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Education Learning and
Development Module



**Diplomatic
Academy.**



EDUCATION SECTOR INTERCONNECTIONS

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ACRONYMS

DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
ECD	early childhood development
GER	gross enrolment ratio
GPI	Gender Parity Index
ICT	information and communication technology
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MTC	Marine Training Centre (Kiribati)
NER	net enrolment rate
PCR	primary completion rate
PNG	Papua New Guinea
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
UIS	UNESCO Institute of Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNEVOC	International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training



1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this module is to provide an introduction to the key sub-sectors of education and the way they link and interconnect with each other. It provides a foundation to engage in this topic and apply advice from staff with operational or expert levels of knowledge in education. On successful completion you will be able to be an informed participant in forums related to education sector interconnections.

2 WHAT ARE THE MAIN SUB-SECTORS IN AN EDUCATION SYSTEM?

Education is a complex sector. It is more than just the school system. It includes all the education and training services available in a country, from pre-school through to adulthood. As well as the government, all countries have a range of other providers who own and manage education and training institutions. Each has their own management structure and educational philosophy. The sections below describe the important linkages and transition points for students between sub-sectors.

3 EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Early childhood has traditionally covered the period of a child's development from birth to entry into formal schooling; that is, ages zero to six years. In recent years, however, research has expanded this definition to the prenatal period from conception through pregnancy—when the health and nutrition of the mother become important determinants of foetal development—to the successful transition from the home (and sometimes an early childhood development program) into the early grades of primary school, when young children are meant to gain a firm foundation for later learning.

Early childhood, in other words, encompasses the period of human development from conception to the age of eight years.

The importance of early childhood development (ECD) is reaffirmed in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) and its target to ensure that all boys and girls have access to quality ECD, care and pre-primary education by 2030.

What is ECD?

Early childhood development (ECD) typically refers to the many skills and milestones that children are expected to attain by the time they reach the age of eight. These milestones include learning how to walk and run, how to talk using simple sentences and how to play with others. In most cases, this type of development occurs naturally when parents and children spend time together in the home, augmented by other activities and experiences.



In an ECD program, age-appropriate learning activities are vital in this critical period of girls' and boys' cognitive, social and emotional development. These early years are a time of remarkable brain growth and so lay the foundation for subsequent learning and development. Good ECD programs attend to a child's health, nutrition, and security as well as providing purposeful learning for their holistic development. ECD is a term that captures this multi-faceted nature of a good early childhood program.

UNESCO definition of ECD

Programs that in addition to providing children with care, offer a structured and purposeful set of learning activities, either in a formal institution (pre-primary) or as part of a non-formal child development program. ECD programs are usually designed for children from age three and include organised learning activities that constitute, on average, the equivalent of at least two hours per day and 100 days per year.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2011a, ISCED level 0 - early childhood education, pp. 26-29.



What are the benefits of ECD?

A good ECD program can provide girls and boys with the following benefits:

- help to improve a child's socialisation (e.g. capacity to interact confidently and cooperate with others)
- develop their pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills
- improve their knowledge about health and hygiene.

ECD can help girls and boys prepare for primary school.

Pre-literacy skills include the ability to identify letters, numbers, or shapes. They also include important skills such as oral language and phonological and phonemic awareness (the awareness of sounds), as well as knowledge of the alphabet and an understanding of common print concepts (e.g. in writing systems such as English, print goes from left to right and from top to bottom on a page).

Pre-numeracy skills include counting, matching, ordering, sorting and classifying (according to colour, shape, size, weight, etc.) and pattern awareness (red, yellow, blue, red, yellow... what comes next?). Key mathematical terminology is introduced (e.g. more, less, plus, equals, match).

A good ECD program can also benefit a child's future primary education in the following ways:

- better performance in literacy and numeracy skills
- higher attention span, due to experience in a classroom setting and/or group learning environments
- more active class participation
- an overall increase in years a child spends in education and their performance.



Key issues in ECD

There are two key related issues regarding ECD.

1. **Equitable access to ECD is a major problem in developing countries.** Despite the compelling evidence that participation in high-quality ECD brings long-lasting academic, social and economic benefits, the most needy—the poorest and most marginalised children, including girls and children with disabilities—are often not reached by good quality ECD provision.
2. **Governments often allocate only a very limited proportion of their education budget to ECD.** Provision of services is usually shared with private providers (churches, communities etc.) and equitable access to good quality ECD—for girls and boys, children with disabilities or from marginalised groups—is highly variable.

4 PRIMARY EDUCATION

What is primary education?

Primary education typically encompasses the first six years of formal schooling. If children enrol at the official entry age, that generally includes six to 12 year olds. In the Pacific, for example, primary education has traditionally been a six-year primary cycle (such as, in Vanuatu) but in some cases (such as, in Palau) primary education is an eight-year cycle.

UNESCO definition of primary education

Programs are generally designed on a unit or project basis to give pupils a sound basic education in reading, writing and mathematics, and an elementary understanding of subjects such as history, geography, natural sciences, social sciences, art and music.



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2011b, ISCED level 1 - primary education, pp. 30-32.

Primary or basic education?

In many countries the term ‘basic education’ refers to the primary school years, plus the first two or three years of junior secondary school (an eight or nine-year cycle). Some countries include pre-school in their definition of basic education. For example, the Solomon Islands defines basic education to include ECD, primary school, and junior secondary schooling.



What is the purpose of primary education?

The purpose of primary education is to support girls and boys in progressively gaining core skills in literacy, numeracy, critical thinking and culturally-appropriate learning content areas. Children develop rapidly between the ages of six and 12, so teaching and learning approaches must be designed to reflect developmental stages.

An important first step is understanding who is—and who is not—in school. Listed below are some of the main indicators used in education:

- gross enrolment ratio (GER) – the percentage of ‘any age’ children enrolled
- net enrolment ratio (NER) – the percentage of ‘right age’ children enrolled
- primary drop-out rate
- grade repetition rate – calculated by gender and population sub-groups
- the primary completion rate (PCR) – the proportion of Year 1 starters that complete six years of primary education
- Gender Parity Index (GPI) – the ratio of girls to boys in education.

GER explained

What is the definition of primary school GER?

The gross enrolment ratio (GER) is defined as the total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school-age population.

To calculate primary school GER divide the number of pupils enrolled in primary education, regardless of age, by the number of children of primary age (e.g. from census data).

For example, if a nation has 900,000 children enrolled in primary schools in 2017/18, this number is divided by the total number of primary-aged individuals. Suppose this total is 1,000,000. This makes a GER of 90 per cent (900,000 divided by 1,000,000).

GER can be greater than 100 per cent as a result of grade repetition and entry at ages younger or older than the typical age at that grade level. That is, you can have 1.1 million children in primary school, with a 1,000,000 ‘right age’ population. That would give you a GER of 110 per cent. For this reason, the GER figure needs to be used with care, as a GER close to 100 per cent could consist of large numbers of over-age, late-entry or grade repeating children.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics n.d., UIS Stat.; 2017b, Gross enrolment ratio.





NER explained

What is the definition of primary school NER?

The primary school net enrolment ratio (NER) is the number of children of official primary school age that are enrolled in primary school, divided by the total number of primary-aged individuals. For this reason, the NER cannot exceed 100 per cent. For example, according to the 2015 UNESCO Institute of Statistics data, Liberia had the lowest primary education NER in the world, at 38 per cent. This means that out of every 100 children within the official age group for primary education, only 38 were enrolled in school.

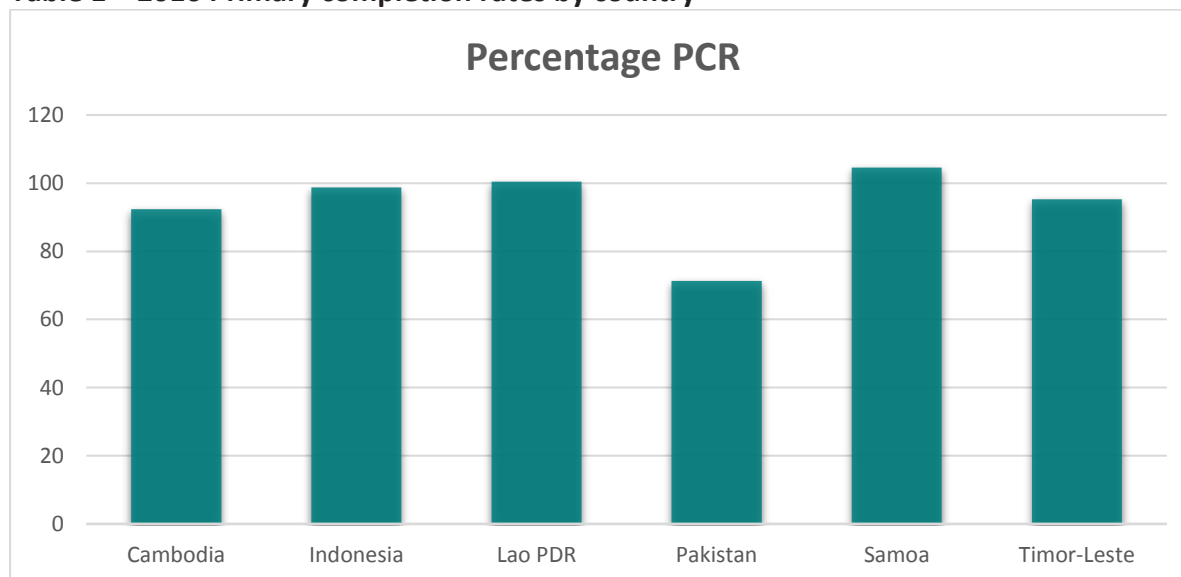


Sources: UNESCO Institute for Statistics n.d., UIS Stat.; 2017a, 'Net enrolment rate'.

Primary completion rates by country

The bar chart in Table 1 shows wide variety in primary completion rates (PCR). There are several ways to calculate the PCR, but all determine the proportion of Year 1 starters who complete six years of primary education. The PCR includes all children, so we can see that Indonesia has a PCR of over 100 per cent.

Table 1 – 2016 Primary completion rates by country



Source: World Bank 2017, DataBank: World development indicators.



An activity for you

Review the table below. Which option is most likely to illustrate the average GER and NER for girls and boys in primary education in developing countries (2015)?



Options	Boys GER	Girls GER	Boys NER	Girls NER
Option a	92%	98%	57%	82%
Option b	105%	104%	90%	88%
Option c	105%	85%	103%	96%
Option d	85%	115%	88%	102%

Check your answer.

The average GER in developing countries in primary education is 105 per cent for boys and 104 per cent for girls (Option b).

The average NER is 90 per cent for boys and 88 per cent for girls (Option b).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics n.d., UIS Stat.

Key issues in primary education

Equitable access, quality and completion of primary education are critical. Despite vast improvements in the enrolment rate globally, a large proportion of the school age population, especially girls, is not on track to complete the primary level in many countries.

Access, participation and completion are all important indicators to track. Disaggregated indicators such as the NER, GER, GPI, primary drop-out, grade repetition and primary completion rates are all tools to show how equitable and efficient a school system is.

An activity for you

Compare these case studies:

- [Primary school on the island of Manono in Samoa](#)
- [Malawi blog post on teacher shortage](#)



Watch the short film of children at their primary school on the small island of Manono in Samoa and contrast their situation with the children in the Malawi blog post. Complete the activity by reading the short blog. Take note of the differences of the class size statistics.

Sources: We Said Go Travel 2011, Manono Island schoolchildren; Antoninis 2014, Malawi: A shortage of teachers is putting children's learning at risk.



5 SECONDARY EDUCATION

What is secondary education?

Secondary education typically relates to the six years of schooling from Years 7 to 12. This is often broken into two parts: junior secondary (Years 7-9); and senior secondary (Years 10-12). In terms of global targets this is important because, as noted earlier, ‘basic education’ is often defined as the completion of eight or nine years of schooling (primary plus junior secondary). The SDG target calls for free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education for all girls and boys.

Many secondary school systems introduce technical and vocational subjects, facilitating learning pathways into apprenticeships and technical training, as well as traditional academic subjects.

The key indicators in secondary education relate to transition points or interconnections, including:

- primary–secondary transition rate (the proportion of primary completers who enrol in secondary)
- junior secondary–senior secondary transition rate
- secondary completion rate.

Many countries have high stakes exams at these transition points.

UNESCO definition of secondary education

Secondary education is made up of two stages: lower and upper secondary.

Lower secondary is generally designed to continue the basic programs of the primary level but the teaching is more typically subject-focused, requiring more specialised teachers for each subject area. The end of this level often coincides with the end of compulsory education.

In upper secondary, the final stage of secondary education in most countries, instruction is often organised even more along subject lines, and teachers typically need a higher or more subject specific qualification than at lower secondary.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2011c, ISCED level 2- lower secondary education, pp. 33-37; 2011d, ISCED level 3- upper secondary education, pp. 38-42.





An activity for you

Go to the **UIS Statistics database**. Using the table below, what is the average GER of young people in:

A - Lower secondary schooling in developing countries in 2015?; and

B - Upper secondary schooling in developing countries in 2015?



Options	GER lower secondary	GER upper secondary
Option a	65%	40%
Option b	90%	70%
Option c	55%	30%
Option d	83%	63%

Check your answers.

A - Gross enrolment in developing countries in lower secondary education was 83 per cent in 2015 (Option d).

B - Gross enrolment in developing countries in upper secondary was 63 per cent in 2015 (Option d).

If we look at these rates by gender, some interesting differences emerge. For instance, across all developing countries, there is no significant difference in the percentage of boys enrolled in secondary education compared to girls. At the lower secondary level, 83 per cent of boys are enrolled, compared to 82 per cent for girls; at the upper secondary level, 63 per cent of boys are enrolled, compared to 62 per cent for girls (2015).

However, at the country level, the gender disparity is clearer. Available data shows that in Lao PDR, 41 per cent of girls are in upper secondary compared with 46 per cent of boys. In Pakistan it is 30 per cent and 40 per cent respectively. But in Samoa, 85 per cent of girls are enrolled in upper secondary, compared with 71 per cent of boys.

Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) n.d., UIS Stat.

Key issues in secondary education

There are significant access, equity and quality issues in secondary education, especially when good quality secondary schools are not available in all parts of the country. In many partner countries, gender inequality and low levels of income are reflected in significant variations in secondary enrolment. Key issues include:

- secondary schools are expensive for parents (e.g. for tuition fees, books, uniforms, transport, boarding and income foregone)
- poorer families struggle to meet the costs and often favour educating boys rather than girls
- the curriculum may have limited relevance to needs for life skills or the local job market
- teacher training may be inadequate and qualified teachers may be in short supply
- lower numbers of female teachers may affect parental choice about whether to educate girls
- learning materials may be inappropriate to the national context
- inadequate facilities may discourage attendance (e.g. for girls or children with disabilities).



6 TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)

What is TVET?

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs are designed mainly to prepare students for direct entry into a particular occupation or trade.

Definitions of TVET from UNESCO and UNEVOC

TVET is used as a comprehensive term referring to the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge related to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life.

Source: UNESCO-UNEVOC 2017, What is TVET?



For the first time, TVET has been introduced into the global development agenda with specific targets (SDG targets 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5) for measuring access, equity and quality outcomes for all girls and boys, men and women. It recognises the importance of a skilled and educated population that can adapt to a broad range of employment pathways.

Examples of ‘traditional’ trade subjects taught in TVET courses, include:

- carpentry
- plumbing
- electrical work
- mechanics
- metal work
- construction work.

Examples of service-based subjects taught in TVET courses, include:

- tourism
- health services
- hospitality
- information and communication technology (ICT).

TVET programs are typically:

- school-based (e.g. integrated within secondary schools)
- centre-based (e.g. in dedicated trade training facilities)
- enterprise-based – in businesses (e.g. apprenticeship schemes).



Case study: Marine Training Centre in Kiribati

The Marine Training Centre (MTC) was established with the assistance of funding primarily from Australia and New Zealand. As an island nation, Kiribati has limited natural resources. The MTC recognises the long and proud tradition that the country has established as sea-farers and aims to build on those skills and experiences. Other than technical sea-faring competencies, it also focuses on self and time management skills.



Given the limited employment opportunities on the islands, it was imperative the MTC's qualifications were internationally recognised, enhancing the job prospects of its graduates. The money repatriated by expatriate Kiribati seamen to their families is a major source of income for their respective local economies. The funding provided by the donor partners has been invested in a clinic, training equipment, vessels and facilities, training programs and the training of MTC instructors. 'Observers' trained at the MTC play a crucial role in overseeing the international fishing licences sold to generate significant income for Kiribati. Hospitality and first aid skills are also developed in the MTC.

If you have access, take a look at the film about the [Marine Training Centre in Kiribati](#).

Source: Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) 2010.

Case study 2: TVET reform in Bangladesh

The TVET reform project in Bangladesh focused on promoting a market-orientated and flexible TVET system to respond to the demand for competitive skills of the modern sector, as well as the needs of young people and under-privileged groups.



The skills development sector in Bangladesh reflects gender inequalities, which lead to gender divisions in many roles. Increasing access to TVET and employment opportunities for women was an important feature of the project. For example, the leather industry was identified as a growth industry which could provide employment for young people, and especially women.

The project achieved a number of results. These included the approval of a National Skills Development Policy, a National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework, the establishment of industry skills councils, and a model for informal apprenticeships in more than 12 trades. A target of 25 per cent public female TVET students was achieved.

Take a look at the [testimonial of a female project beneficiary](#).

Source: International Cooperation and Development 2018, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Reform in Bangladesh: Testimony, Amina Akhter, project beneficiary.

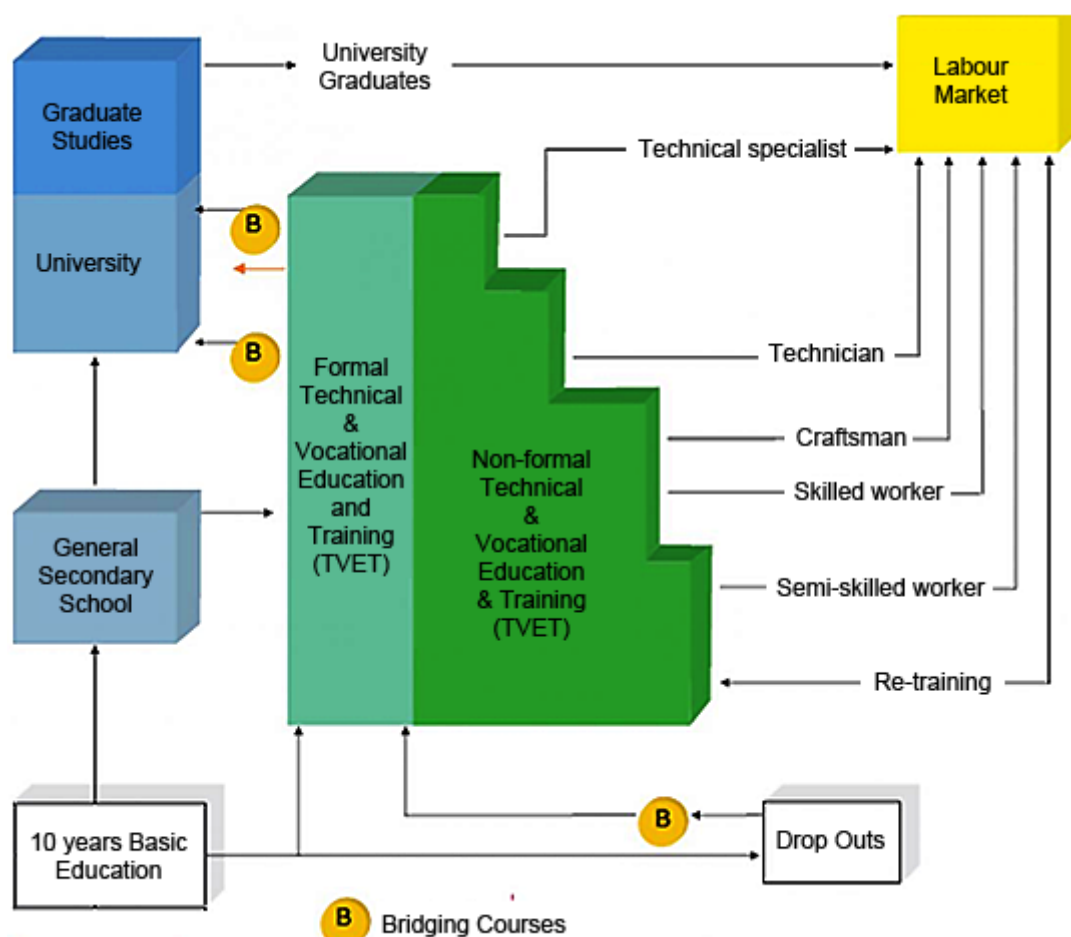


Understanding how a TVET program works

Technical and vocational education and training programs frequently offer multiple entry points for school leavers and out-of-school youth, and enable adult participation. Many countries build connections between secondary education, TVET, adult education and the university system, so that people have the opportunity to access all education and training streams, irrespective of their learning background.

Vocational training that provides women and men with skills and knowledge specific to a particular job, trade or vocation enhances their ability to do that job and their marketability as labour suppliers. However, girls and women are often over-represented in the ‘traditional’ female training programs like tailoring, hairdressing, secretarial studies, nursing, food and nutrition. Boys and men dominate ‘traditional’ male fields like carpentry, bricklaying, motor mechanics and engineering. These different paths usually result in different outcomes and, in particular, different earnings. Currently, the nature of the labour market is changing and an increasing number of occupations today are technical and/or require the application of technology.

Figure 1 – An example of a TVET structure



Source: UNESCO-UNEVOC 2012, World TVET Database: Palestine.



7 HIGHER EDUCATION

What is higher education?

Higher education typically refers to university level study. It often includes teacher education institutions and other specialised training institutions.

University education represents degree-based programs at the post-secondary (higher) level. For many developing countries, a relatively small proportion of the population has access to university education, or has completed a degree. This is important because the cost to a country of providing a year at university is typically 10 times (sometimes much more) the cost of a year at primary school.

The allocation of funding by education sub-sector is often a significant element of sector planning, in terms of equity and access. Most of the larger developing countries have universities. Some smaller countries have access to a regional university such as the University of the South Pacific. Some students study through distance learning and some gain scholarships to study overseas.

Key issues in higher education

Disadvantaged Groups

Female students, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and people living in rural/remote areas tend to be under-represented at the higher education level as a result of being disadvantaged at the primary and secondary levels. In this way, disadvantage or exclusion at one stage of the education system can carry forward to later stages. If parts of the population are excluded from primary or secondary education, they are likely to be excluded from higher education too.

Recognising the disadvantage faced by many people in accessing tertiary education (including TVET and university education), the global target for education calls for a substantial increase in the number of scholarships available to low-income countries and small island states for enrolment in higher education in developed countries (SDG 4.b).

Source: UNESCO 2016, Laying the foundation to measure Sustainable Development Goal 4.

Challenges

Universities in developing countries face considerable challenges. Funding is a major issue. Others challenges include:

- establishing and maintaining quality assurance standards
- attracting and retaining good quality staff and addressing gender imbalance
- providing student accommodation
- developing a robust research culture.



8 NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

What are non-formal education and lifelong learning?

Non-formal education refers to structured learning activities that do not usually result in the award of a qualification. They are organised outside the formal education system. Examples include training workshops, community-based information sessions, adult literacy programs, and applied learning activities (e.g. community training on school maintenance; school-community workshops on improved water and sanitation). They often target out-of-school children and youth, providing education fundamentals (e.g. functional literacy/numeracy), life skills, work skills and reinforcing general culture.

Lifelong learning encompasses non-formal education and acknowledges that learning never stops. The priority of lifelong learning in many developing countries is on increasing adult literacy rates, linked with sustainable livelihood topics. Lifelong learning also targets the development of skills and knowledge directly applicable to the workplace. A substantial proportion of capacity building investment provided by DFAT and other development partners may be categorised as non-formal education and lifelong learning. This may include on-the-job training, domestic/international workshops, peer support or tailored training programs.

9 PATHWAYS THROUGH EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education systems try to build in flexibility

The education sub-sectors are generally designed as a straight and direct pathway (e.g. early childhood education → primary → secondary → TVET/higher education), facilitating a smooth passage through the education system. However, for some learners the pathway is not so smooth.

What reasons could influence a learner's education pathway?

A learner's education pathway may be influenced by:

- late start to education
- dropout and later return
- missed stages.



Reasons for missing stages of education

People may miss stages of their education owing to:

- natural disasters
- conflict
- personal reasons (e.g. household responsibilities)
- financial reasons
- internal mobility or displacement
- equity issues (gender, disability and ethnicity).

Many education systems build in flexibility to increase the chances of getting all children and young people into the system in the first place, and to facilitate re-entry for those who have left.



Purpose of multiple pathways

Multiple pathways through education and training provide a greater opportunity for age-appropriate learning (e.g. teenagers accessing primary level education for the first time), allow people to change 'streams' as their life situations change (e.g. to move from a vocational program to an academic degree, and vice versa), and facilitate multiple re-entry points for training or re-training. Having an integrated education system, where one stage is linked to another and alternative pathways are offered, results in improved educational outcomes, enhanced inclusion, accessibility, education and employment opportunities, and economic and social development.



An activity for you

What does an education and training system look like in a country DFAT works in?

Figure 2 below shows the Papua New Guinea (PNG) education and training system. It shows clearly the different education and training pathways that students may take. Using this diagram answer these questions.

Questions

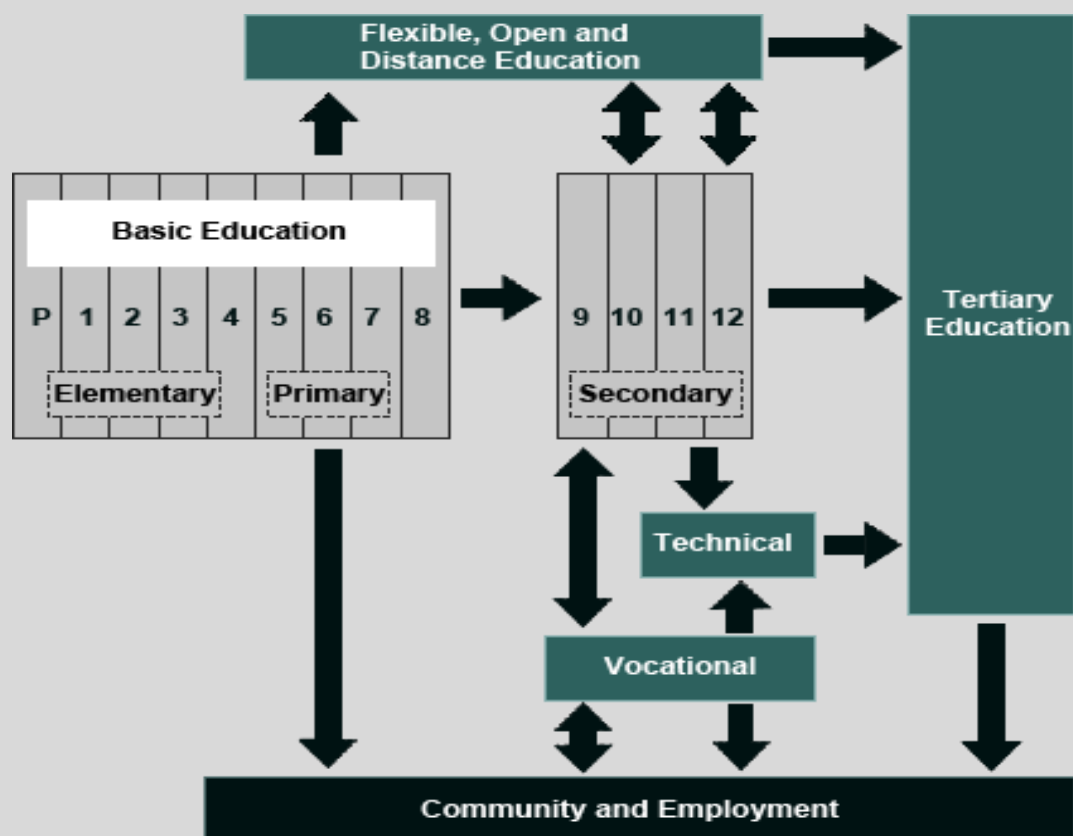
1. How many years of schooling are in the basic education cycle in PNG?
2. What are the three possible pathways after basic education?
3. What possible pathways are available after secondary school?
4. What do the double-ended arrows mean?





An activity for you (cont.)

Figure 2 – Papua New Guinea education and training system



Source: Papua New Guinea (PNG) Department of Education 2004, Achieving a better future: a national plan for education 2005-2014, p. 4.

Check your answers.

1. Nine years (pre-school, elementary and primary).
2. 'Flexible, open and distance education', 'community and employment', and 'secondary education'.
3. 'Flexible, open and distance education', 'vocational, technical' and 'tertiary education'.
4. Students might move along these pathways in either direction.



What influences the way education systems are structured?

Education systems in developing countries have typically evolved through their particular colonial and missionary legacy, with external models largely replacing the traditional indigenous approaches to learning. Over the last century or so, these structures have become formalised and enshrined in legal frameworks like Education Acts. While there is much in common among education systems, there is also considerable variation.

Education structures continue to evolve, as government priorities demand reform. Lengthening the compulsory basic education cycle, for example, is a common structural change.

In the Pacific, for example, each country is unique in the way its education system is structured and managed.

Case study: Education systems in Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa



In **Vanuatu**, a colonial legacy is the existence of parallel systems of English- and French-speaking primary and secondary schools, with distinctly different curriculum approaches.

In **Fiji**, nearly all primary schools are owned by the local community, not the government.

In **Tonga**, junior secondary education is largely church-run. In addition to the Tongan government, thirteen education authorities operate education programs.

In **Samoa**, historical links with New Zealand have put their stamp on the system. There are 140 government primary schools and 24 government secondary schools. Like in Tonga, churches are particularly active at the secondary level and run 17 of their own schools. Samoa has its own university.

10 GENDER CONSIDERATIONS

Gender, youth and skills

In many countries there is a strong relationship between low education and working poverty. But just completing secondary education does not ensure that young people have the skills needed to find adequately paid work. It depends on where they live and their gender.

For example, less than 30 per cent of both rural and urban women in Nepal who have completed secondary education earn above the poverty line. But 40 per cent of young men who have not even completed secondary education are more likely to earn an



adequate wage than better educated young women. The reasons are complex and vary by country. The important point for policymakers is that gender gaps start early and persist throughout the stages of education. Therefore we need to better understand the reasons behind these differences.

Source: UNESCO 2012, Youth and skills: Putting education to work, p.18.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and outcomes

Girls, in particular, should be the focus of initiatives to increase participation rates at all levels. Table 2 below highlights the discrepancies in enrolments at different levels of education systems in the world and other differences between males and females, against the education SDG targets.

Table 2 – Discrepancies in enrolment

Global Outcomes (2015 & 2016)	Male	Female
Target 4.2:		
Pre-primary gross enrolment ratio	49%	48%
Target 4.1:		
Primary net enrolment ratio	90%	89%
Out-of-school primary age children	29 million	32.4 million
Target 4.1:		
Secondary gross enrolment ratio	77%	76%
Out-of-school adolescents of lower secondary school age	32.1 million	29.8 million
Out-of-school adolescents of upper secondary school age	72.3 million	68.7 million
Target 4.6:		
Adult literacy rate	90%	83%
Youth literacy rate	93%	90%

Sources: UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) n.d., UIS Stat.; UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) & UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report 2017, Reducing global poverty through universal primary and secondary education.



Key messages on gender



Despite two decades of progress in improving education access for all children, girls are still more likely than boys to remain excluded from school. According to UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) data, 15 million girls between six and 10 years of age will never set foot in the classroom compared to about 10 million boys, if current trends continue. In many countries, the gap tends to widen with higher levels of education. However, the good news is that girls who do enrol are more likely to complete primary school, even if they must repeat grades.

Educating girls can have a catalytic impact on other areas of social and economic development. For example, each additional year of schooling for girls can lead to an average increase of 10 per cent of earnings. Subsequently, when women earn, they are more likely to invest 90 per cent of their income into their families compared with 30 to 40 per cent for men. Educated girls tend to marry later and have fewer, healthier children. A child whose mother can read is 50 per cent more likely to live past the age of five, 50 per cent more likely to be immunised and twice as likely to enrol in school.

SDG 4 on quality education and SDG 5 on gender equality commit governments to invest in boys and girls, women and men with the necessary skills and competencies to participate equally in the economy, in their families and in their communities. Examples of proven measures that can overcome barriers to gender equality in education include:

- making schools safe and responsive to girls' needs
- targeted financing to make school more affordable for girls, such as cash transfers, scholarships and stipends
- hiring more female teachers
- developing gender sensitive teaching and learning materials
- advocacy and community efforts to address cultural norms, such as early marriage.

Sources: The Global Partnership for Education 2017, Girls Education and Gender Equality; The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity (Education Commission) 2016, The learning generation: Investing in education for a changing world, p. 99; UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) 2017c, eAtlas of Gender Equality in Education.



11 TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE



Assessment questions

Answer the following questions by ticking 'True' or 'False'. Once you have selected your answers to all the questions, turn the page to 'The correct answers are...' to check the accuracy of your answers.

Question 1

Developing countries find it difficult to provide access to early childhood development (ECD) programs for all children, so they prioritise enrolment of the poorest and most marginalised children.

Is this statement true or false?

☐ True

☐ False

Question 2

A primary school Year 3 gross enrolment ratio (GER) can exceed 100 per cent.

Is this statement true or false?

☐ True

☐ False

Question 3

A high primary completion rate (PCR) shows that most children have achieved a good quality education during their primary school years.

Is this statement true or false?

☐ True

☐ False

Question 4

In many countries the term 'basic education' refers to the primary school years and the first two or three years of junior secondary school (an eight or nine-year cycle).

Is this statement true or false?

☐ True

☐ False

Question 5

People successfully completing non-formal education courses normally receive qualifications.

Is this statement true or false?

☐ True

☐ False



Question 6

Today's education systems in developing countries are typically the result of policies developed when they became independent nations.

Is this statement true or false?

☐ True

☐ False



The correct answers are...



Question 1

Developing countries find it difficult to provide access to early childhood development (ECD) programs for all children, so they prioritise enrolment of the poorest and most marginalised children.

This statement is false. The reality is that the most needy children are typically the ones not reached by good quality ECD.

Question 2

A primary school Year 3 gross enrolment ratio (GER) can exceed 100 per cent.

This statement is true. The GER can exceed 100 per cent because of grade repetition and children enrolling at ages younger or older than the typical age at Year 3. The GER is defined as the total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school-age population.

To calculate primary school GER divide the number of pupils enrolled in primary education, regardless of age, by the number of children of primary age (e.g. from census data).

Question 3

A high primary completion rate (PCR) shows that most children have achieved a good quality education during their primary school years

The statement is false. Many children complete primary school without learning adequately. We need to look at learning assessment results too.

Question 4

In many countries the term 'basic education' refers to the primary school years and the first two or three years of junior secondary school (an eight or nine-year cycle).

The statement is true.



Question 5

People successfully completing non-formal education courses normally receive qualifications.

The statement is false. Non-formal education courses are provided outside the formal education system and so qualifications are not normally awarded.

Question 6

Today's education systems in developing countries are typically the result of policies developed when they became independent nations.

The statement is false. On the contrary, colonial and missionary legacies typically remain the basis for the education systems we see in many countries today.



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Learn more about...

- ✂ You can learn read more about these issues in this article by Helen Murray, 2010, *Early childhood care and education as a strategy for poverty reduction: Evidence from young lives (Young Lives Policy Brief 9)*, found at, <http://www.younglives.org.uk/files/policy-papers/early-childhood-care-and-education-as-a-strategy-for-poverty-reduction-evidence-from-young-lives>
- ✂ You can learn more at the UNESCO website, found at, <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/international-standard-classification-of-education.aspx>
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- ✎ You can read more about non-formal education on the UNESCO-UNEVOC website, found at, <http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php>
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- ✎ You can read a very clear overview of ECCE in *The Education for All Global Monitoring Report, UNESCO 2012, Expanding equitable early childhood care and education is an urgent need, Education for all global monitoring report (Policy Paper 03)*, found at, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002160/216038e.pdf>
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- ✎ You can learn more by reading the UNICEF Early Childhood resources, found at, http://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/index_3870.html
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