest	10	5	244	121	
	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	
0	Babil	13	2	61	10	
Governorate	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	
Devie	Kurdistan	12	6	245	120	
Region	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	<ol> <li>For which groups is early marriage higher and how does it connect to literacy and ICT skills?</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>Which groups of children are more frequently in child labor?</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>How is child labor linked to education attendance?</li> </ol>	4. How does child labor explain the profile of children out of school?

#### **Overview**

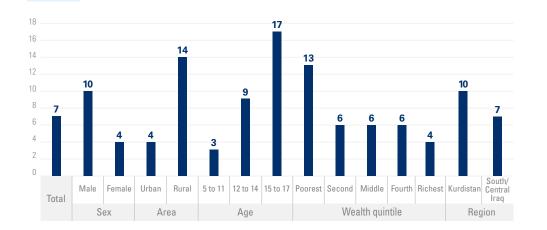




- Around 21% of women aged 20-24 years old in the country got married before they were 18 and 7% got married before they were 15
- Women from the poorer 40% of the population (poorest and second quintile) have higher rates of child marriage then the rest
- Surprisingly, although the prevalence of child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

FIGURE 38

Prevalence of child labor for children age 5 to 17





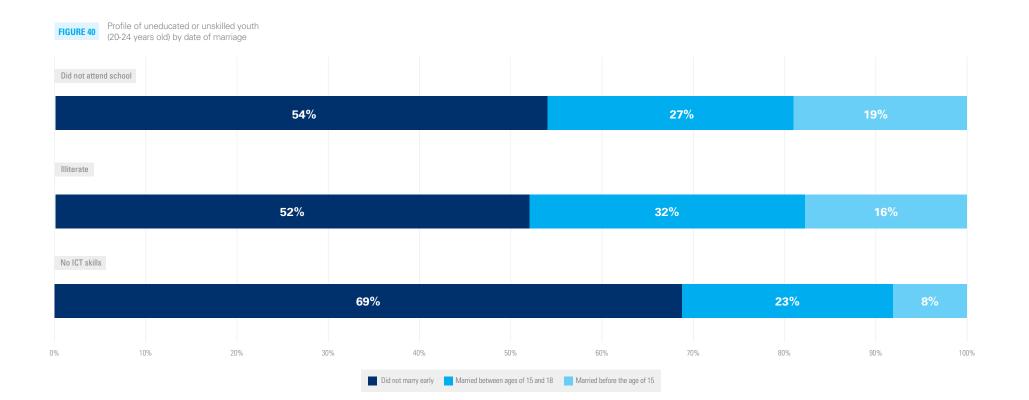


# Not attending child laborAttending child labor

- 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 than 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



- 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	Topic 7     Inclusive Education								
Guiding questions	<ol> <li>For what groups of children are disability rates higher?</li> </ol>	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?				

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18

19 18

15

22

22

21

16

14

10

8

7

# **Overview**

Wealth

quintile

Region

Governorate

Middle

Fourth

Richest

Kurdistan

Sourth/Central Ira

Duhok

Nanawa

Sulaimaniya

Kirkuk

Erbil

Diala

Anbar

Baghdad

Babil

Karbalah

Wasit Salahaddin

Najaf

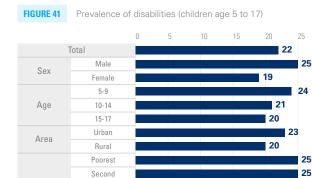
Qadisyah

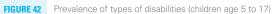
Muthana

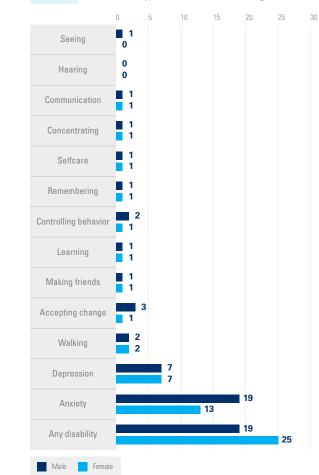
Thigar

Misan

Basrah

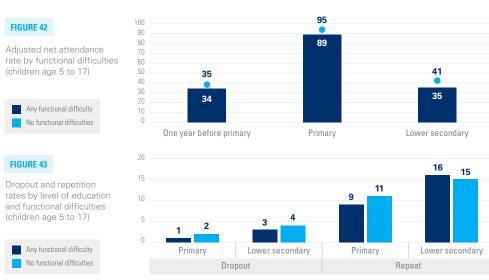




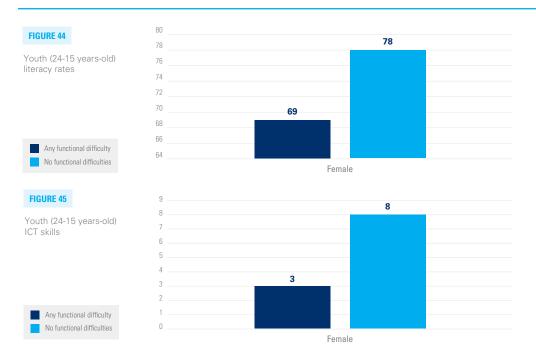


- Around 22% of children in Iraq have a disability, most of whom suffer from depression or anxiety. All other types of disability have a prevalence of 2% less
- There is an incremental increase in the rate of children with disability age (5-17 years) from the poorest to the richest wealth quantiles
-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

#### Inclusive education (5 to 17 years old)



# Inclusive education (5 to 17 years old)



# **Findings**

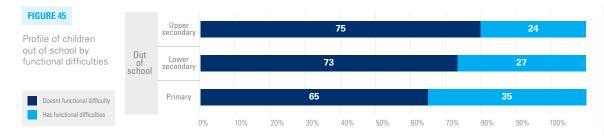
• Children with functional difficulties attend school at slightly lower levels than children without disabilities. Furthermore, they have slightly higher dropout rates and repetition rates (in primary education)



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



# Profile of children out of school by disability



# **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 (35%)



# 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.



UNICEF Iraq UN Compound, Green Zone Baghdad, Iraq https://www.unicef.org/iraq/