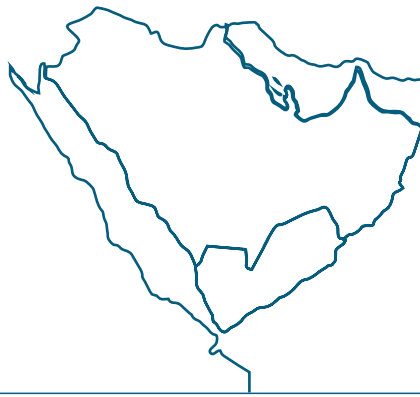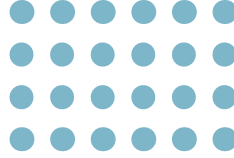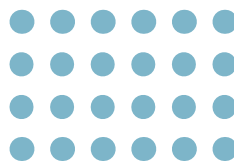# Education in the GCC Countries

Towards Achieving Sustainable Development

Prepared by
Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States
(ABEGS)

Educcation
2030

Education in the GCC Countries

Towards Achieving Sustainable Development

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Executive summary

This report details the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) efforts to attain Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), as well as its targets and indicators, and the specific achievements accomplished in the years after the world community accepted these targets in 2015.

The Bureau's member states set out to incorporate the fourth goal's targets into their development plans and future goals, according to the report. This affirms their commitment to achieving this aim by devoting the appropriate resources.

The report casts light on the efforts of the ministries of education of these countries in forming committees and task forces. These include development partners from government agencies and the civil sector, in order to ensure effective community participation in the preparation of national reports based on monitoring and assessment mechanisms.

Many initiatives and success stories achieved by these countries in various disciplines and levels of education have aided and supported this effort, demonstrating the amount of engagement and cooperation between their respective institutions.

The report reflects the member states' progress toward the fourth goal's aims, as well as the efforts they have taken to assure the achievement of the relevant metrics. The report also highlights the difficulties that these states may have encountered.

Contents

ABEGS Director-General's Preface ....

   The Member States of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) pay close attention to sustainable development and the various initiatives associated with this. The report therefore reflects their leaders' current and future interests in qualifying people to lead safe and comfortable lives. In fact, the Arab Gulf States' development plans and programs have prioritized "education" as a key component of human development. This is due to members' conviction that education is the best method of achieving various developmental processes. The Bureau States have dedicated their strenuous efforts to education and lavishly spent on their plans to disseminate their findings to reach a wide audience. The Bureau States are also extremely keen to boost the report's efficiency and quality. Their efforts in this area are in harmony with the calls of the international community to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 4 on education, which seeks to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."

   The Bureau Member States have intensified their efforts, individually and collectively, to achieve this goal with its educational and humanitarian targets and dimensions and coordinate cooperation between them. The Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States has played a major role in this regard. This role has clearly deepened since the Bureau was selected to be a member of the Supreme Steering Committee of the United Nations Program for Sustainable Development 2030, on behalf of the Arab countries group. It has coordinated their efforts and brought them to the attention of international organizations, exchanged experiences and reports, and offered training workshops for experts and individuals interested in accomplishing the fourth goal. It also aims to share perspectives on how to generate reports that highlight national development plans and countries' policies

and procedures, in order to improve performance and enable the education sector to fulfill its purpose and achieve its goals and objectives.

The Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States have developed this report as part of its efforts to document the efforts of its member states' ministries of education, to achieve the fourth goal of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. It relied heavily on reports sent to UNESCO as well as those submitted to the Bureau.

I am extremely pleased to point out that this report has come out after the Bureau States managed to overcome the COVID-19 crisis with the help of Allah and the support of their leaders. I will not delve into the report's specifics or content because I wish for readers to discover the report's accomplishments for themselves. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who helped prepare and draft this report. I also want to thank His Excellency Dr. Abdulsalam Al-Joufi, the Bureau advisor, His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Al Yaqoubi, Mr. Badr Al-Harthi, and the rest of the Ministry of Education of Oman's personnel for their exceptional efforts in preparing this document.

Director-General
Dr. Abdulrahman M. Alasmi
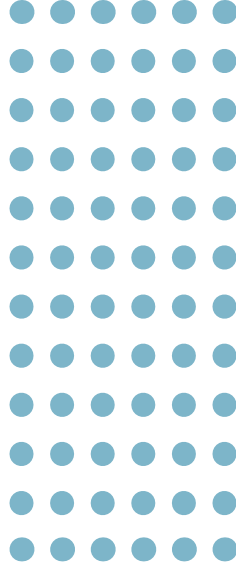
Introduction and context

1. Introduction

In September 2015, member states of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) pledged to abide by the international community resolution to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, including the fourth goal on Educati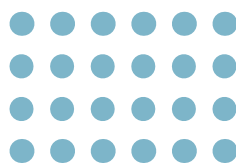on. This goal is regarded as a key enabler of achieving the other goals of sustainable development, "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". Hence, the member-state governments have prioritized education by incorporating goal 4 and its targets into their national and developmental agendas, thus developing and strengthening its necessary legislations, policies and strategies, and modernizing its programs and institutions. It comes out of members' unwavering belief in the importance of continuous upgrade and improvement in order to absorb the upcoming changes. It will enable members to meet the challenges which will help the education sector to fulfill its function, achieve its goals and targets, including transferring knowledge, adoption of technology and increasing research, innovation and community services. In order achieve this goal, the member states have formed national committees comprised of representatives from diverse educational sectors to develop the appropriate plans which are aimed at incorporating the goals and indicators into their national strategies, five-year plans, and future visions. This is in addition to promoting their programs and initiatives, allocating adequate funding to satisfy their needs, building systems to assure follow-up, monitoring, and execution, and implementing information and education programs to enhance societal awareness.

United Arab Emirates

Since its establishment, the constitution of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has guaranteed the right to compulsory and free education for all citizens at all levels within the country. Article 17 of the constitution emphasizes the importance of education for society's development, and the government's role in formulating the necessary plans to promote education. Moreover, the UAE has attempted to align its national educational strategy with goal 4 by establishing national task forces which are focused on achieving the goal of education 2030 and activating the appropriate national coordination mechanisms among education stakeholders, in order to unify their efforts towards high quality outcomes.

The Kingdom of Bahrain

According to the constitution, basic education in the Kingdom of Bahrain is compulsory for nine school years and is free until the conclusion of the secondary stage. Bahrain has praised the UN's initiative to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals 2030. It has taken

a number of actions to achieve the goals, including the formation of a steering committee to oversee the achievement of goal 4 targets, and teams to oversee the execution of each goal's indicators, resources and measurement methods; together with the collection of necessary data. Operating plans have also been developed along with revisions to laws and standards based on a legislated scientific methodology for documenting the developmental progress.

The Republic of Yemen

The Republic of Yemen faces a troublesome situation because of the conflict between the government and armed groups in most parts of the country, which has wreaked havoc on the infrastructure of various sectors, including education. Education is directly affected, with a school dropout rate of 75 % for pupils in both primary and secondary schools. The Ministry of Education in Yemen, on the other hand, adopted an educational policy that aspires to achieve the fourth goal of sustainable development as an essential pillar. The three-year transitional education plan 2022-2020 was created to increase enrollment rates, decrease dropout rates, close gender inequalities, and improve educational quality.

State of Kuwait

Article 13 of the Kuwait Constitution promulgated in 1961, states that education is a

fundamental component which is guaranteed and supported by the State. The Compulsory Education Act stipulates that all Kuwaiti students, male and female, must attend school from primary level to the end of intermediate education. Moreover, a ministerial resolution was made stating that education is mandatory for nine years. Kuwait has formed a supreme consultative council to follow up on the fourth goal's execution. Based on His Highness the Emir of Kuwait's future vision 2035 and guided by the education strategy in accordance with the first Sustainable Development Goals 2025, its role is to prepare reports on educational status, develop a time-bound plan to achieve the goal, oversee the targets by monitoring obstacles and feedback, and provide appropriate solutions.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Article 30 of the Basic Law of government emphasizes the importance of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and vows, "The state provides public education and vows to combat illiteracy." The Kingdom's ambitious 2030 vision is regarded as the driving force behind all development programs. One of the Kingdom's most prominent efforts is the formation of a national committee to pursue the Sustainable Development Goal 4 Agenda. The committee's mission is to lead efforts, develop plans and implement Initiatives relevant to Sustainable Development Goal 4 and to support the concerned stakeholders in the achievement of the other goals linked to education. To accomplish goal 4 targets, the committee has been keen to use effective monitoring and follow-up mechanisms.

Sultanate of Oman

Education is a fundamental right for all people in the Sultanate of Oman, as guaranteed by the state's Basic Law. Under the 2014 Law on the Rights of the Child, the government provides free education to males and females starting from the first grade and continuing until the end of the general education, as well as a compulsory education until the tenth grade. The Sultanate has formed a national team made up of education stakeholders. Their task is to monitor the implementation of the Global Education Framework 2030, as well as link and integrate the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly goal 4, with the goals and programs of the National Education Strategy 2040. This is in addition to monitoring the implementation of goal 4 targets based on indicators, providing periodic reports on progress, and making relevant recommendations to decision makers.

State of Qatar

Article 49 of the Qatari constitution states that everyone has the right to education, while the Compulsory Education Act No. 25 of 2001, as amended in 2009, stipulates that education is free and mandatory from primary school to the end of the preparatory school, or until the child reaches the age of eighteen. Qatar formed The National Commission for Education for

All 2030, which includes members from the various authorities involved in the development of the National Education for All 2030's plans. In addition, Qatar monitors its implementation in cooperation with relevant ministries and bodies in line with the targets outlined in the education and training sector strategy, Qatar Vision 2030 and the International Sustainable Development Plan 2030, particularly goal 4 and its targets.

2. Future Plans and Directions

The Gulf member states have developed their future plans and strategies based on ambitious visions which differ depending on the state (Kuwait 2035, Qatar 2030, Bahrain 2030, Saudi 2030, Oman 2040, UAE 2021, Yemen 2022).

These visions are based on an examination of the education sector and the identification of priorities and strategies that focus on the specific targets of the SDG 4, through setting developmental plans, initiatives, programs and activities. This will be accompanied by nationwide development, implementation, and monitoring mechanisms at the governmental level, as well as coordination and integration with both domestic and international partners. These countries have created the following strategies as part of their future directions in order to achieve the targets of the SDG 4 over the next years:

United Arab Emirates

The following are the most prominent directions in the UAE's plan to achieve goal 4:

1. Integrate the policy-making and policy-implementation processes, as well as improve coordination, to maintain a system-wide perspective in education.
2. Coordinate with relevant stakeholders on the indicators that require the UNESCO Institute of Statistics and the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority to approve a definition.
3. Determine future labor market requirements in accordance with the national policies on Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning.
4. Invest in early education through increasing access and enrollment to its programs and improving the services provided.
5. Encourage students to become innovators and leaders in order to contribute to the well-being of their families and develop their communities and countries.
6. Focus on teaching the history, cultures, and civilizations of other countries in addition to new languages in order to foster openness to lived experiences of developed countries.
7. Encourage students to excel by teaching them science, mathematics, engineering, technology and reading skills.
8. Expand vocational education opportunities in each of the State's emirates.

9. Define national initiatives to improve the fourth goal's achievement, foster common awareness and political commitment; and support the fourth goal's incorporation into the national education plan and policy.

10. Create the most up-to-date educational data center to facilitate the provision of information and analysis, and support decision-making processes.

11. Adopt governmental accelerators as a vehicle to support Ministry of Education employees in achieving ambitious goals and implementing national indicators, policies, programs and government initiatives and services.

12. Initiate creative solutions to overcome challenges and obstacles to ongoing education development projects.

13. Develop an effective communication strategy based on three key principles: awareness, participation, and monitoring.

The Republic of Yemen

The Yemen's current circumstances has impeded its ambitions and made it difficult to achieve its goals as it struggles to keep the educational process ongoing without giving up. It also aspires to provide more equitable and equal education opportunities for youngsters during the coming years. Furthermore, the country will make every effort to incorporate and adapt the targets of the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2030 into its future plans and programs.

The Kingdom of Bahrain

Through a set of measures aimed at implementing the fourth goal, the Kingdom of Bahrain has created a road map to assist in meeting the educational targets and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The following are some of the most prominent measures they have taken:

1. Participation in international competitions, as well as the development of an ambitious plan to contribute to the process of improving and benefiting from students' performance in these tests, in order to enhance the quality of education and the effectiveness of the curricula being used.

2. Development of a strategy to promote private sector investment in early education and a second strategy for higher education that lasts until 2030, and adopt it as a source for knowledge and creativity, together with a strategic partner for Bahraini economic institutions for their industrial and commercial projects.

3. Establishment of public and private universities, as well as enhancing academic fields to meet labor market needs.

4. Preparing schools to accommodate students with special needs based on their capacities.

5. Development of new technical and professional specialities for girls, which will help them gain 21st century skills and keep up with the labor market needs.

6. Cooperation with appropriate authorities to develop a large-scale data system that allows for the collection of up-to-date statistics that help to maintain decision-making and knowledge advancement. This will also strengthen the educational infrastructure and enhance the level of readiness and preparation until 2030.

7. Enhancing the competitiveness of the higher education institutions by raising scientific research and innovation standards and obtaining the desired competitiveness on the domestic and international level.

8. Development of a vocational training system that will contribute to raising the professional level of educational leaders in schools and universities until 2030.

The State of Kuwait

Kuwait is reliant on a variety of strategies in order to implement future suggestions, the most important of which are as follows:

1. Rethinking and updating the education vision 2005-2025 based on Kuwait's new vision 2035, which is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. Improving national capabilities to serve as a statistical follow-up on educational goals, including the fourth goal's indicators.

3. Establishment of a supreme advisory committee to oversee the implementation of goal 4, including the preparation of brief reports on educational progress, the development of a time-bound plan to achieve the educational objectives, the monitoring of obstacles and feedbacks, the provision of solutions, and the evaluation of the level of goals.

4. Continuous professional development for teachers, particularly in primary schools and kindergartens.

5. Incorporation of more sustainable development principles and global goals into curricula and school activities, including environmental preservation on a local and global scale.

6. Inclusion of kindergarten in compulsory education.

7. Continuous media education on human rights, gender equality in education, and focusing on knowledge and application of the principle of respect for human rights and equality of races, religions, and doctrines.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

According to its ambitious Vision 2030, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continues to enhance the educational system and all of its components. The most significant parts are:

1. A capacity–building program aimed at improving the outcomes of education and training system at all levels, from early education through to lifelong education and training, and enhancing family participation in preparing their children for the future. Additionally, educational outcomes must be aligned with labor market requirements.

2. Development of educational job regulations in terms of procedures, mechanisms and features that ensure professionalism of teaching jobs, seriousness of work and educational system discipline, as well as promotion of justice and reward based on outstanding performance through performance-related promotions.

3. Development of public education laws and regulations in accordance with the Kingdom's vision 2030, and creation of an institutional structure within its various sectors, together with a full definition of specialized performance indicators at ministerial level.

4. Using a modern system for university administration that reflects the Kingdom's vision 2030, including organizational structures, powers, and performance indicators in the educational, research, and administrative domains. Higher education, science, research and society will thus be promoted at local, regional, and international levels.

5. Consideration of more effective mechanisms to finance education by developing a budget model to enhance the efficiency of its performance and contribute to the rationalization of capital and operational expenditures. This can be accomplished by transitioning from centralized planning and financial distribution at ministerial level to school-level methods, which ensure budget optimal distribution and achievement of educational goals.

6. Developing new secondary education pathways based on improved system architecture, which will develop students' scientific and professional capabilities in line with the requirements of future-oriented fields, and provide students with a variety of options with regards to making academic decisions at this stage.

The Sultanate of Oman

The Sultanate of Oman has developed plans to achieve goal 4 through the national education strategy, in collaboration with all sections of society, including young people from various provinces, as well as public and private agencies. This will enable the Sultanate of Oman to provide community support which aims to raise awareness of Sustainable Development goals, based on the following foundations:

1. Building an effective system for managing and governing the educational sector in order to achieve high enrollment rates and encourage students to complete all stages of their education.

2. Aligning the outcomes of the educational system with the labor market.

3. Enhancing educational innovation, creativity, and scientific research.

4. Establishing an effective and sustainable funding system for the education sector.

5. Raising public awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals and encouraging partnership with society.

The State of Qatar

Qatar has made remarkable progress in education, achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 in the last period and in line with Qatar's Vision 2030 and the strategy of education, training, and population. The main plans it has worked to implement are as follows:

1. Carrying out a scientific study on early childhood development with the aim of developing a national measurement tool to assess children's progress in different areas.

2. Providing a database for pre-primary students to help decision-makers draw up policies and strategies for this stage group.

3. Opening more technical and vocational schools specializing in new fields that meet the current needs of the labor market.

4. Conducting a study on the specializations offered by higher education institutions and the current labor market requirements, in order to align higher education outcomes with those of the labor market.

5. Spreading the culture of sustainable development and global citizenship in higher education and promoting the common human values of tolerance, dialogue, and embracing otherness.

6. Maintaining teacher professional development programs to ensure that the most recent educational strategies are implemented.

7. Maintaining student performance in national and international tests by improving their skills, cognitive and mental abilities.

3. Signs of Progress

The United Arab Emirates

All the major targets related to Sustainable Development Goal 4 are covered in the UAE General Policy Document on Education. The UAE has also incorporated them into its strategic plans through a variety of initiatives and programs relating to the governance of the educational system, its quality, excellence, teaching, together with administrative staff, curricula, assessment, students, social care, environment, and health and safety. This is in addition to using technology, information and communication in education, alongside research and development. This will serve as a road map for the features, directions and outcomes of the educational system.

Target 4.1: By 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to free, equitable, and high-quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

The UAE has sought to achieve high-quality education based on its Vision 2021 which states, "establishment of a first-class educational system that offers free education and provides students with the necessary cognitive skills and competencies to participate in a knowledge-based economy in a way that ensures quality, equitable and comprehensive education". Government   legislation underpins the educational system, ensuring free and compulsory education for all students and allowing the state to expand primary and secondary education through the UAE modern school model. This shows that the nationwide school development and related educational reforms have been adopted by Ministry of Education's strategy.

The following are the main policies that contribute to achieving this goal:
- ◻ Free education policy.
- ◻ Educational structure that incorporates early childhood education.
- ◻ Policy for curricula development (authorship and alignment with some global chains or a combination of both)
- ◻ Students' admission and enrollment policy.
- ◻ Inclusive education policy.
- ◻ Policies of teacher certification, qualifications, selection, appointment, and training.
- ◻ Virtual and blended learning policies.

According to the results of PIRLS 2016 study, 62% of male fourth-graders have achieved at least minimum competence in reading, compared to 74% of female fourth-graders. In the same grade, the TIMSS 2015 study found that male students scored 67% in mathematics,

compared to 69% for females.   According to the findings of the recent TIMSS 2019 study, UAE fourth- graders' performed well in mathematics, scoring 481 points compared to 452 in 2015. The eighth-graders' math performance improved from 465 points in 2015, to 473 in 2019.

Percentage of fourth-graders achieving minimum competence in mathematics

%62

%74

2016

Percentage of fourth-graders achieving minimum competence in reading

67%

69%

2015
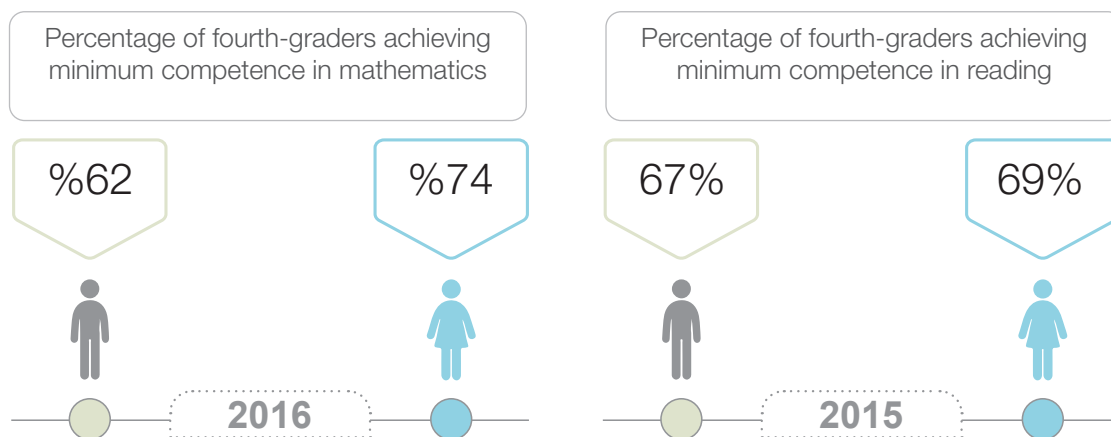
The UAE National 2019 Report on Goal 4

According to PISA 2018 study, 68 % of 15-year-old males who achieved at least minimum competence in reading, compared to 89% for females. For mathematics, the percentages of male and female in the same age group reached 78% and 86 % respectively.

Percentage of 15-year-old students who have achieved minimum competence in mathematics.

68%

89%

2018

Percentage of 15-year-old students who have achieved minimum competence in reading.

78%

86%

2018

The UAE National 2019 Report on Goal 4

Education in the GCC Countries Towards Achieving Sustainable Development
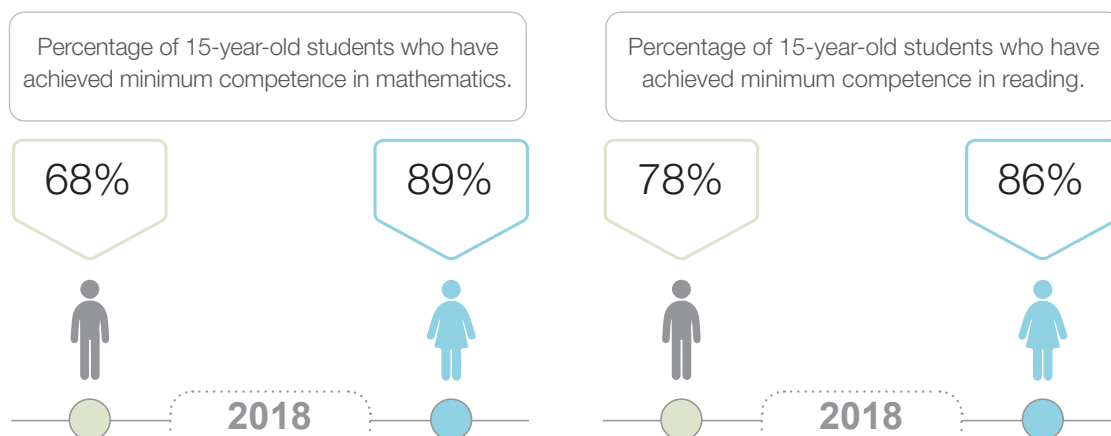
The Emirates Standardized Test (EmSAT) has been also been used at all levels of education to measure teaching and learning outcomes and to track progress of students' performance, thereby improving the efficiency of internal and external elements of the educational system.

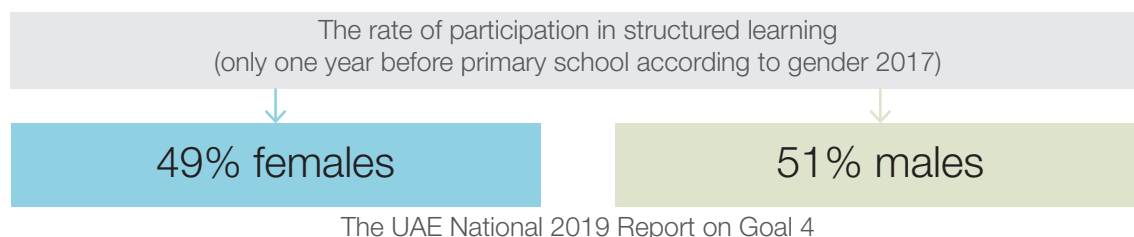**Target 4-2:** By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education so that they are for primary education.

The UAE places a high value on and prioritizes early childhood care and education because of their importance and impact on subsequent levels of education. Accordingly, the UAE Ministry of Education is developing curricula that are based on constrictive educational outcomes in order to increase kindergarten enrollment rates and provide quality education. Furthermore, the Ministry has worked to improve the kindergarten classroom structure by incorporating educational elements and providing sources and games.

The rate of participation in structured learning
(only one year before primary school according to gender 2017)

| 49% females | 51% males |

The UAE National 2019 Report on Goal 4

In order to increase kindergarten enrollment and improve the quality of education and care, the Ministry of Education sought to create a framework for policies and childhood care and development from the ages of 0 to 6. One of the state's national agenda goals is to increase kindergarten enrollment by 95%, by 2021. As part of its strategic plan, the Ministry of Education has taken significant steps toward this goal, including developing strategic and executive policies to improve the state's early childhood sector. The main policies are as follows:

- □ Creating an educational structure policy that incorporates the kindergarten stage.
- □ Improving Children's Home Care Services.
- □ Comprehensive care for children from birth to the age of eight.
- □ Developing a general framework for national development outcomes and the comprehensive curriculum.
- □ Developing a general framework for monitoring and evaluating the quality of kindergarten education.

Target 4-3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university.

The UAE's national strategy for technical education is in line with Sustainable Goal 4 because it aims to provide education and training opportunities for both male and female young people as well as adults, based on a lifelong learning approach. The UAE Vision 2021 is supported by the National Education Strategy, which focuses on making significant progress in the technical and vocational educational system, and equipping individuals with the necessary skills for improved economic production and competitiveness.

As part of the "continuing education program", the Ministry of Education and national institutions have focused on increasing the number of young people who acquire the necessary skills by providing informal programs to those who have not previously had access to education for various reasons. Furthermore, the educational streams in UAE schools have been developed as follows: the Elite Stream, the Advanced Stream, the General Stream, the Technical and the Vocational Stream. Following basic education, vocational and technical education programs such as the specialized stream, integrated continuing education, and the programs offered by the Abu Dhabi Vocational Education and Training Institute are provided, with males and females having equal opportunities. The state, on the other hand, has implemented relevant initiatives such as the establishment of secondary applied technology high schools and the life skills initiative, both of which aim to provide students with short-term programs that support more than twenty professional and technical skills during school vacations.

Gross enrollment percentage in secondary education by gender 2017	
59% females	41% males
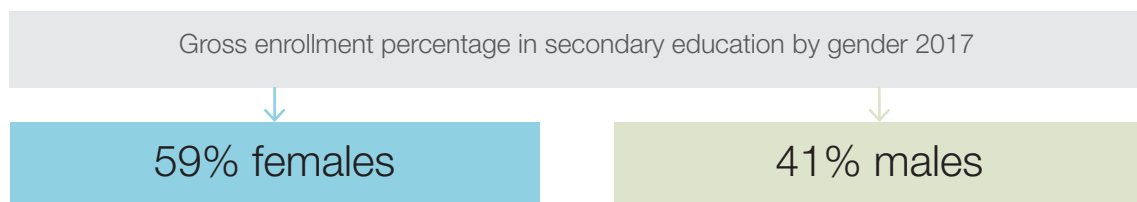
The UAE National 2019 Report on Goal 4

Target 4-4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youths and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills - for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.

The Ministry of Education's policies and initiatives aim to ensure that young people and adults are able to master technical and vocational skills through the "Continuing Education Program." Furthermore, the adoption of school programs in higher education institutions ensures technical and vocational skill training appropriate to each program's nature.

Developing national and vocational standards and qualifications systems in accordance with the national qualifications framework to ensure that educational outcomes meet labor market needs.

In accordance with the National Qualifications System, the state provides vocational and technical education programs, specialized stream, continuous and integrated education, and programs offered by Abu Dhabi Vocational Education and Training Institute after basic education. The Ministry of Education is implementing the Sheikh Muhammad bin Rashid Program on Smart Learning, which aims to improve education by upgrading infrastructure, educational programs, and aids, as well as enhancing electronic curricula. The National Qualifications Authority also assists in the development of vocational and technical skills in order to better prepare young people for the job market.

The Ministry of Education has been working to develop curricula and introduce new subjects that focus on technology, innovative design, life skills, business management, health-related sciences, and third language. In addition, it creates a variety of activities aimed at developing educated, skilled, and responsible students and equipping them with a variety of life skills that will improve their abilities and experience, spur innovation, strengthen their national identity, and instill national pride and leadership.

According to the World Knowledge Report 2018, the state was ranked first in the world in terms of students enrolling in post-secondary vocational and technical programs as a result of the state's efforts to achieve this goal. According to data collected by "Eurostat" and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), 92% of people are able to copy or move a file or folder on a computer, while 33% are able to make electronic presentations.

33 %
Able

92 %
Able

67 %
Unable

8 %
Unable
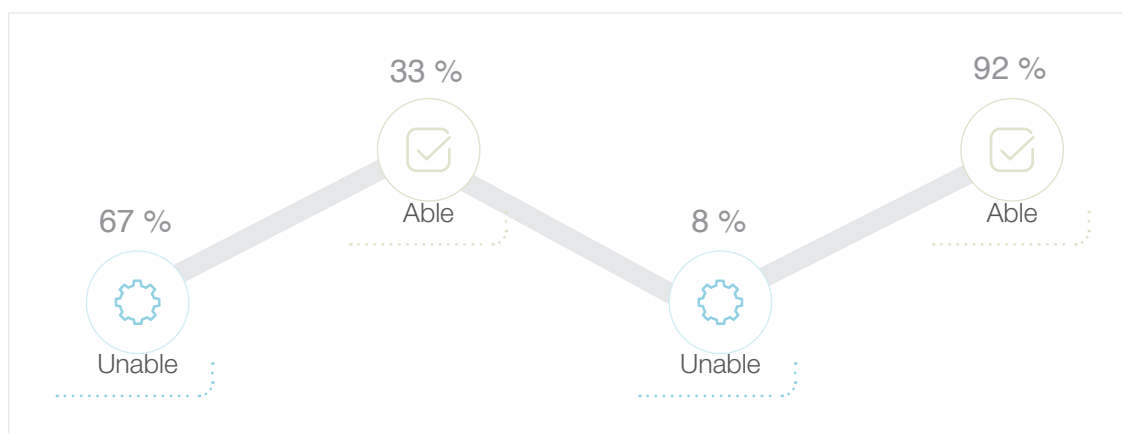
The UAE National 2019 Report on Goal 4

Target 4-5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people, and children in vulnerable situations.

The UAE is comprised of almost 200 different nationalities, which necessitates a variety of educational curricula. These curricula are offered to students of various nationalities, linguistic and cultural backgrounds in a variety of private schools.

The Ministry of Education's strategy focuses on eliminating gender disparities in education and providing equal opportunities for students with disabilities and learning difficulties from kindergarten through to secondary school at the educational institution closest to their homes. Furthermore, the Ministry provides a supportive environment in which they can pursue their educational goals in accordance with their abilities. It also defined the services, programs, and plans available to students, taking into account best practices and local and international legislation.

To ensure that the goals of policies contributing to this particular agenda are met, the state has implemented a number of initiatives, projects, and programs aimed at reducing gender disparities in education. They also ensure that all groups, including people with disabilities and learning difficulties, have equal access to all levels of education and vocational training, as well as developing specialized electronic programs to assess students with disabilities and provide them with related services.

Child Protection Unit

The initiative aims to put in place mechanisms and measures to protect children in educational institutions, as per Federal Law No. (3) of 2016. Children will be protected from all forms of abuse, negligence, discrimination, and exploitation in their surroundings as part of this initiative (home or school.)

Target 4-6: By 2030, ensure that all youths and a substantial proportion of adults - both men and women - achieve literacy and numeracy.

Through a set of operational policies focused on increasing the proportion of young people and adults, the UAE strategic policy ensures that all young people and adults - men and women – are able to master literacy and numeracy skills. It also aims to improve their skills through informal programs as part of the "Continuing Education program", for those who have never had the opportunity to receive an education due to age or other circumstances.

Continuing Education Streams:

1. Literacy stream: starts from first to seventh grade (for both male and female citizens). This stage aims at literacy from the age of ten and above. The stream covers grade one through to seven in two stages.

Foundational Phase
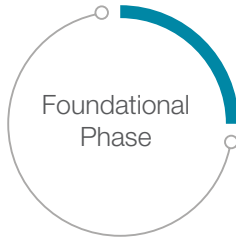
This includes two academic years: the first year is for grades one and two, and the second year is for grades three and four.

Complementary phase

This includes two academic years following the foundational phase, the third year for grades five and six and the fourth year for grade seven.

2. **Academic stream:** begins in eighth grade through to the twelfth grade (for female citizens only), as the eighth grade serves as a transitional stage (bridging) between the seventh grade and the UAE School streams.

3. **The home study stream:** begins in seventh grade and ends at twelfth grade (for male and female citizens). This is an educational program in which students learn the curriculum of the Ministry of Education.

4. **The general and the specialized vocational streams:** begin in the ninth grade and continue through to twelfth grade (for both male and female citizens), in two stages:

Preparation stage
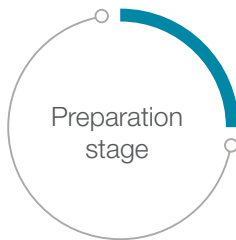
This stage ranges from 6 months to one year and a half. The capacity test must be passed in order for a student to advance to the ninth grade.

specialization stage
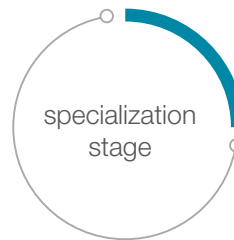
(Engineering, trade and health) it is a four-year stage, which includes (ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades).

The Ministry of Education implements the "Emirates read" initiative, which aims to foster a culture of reading among family, students, and staff, in order to foster curiosity, knowledge, and continuing education for all citizens and expatriates.

Target 4-7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development – including (among others) through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Recognizing the critical importance of preparing future generations to meet the demands of sustainable development, the Ministry of Education has reformed curricula and incorporated concepts that support sustainability both locally and internationally. One of the national educational system's goals is to instill citizenship principles in students, as these are directly linked to society's safety and well-being. The Ministry of Education has implemented moral education at all levels of education by incorporating basic citizenship principles, which are divided into four topics:

1. Personal ethics
2. The role of society, individuals, and cultural education in the school curriculum
3. Adding various subject areas
4. Classroom and extracurricular activities.

Schools conduct numerous educational activities and provide vocational training and development programs for students and teachers in the field of human rights education. Furthermore, citizenship principles have been incorporated into community and youth activities.

Human rights policies have also been developed and implemented by the government and national institutions. The findings of a local study on human rights concepts in subjects and school curricula through learning outcomes and performance indicators of each course and stage are used by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry's policies support the inclusion of a variety of positive values, principles, and attitudes in each curriculum. These policies cover the structure and objectives of the educational system, academic levels, social care, curriculum development, vocational training and development policy, health and safety standards, security, the environment, and projects that benefit the environment. Other initiatives that help to achieve this goal will be discussed in the chapter on unique initiatives and experiences.

Target 4- A: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

In order to support students, teachers, and all those who work in education, it is critical to create motivating learning environments. The educational process in the UAE is focused on achieving the UAE's educational goals. All state educational facilities must meet learning environment quality, service, and safety standards that are aligned with standards and specifications that meet the demands of educational programs and policies and are supported by policies to develop services provided to all educational stakeholders.

A new regulatory act has been issued by the Ministry of Education to promote positive behaviors and address issues of violence and harassment (Positive Behavior Management Regulations). Academic advisors, principals, and nurses will be trained in the concept of bullying, its various guises, how to detect and intervene, and develop preventive and curative plans to address it as part of the National Program set up for "Combating School Bullying."

The Sheikh Zayed Educational Compounds Project is currently being developed, as is the upgrading of electronic programs and technologies that assist students with disabilities, and developing educational resources and solutions in the UAE.

According to data, 100% of state schools have access to electrical power, the internet for educational purposes, drinking water installations, and separate sanitary facilities and hand-washing facilities.

The Ministry of Education has issued a comprehensive health, safety, and environmental framework to ensure that educational facilities are suitable for all students, especially those with disabilities.

Safety and Security Initiative:

It is a unified framework for reporting and intervention procedures for cases of student violence that complies with international standards and trends in order to support the protection of children's rights both inside and outside the school environment.
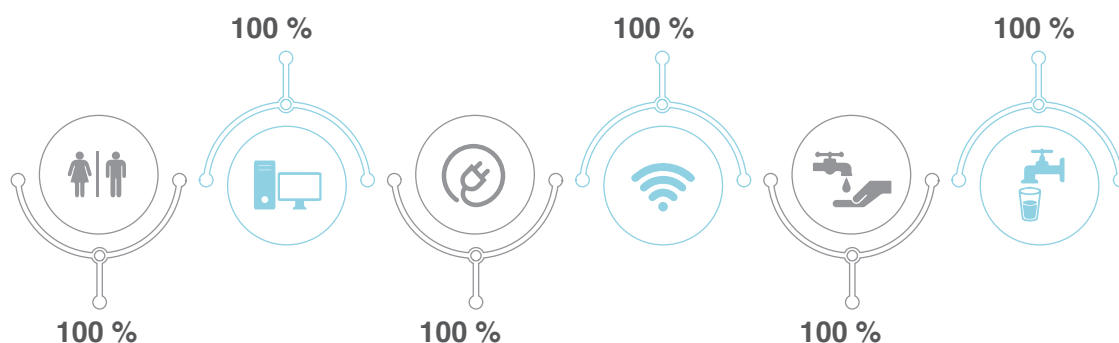
100 %   **100 %**   **100 %**

100 %   **100 %**   **100 %**

Target 4-B: By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programs, in developed countries and other developing countries.

The UAE provides development assistance on a regional and international scale, with a total budget of $1.06 billion. Many countries around the world, particularly those affected by refugee influxes and natural disasters, have set aside a large portion of funding for educational purposes.

Target 4-C: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially the least developed countries and small island developing States

There is no doubt that teachers help students achieve better learning outcomes. Teachers should be provided with high-quality certification, ongoing training, and long-term professional development, all of which will help to improve teaching and learning processes. The UAE is working to attract well-qualified teachers by developing specific career paths and vocational development programs that meet the needs and professional development of teachers. Furthermore, it provides educational environments to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in accordance with specific educational instructions. In addition to the technical competencies approved according to their job performance system, the policy of evaluating teachers' performance annually consists of five elements: achieve quorum, improve student outcomes, attend specialized training hours (100 hours per year) and volunteer hours, and creative suggestions applicable schoolwide.

As a result of these efforts, the percentage of qualified and trained teachers at all levels has reached 100%.

100 %

Number of teachers
qualified and trained

Teacher certification policies are based on occupational standards and must adhere to the National Qualifications Authority system.

Kingdom of Bahrain

Target 4-1: By 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to free, equitable, and high-quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

The indicators show the educational sector's successes and the focus on high-quality educational services in the Kingdom of Bahrain, as measured by the Education and Training Quality Authority, an independent body affiliated with the cabinet, with the goal of achieving a paradigm shift in the education sector.

The results of the international tests PIRLS and TIMSS in 2015 and 2016 show that the Kingdom has made significant progress. It also achieved high enrollment rates in basic education stages and high internal efficiency. In their first participation in this international study, Bahraini students scored 446 points on the PIRLS test, placing them second in the Arab world. Bahrain made significant qualitative quantum leaps in the TIMSS science and mathematics test from 2011 to 2015, despite not reaching the global average. In comparison to the previous two sessions, significant progress was made. In the 2019 academic year, the Kingdom's students continued to excel, ranking first in the Arab world in eighth-grade mathematics, fourth-eighth-grade science tests, and fourth-grade mathematics tests.

> The PIRLS 2016 test ranked Bahraini female students first in the Arab world, with a score of 468. In 2019, the Kingdom ranked first in the Arab world in eighth-grade mathematics, fourth-grade science, and eighth-grade science tests.

The results of the international tests TIMSS for grade 4 and 8, 2015-2019

Grade	Mathematics		Science	
	2015	2019	2015	2019
Fourth	451	480	469	493
	2015	2019	2015	2019
Eighth	454	481	466	486

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In order to track progress toward this goal, the Ministry of Education plans to examine and analyze the current situation. Only by conducting studies and participating in the collection

of survey-related data and questionnaires provided by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the results of international studies, the results of national tests, and the outcomes of this process would enable sufficient information for analysis. It also creates a matrix to serve as a road map for achieving this goal by 2030, linking it to appropriate and effective educational outcomes. The operational projects and plans for vocational and public education were aligned with goal 4-1. As a result, the self-management initiative was established and implemented in state schools, and the Quality score card was created to track the technical and administrative processes.

99.27%
Total enrollment rate in the largest primary grade of 2018

99.36%
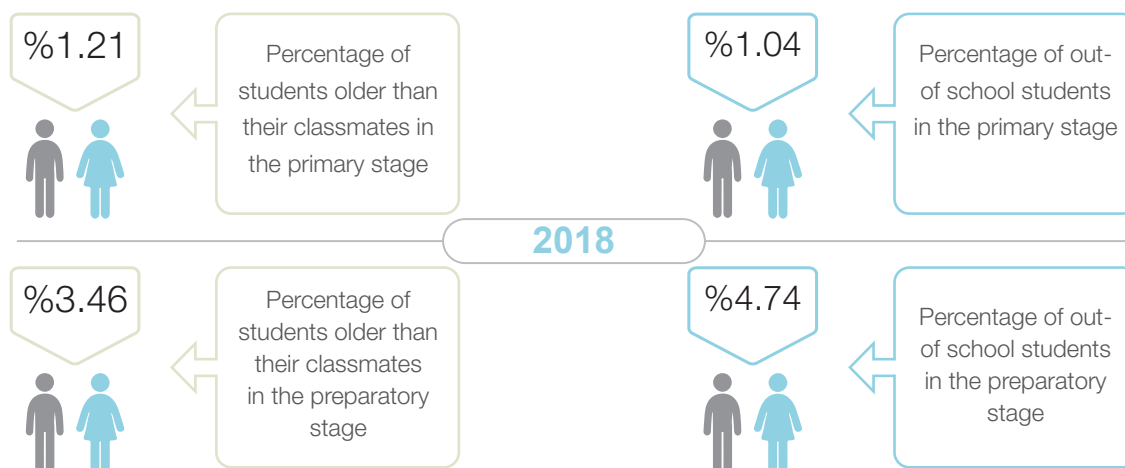Total enrollment rate in the last preparatory grade of 2018

All of this has boosted the educational system's internal efficiency indicators and highlighted the Kingdom's commitment to education. This concern is reflected in policies derived from the National Action Charter and Education Law, both of which emphasize the importance of providing free and compulsory education. In light of the remarkable initiative provided for humanity, the educational system focuses on the principle of total quality and ensures quality education aligned with national and global trends and various partnerships across line ministries, academia, civil society, and the business community.

Iqraa is one of the most well-known projects and initiatives in the Kingdom, aimed at improving the educational system's internal efficiency indicators. The National Action Charter and Education Law, which emphasize the importance of providing free and compulsory education, highlight the Kingdom's interest in education in this project. In light of the remarkable initiative for humanity, the educational system also focuses on the principle of total quality, ensuring quality education aligned with national and global trends and various partnerships across line ministries, academia, civil society, and the business community.

The Iqraa project is implemented by allocating a daily lesson for reading instruction, as well as the Reading Strategy project, which aims to improve students' abilities and encourage them to read.

The Kingdom created a road map to achieve educational sustainable development goals and conducted studies to address the issue of low male performance, improve school efficiency, improve teaching quality, and support school leaders, as well as spread best practices through manuals distributed to all schools. It also planned enriching courses on problem-solving, life skills, and 21st century skills.

%1.21 — Percentage of students older than their classmates in the primary stage

%1.04 — Percentage of out-of school students in the primary stage

2018

%3.46 — Percentage of students older than their classmates in the preparatory stage

%4.74 — Percentage of out-of school students in the preparatory stage

Target 4-2: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education.

The Kingdom of Bahrain believes that the care and attention a child receives in learning, nutrition, and healthcare has a lifelong impact, and is therefore one of the most important stages in a child's development.

Children are prioritized in all of the Kingdom's laws, regulations, and legislation, the most notable of which is Child Law No. 37, passed in 2012. This law's article (69) ensures the state's protection of childhood and motherhood by creating a favorable environment for upbringing children appropriately, emphasizing the provision of care, education, and rehabilitation for children with disabilities, as well as protecting children from abuse or neglect by establishing a "Child Protection Center."

The Ministry of Education encourages investment to expand pre-school educational services across the Kingdom, which has resulted in higher enrollment rates. It has also implemented the Kindergarten Experiences Curriculum in private schools, verified children's legal age, and provided curricula that are appropriate for kindergarten students.

In 2018, the adjusted net enrollment rate (one year before primary school) reached 70.5% as a result of all of these efforts.

The total enrollment rate for pre-school education reached 54.76 % in 2018.

Preparing a manual on educational and technical specifications for children with disabilities to guarantee the quality education services offered to this group.

Regular learning participation rate (one year before primary-school age)

	👨	👩	👨👩
2015	83.3 %	81.3 %	82.3 %
2018	69.5 %	71.5 %	70.5 %
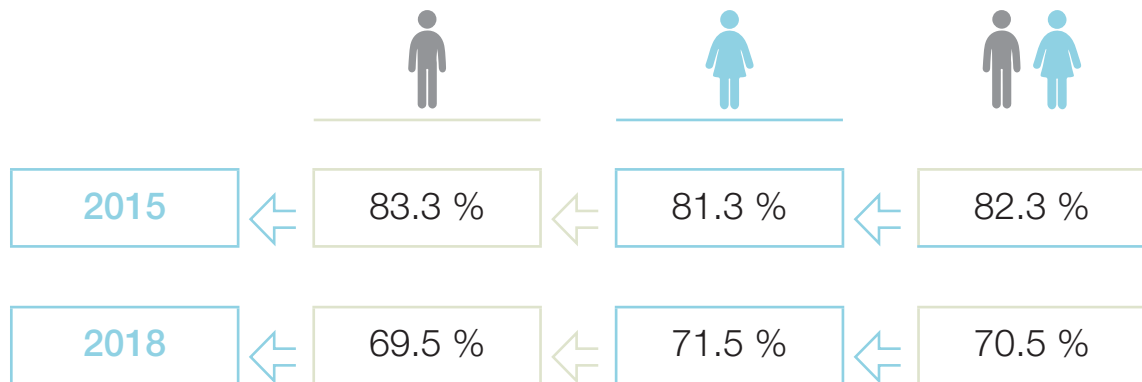
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The Ministry is currently working to improve coordination and cooperation between the Kindergarten, Continuing Education, and Special Education departments, in order to conduct developmental workshops aimed at increasing kindergarten teachers' efficiency, and training them to deal with children who have special needs. It also works with the Department of Educational Supervision to adopt educational evaluation forms and improve the quality of the services provided.

Target 4-3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university.

The Ministry of Education oversees public, higher, technical, and vocational education, which is one of the benefits of Bahrain's educational system. As a result, policies and decision-making mechanisms are standardized, and quality assurance issues are monitored by an independent entity.

To achieve this goal, the Ministry has sought to improve the higher education legislative structure by updating the Council for Higher Education's regulations and aligning them with current developments, and regulatory aspects relating to equal opportunities. It has also provided teaching and learning options by encouraging private higher education institutions to open and introduce their academic programs, as well as encouraging investment in higher education. As a result, the total number of people enrolled in higher education increased from 43.2% in 2015 to 50.4% in 2018.

They have creating a single stream by combining advanced and specialized streams in the third level and focusing on academic and scientific application for all students.

Growth of higher education total enrollment rates according to sex

	♂	♀	♂♀
2015	30.9 %	59.3 %	43.2 %
2018	36.9 %	67.8 %	50.4 %
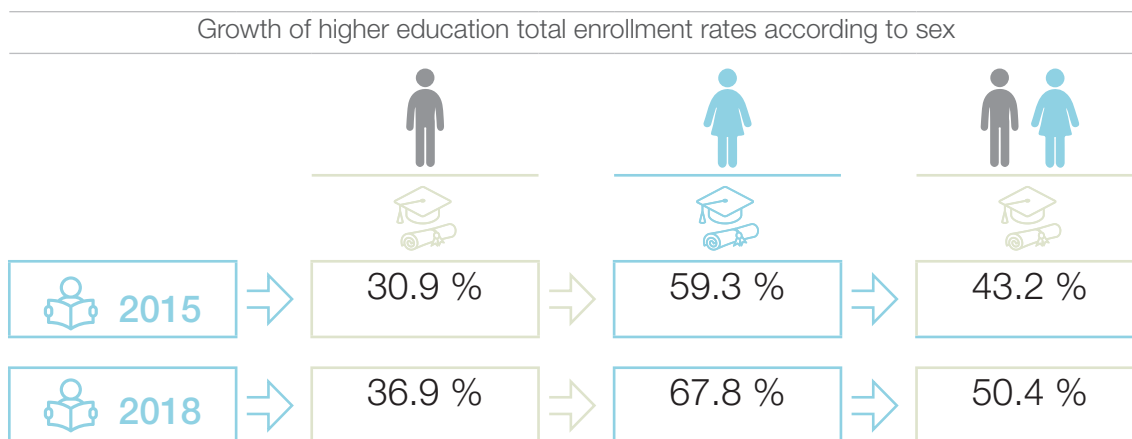
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The Ministry of Education has worked to improve the structure of the technical and vocational education system by developing the curriculum and introducing technical and vocational disciplines to meet the needs of the labor market. This is based on the importance of technical and vocational education in supplying the labor market with highly skilled outcomes and competencies. It has also made every effort to improve the institutional efficiency of technical and vocational schools, emphasizing the importance of equal opportunities for all students.

The Ministry of Education aims to improve the technical and vocational education system in collaboration with labor market institutions and under the supervision of an advisory committee in order to develop an industrial trajectory and implement an industrial support strategy. On the issue of orphaned children, the Ministry has formed a historic partnership with the royal institution to assist this group of students enrolled in formal education in the Kingdom's schools. The Ministry is also implementing the third phase of the educational program "Sustainable Development Goals," which is aimed at educational and administrative bodies, students, and parents. It also works to improve the quality of student vocational guidance services, integrate it into counseling, and develop field-training programs, as well as innovation and entrepreneurship centers in higher education.

Growth of the number of technical and vocational graduates		
Academic year	Number of graduates	🎓
2016/2017	1534	
2017/2018	1549	
2018/2019	1812	

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Target 4-4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youths and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

Bahrain's education and training policies are constantly evolving and diversifying in order to conform to a skills matrix in a rapidly changing world and jobs market. Through the Digital Educational Empowerment Program, it develops student skills and provides young people with skills and opportunities for lifelong learning. It is a continuation of His Majesty King Hamad's vision for future schools, which is reflected in the Educational Portal Project, ongoing training programs, and the project for online safety.

The percentages in the table below reflect the extent to which young people and adults have developed skills in the use of information and communication technology, reflecting the Kingdom's efforts in this area.

By improving the practical competencies of graduates, the Kingdom is improving the institutional efficiency of technical and vocational schools. The goal is to provide the best options for students who are having difficulty continuing their education in order to assist them in obtaining vocational certificates and keeping up with the labor market's requirements.

The Ministry of Education adopted a project to introduce technical and vocational study programs and develop the curriculum, which had a 100% implementation success rate by the end of 2018.

The rate of young people who have ICT skills, organized by specific skill

Indicators	2015	2016	2017
Skills in copying or pasting a file or folder	68	82	83
Skills in using copy and paste tools to repeat or move information inside the document	54	56	65
Skills in sending e-mails with attached files (documents, images, videos)	61	74	84
Skills in using basic calculation formulas in a spreadsheet	33	49	47
Skills in connecting to and installing new devices (such as identifying printers and cameras)	41	54	48
Skills in searching for, uploading and entering an identification of software	41	52	52
Skills in introducing electronic presentations through programs of presentations, including texts, sound effects, videos and maps.	36	52	43
Skills in moving files from one computer to another	37	50	75
Skills in writing a piece of software using a programming language	13	14	21

Target 4-5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people, and children in vulnerable situations.

The Bahraini government prioritizes equal, inclusive, and equitable access to all levels of education for all members of society, regardless of race or ethnicity. Under the guidance of wise leadership and in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and the education law, it also pays special attention to people with special needs.

Students with special needs, including those with simple learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, visual, hearing, and physical disabilities, or Downs syndrome, were integrated into schools by the Ministry of Education. It has also partnered with a specialized Kuwaiti organization to provide an advanced rehabilitation curriculum and prepare students to deal with and interact with others and society in a non-discriminatory manner. It has additionally provided special education classes with all the necessary equipment. The number of public schools in the Kingdom that are prepared to integrate students with special needs has increased to 81. In some cases, each student was assigned a teacher, and they were given scholarships regardless of their high school performance.

Integration of deaf students into secondary school is one of the successful and ambitious experiences because the Ministry has provided all of the necessary resources, including sign language teachers, to make this experience a success.

In the academic year 2020/2019, the Kingdom implemented various policies based on gender equality, particularly in the education sector, where the ratio of female to male students in primary education reached 50.9% and 59.2% percent in secondary education.

The number of schools dedicated to integrating students with autism spectrum disorders has grown from three in 2010 to sixteen in 2019, with approximately 100 students enrolled.

The state must provide educational opportunities to all people based on their needs and abilities, according to Education Law No. (2) of 2005.

Gender equality data and indicators across different educational levels for 2020/2021			
Educational level			
Primary	31997	30860	50.9 %
Preparatory	23651	22082	51.7 %
Secondary	18009	12379	59.2 %
Technical and vocational education	654	6382	50.9 %
Tertiary education	28610	19931	58.9 %

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The principle of justice and equality is practiced in a variety of areas throughout the kingdom, including education, health, and employment. This is reflected in women's active participation in education and their clear role in Bahrain's educational paradigm shift.
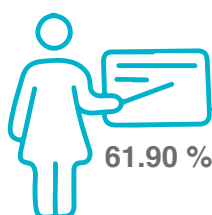
61.90 % Percentage of male and female teachers in the Kingdom **38.10 %**
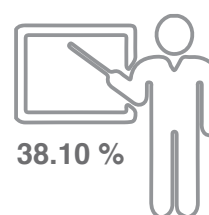
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Target 4.6: By 2030, ensure that all youths and a substantial proportion of adults - both men and women - achieve literacy and numeracy.

In accordance with the ninth article of Education Law No 27 of 2005 which states that "literacy and providing education for adults are a national responsibility that aims to advance citizens culturally, socially, and professionally," the Kingdom's constitutional constants support the right to education for all.

The Ministry of Education is constantly developing literacy, adult education, and continuing education programs. This is accomplished by offering educational, cultural, and vocational courses to those who learn within the Ministry's centers, as well as introducing digital literacy programs to those who study in the centers. It also develops policies for admission and

registration of applicants for study in the Continuing Education Department's programs, as well as widely promoting these programs.

As a result of all these efforts, literacy rates among young people aged 15 to 24 years rose to 99.6% in 2018, and 97.4% for those aged 15 and up.

Literacy rates of the age group 15-24 years

| 99.9 % | 98.3 % | | 99.9 % | 98.8 % |

2018   2016

| 99.6 % | | 99.4 % |

Literacy rates of the age group 15 and above

| 98.7 % | 94.9 % | | 98.5 % | 94.2 % |

2018   2016

| 97.46 % | | 97 % |
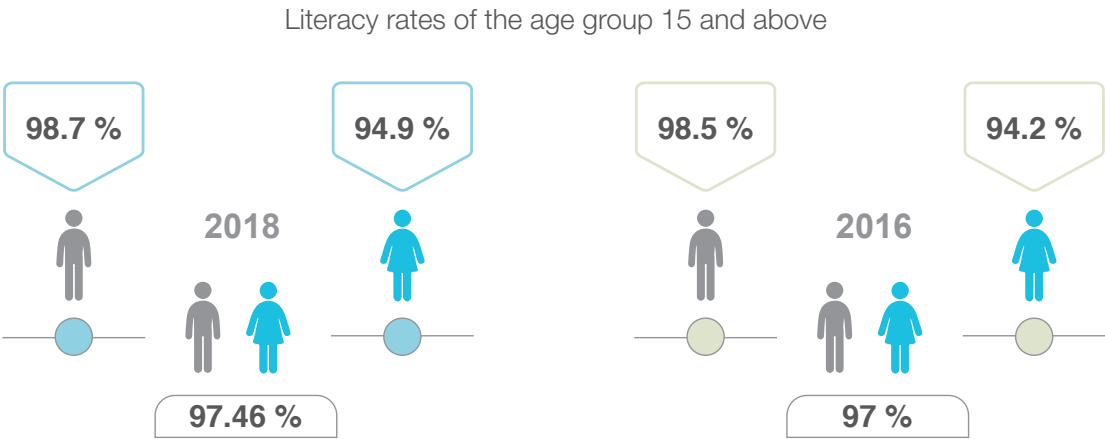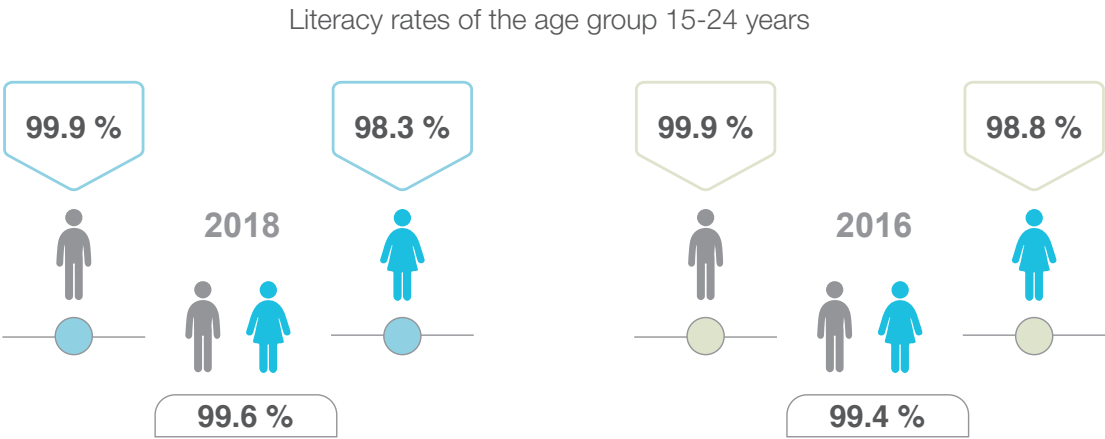
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The Ministry is currently attempting to simplify the procedures for registering the elderly and others who wish to continue their studies as part of its efforts to develop the necessary skills for adults based on the principle of long-life education. It also provides them with equivalent basic education and parallel secondary education certificates, enhancing their chances of finding well-paid jobs and contributing significantly to the development process.

Target 4-7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development – including (among others) through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

The main guiding principles for curriculum and development in Bahrain are human rights, gender equality, environmental preservation, citizenship, and other topics related to sustainable development. In order to build the nation and develop educational and curriculum-related policies, teacher training, and student evaluation, the Ministry of Education takes this into account in its approaches and practices.

The Ministry is attempting to introduce a set of books aimed at promoting the values of peace, co-existence, violence prevention, and environmental preservation, as well as enhancing global citizenship concepts. It also conducts a series of workshops for teachers and students in which the values of belonging and citizenship are developed across a variety of school subjects.

The Ministry also places a premium on improved citizenship, the sense of belonging, and human rights education. It elevates them from mere subject areas based on concepts and values from other subjects, to a fundamental choice that extends beyond the curriculum and encompasses the broad concept and meaning of students' experiences throughout their educational stages.

Bahrain has a number of programs and achievements that help to foster citizenship and sustainable development values, such as the experience of UNESCO-promoting schools and citizenship and human rights-promoting schools, as well as a Bahraini national educational project resulting from collaboration with the International Education Office in Geneva. This project promotes a sense of belonging while also reinforcing the values of tolerance, peace, and co-existence.

Curriculum development processes depend on four pillars:

1. Coexistence, its relevant values, principles, and behaviors.
2. The State of law which implies the rule of law and equality of justice.
3. Democracy, which emphasizes equal participation in public affairs and decision-making.
4. Equal opportunities and debunking stereotypes about women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

The Ministry of Education sought to create a document on citizenship and human rights curriculum, update basic education citizenship books, and add lessons to promote loyalty, belonging, and the value of work. It has incorporated enriching electronic material into various subjects as well as enriching books to promote citizenship, tolerance, and harmony

values. It is currently launching a 12-series program on citizenship, tolerance, moderation, peaceful coexistence, multi-ethnicity, difference, participation, partnership formation, peace talks, democracy, justice, volunteering, and professionalism.

> Throughout the Kingdom, every school teaches students about the human
> immunodeficiency virus and sexual education.

Target 4-A: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

Recognizing that a positive educational environment benefits students, teachers, and all other stakeholders, Bahrain's Ministry of Education designed school buildings to meet the needs of modern education and to be green buildings that improve the long-term sustainability of all of their components. It provides 100% electricity, drinking water, and sewage to these locations, and some schools use solar power as a source of energy.

In the field of education, the infrastructure of the information network has vastly improved, and schools have been outfitted with the most up-to-date network solutions, including 100% computer and Internet access. Gender differences and different types of disabilities are taken into account when designing educational facilities. They have been upgraded to create an educational, effective, safe, and non-violent environment in accordance with international standards, including all special needs requirements and separate toilet facilities for everyone.
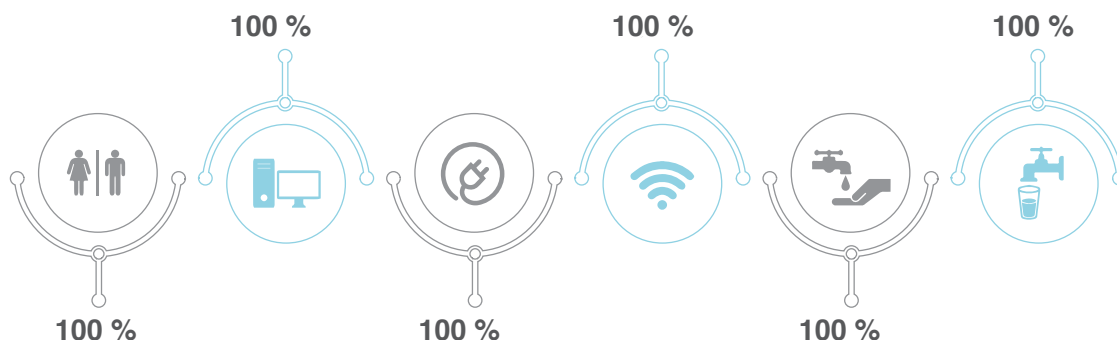
Schools have been designed with features that make it easy for students, teachers, and staff to move around. They also include common areas and multi-purpose spaces that help

to create an environment that is educational, safe, and non-violent by easily monitoring student behavior and installing security cameras at the school gates.

Target 4-B: By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education.

The Ministry of Education recognizes that teachers are a critical component of high-quality education, and that educational leaders' roles in improving teaching and learning is critical. As a result, it gives teachers and educational leaders top priority and qualifies them to the highest international standards in order to improve their vocational competence in a variety of fields.

According to the most recent statistics from 2018, Bahraini teachers are fully qualified to the highest standards at all levels of education. In preparatory and secondary education, the average number of students per teacher increased to around 10 in 2016, compared to nearly 12 in 2015.

Percentage of qualified teachers 2015-2018

Level	2015			2016			2017			2018		
	Male	female	**Total**	Male	female	**Total**	Male	female	**Total**	Male	female	**Total**
Preparatory	%97.6	%95	**%95.7**	%98.6	%95.5	**%96.3**	%98	%95.4	**%96**	%100	%100	**%100**
Preparatory	%98.3	%95.2	**%96.5**	%99.2	%95.9	**%97.3**	%99	%95.8	**%97.1**	%100	%100	**%100**
Secondary	%98.5	%96	**%97.1**	%99.4	%96.9	**%97.9**	%99.3	%96.6	**%97.7**	%100	%100	**%100**

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The Teaching and Learning Academy project, as a training program, has enabled teachers to use modern activity-based teaching strategies, which is one of the educational system's achievements.

Around 8,407 teachers have been trained in the area of integrating technology into education to produce, evaluate, publish, and make the best use of digital educational content in schools that use the My Digital Library initiative. In the area of technology integration, the total number of Hamad Project for Future Schools approved teaching programs amounted to 65 up until July 2019. The Bahrain Training Institute also implemented four training programs for 399 educational staff members (teachers, trainers, and technicians): a national diploma in teaching and training, a national diploma in laboratory management, a diploma in learning resources, and a diploma in information technology.

In terms of training educational leaders, the postgraduate three-level diploma for Educational Leadership has trained nearly 400 leaders. Bahrain Teachers' College offers a special high professional diploma to educational leaders after 420 hours of ongoing training over two academic years.

The Ministry of Education is determining training needs by developing clear and appropriate training plans for all jobs based on their functions, required capabilities, and performance levels. It will also implement a number of teacher apprenticeship programs in the near future, train new teachers in formative evaluation methods and electronic monitoring programs through the educational portal, and provide a diploma in teaching and English training for teachers working in private schools.

The Ministry of Education has been able to improve the capabilities of educators and assist them in developing quality plans for supervision and development projects through exemplary collaboration with the Kuwait National Planning Institute and the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States in Riyadh.

State of Kuwait

Target 4-1: By 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to free, equitable, and high-quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

Article 13 of Kuwait's constitution guarantees that everyone living on the country's land has access to education. Kuwait considers education to be both the foundation for development and an inalienable human right. As a result, it provides free education to all from pre-school to higher education and makes it mandatory from first grade to ninth grade, i.e. the end of preparatory school. This helps the Kuwaiti education system achieve high internal efficiency and prevents students from dropping out.

> According to Article 13 of Kuwait's Constitution: "education is a vital element of society's progress, which is fostered by the state".

According to the sixth pillar of the Kuwaiti Vision 2035, the Government is implementing a number of projects and programs in relation to the development of the creative human capital. This also includes projects aimed at improving educational quality by rethinking curriculum and improving school management competencies in order to provide students with the necessary creative and problem-solving skills.

According to the findings of the TIMSS 2015 study, Kuwaiti fourth-graders got 353 points in mathematics skills and 337 points in science. The eighth-graders received 392 points in mathematics and 411 points in science. Kuwait improved by 383 points in mathematics in the fourth grade, 403 points in the eighth grade, 392 points in science in the fourth grade, and 444 points in science in the eighth grade, according to the findings of the 2019 TIMSS study:

2019	←	Mathematics	Science
Fourth grade	←	383	392
Eighth grade	←	403	444

The first voluntary evaluation of Kuwait 2019

For reading skills for the fourth grade (PIRLS 2016), students scored 393 points, compared with 419 in 2011 (The first voluntary evaluation of Kuwait 2019). The first voluntary evaluation of Kuwait 2019

Reading skills				
Fourth grade	←	2016	←	393
Fourth grade	←	2011	←	419

The first voluntary evaluation of Kuwait 2019

Kuwait sought to close the gaps in quality education as a result, and this goal was included in its national development plan. By identifying the rationales for developing these skills, developing curricula and effective teaching methods, empowering teachers, providing a motivating educational environment, technical aids, and developing an Arabic language curriculum document and standards, it improved learners' linguistic abilities.
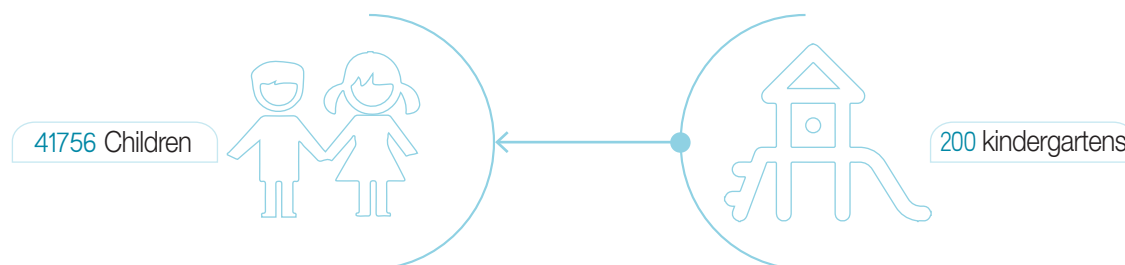
The Ministry of Education has policies in place to help students advance in their academic careers. According to the most recent statistics, the total enrollment rate in the final grade of primary school (1-6) was 88.4%, while the same indicator for the lower stage of secondary education (9-7) was 92.64%. The policies designed to keep students in their seats in basic education for the first and second stages paid off, with the percentage of out-of-school children in the first stage reaching 11.5% (1 - 6), and 7.35% at the second stage (9-7). The proportion of children older than their grademates in the first stage of basic education reached 4.35% (1 - 6) and amounted to 2.24% at the second stage.

Target 4-2: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education.

Article 10 of the Kuwaiti Constitution stipulates that: "The state shall take care of the young, protects them from exploitation and shields them from moral and spiritual neglect". Based on these constitutional grounds and constants, Kuwait pays attention to childhood from birth through laws and regulations that foster health, mental, social, and educational care to this group in collaboration with the various ministries in the country. Through the Department of Women and Childhood, which works on child development and supervises private nurseries, the Ministry of Social Development oversees early education (nurseries) and ensures the provision of specialized teachers to support children with learning difficulties. It also enrolls children of unknown parentage in orphanages in public schools affiliated with the Ministry of Education for educational care. "Kuwait's First Voluntary Report on Sustainable Development Goals."

The Ministry of Education is responsible for the kindergarten stage (two years prior to basic education), which is a free stage on the government's educational ladder. The overall enrollment rate in pre-school education is nearly 59.7%, while the organized education participation rate (one year before primary education) is around 64.69%.

41756 Children   200 kindergartens

The First Voluntary Report: Sustainable Development Goals, State of Kuwait.

%64.69 Participation rate of organized education (one year before primary school

%59.7 Total enrollment percentage in pre-school education

The First Voluntary Report: Sustainable Development Goals, State of Kuwait.

Target 4-3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university.

Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, which work in tandem to improve the potential of higher education nationwide and expand opportunities for higher, technical, and vocational education, are supported by the state's interest in developing post-secondary education (outlined in the Kuwaiti Vision 2035). Similar contributions are made by private universities and colleges in Kuwait that are affiliated with many prestigious international universities. Other organizations, such as the National Committee for Education Support, the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development and the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, are also making significant efforts in this area.

According to the growing demands of the labor market, all Kuwaiti higher and technical education and training institutions are providing more opportunities and diverse specializations. They focus on quality, innovation, and sustainable development, and adopt ideas that support Kuwait's Vision 2035, which is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, and based on raising a generation with the knowledge and skills to meet society's aspirations.

Kuwaiti higher education institutions develop policies for admitting students with disabilities, create an appropriate university environment for this group, and make all services available to them. The Ministry of Education works with the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training to improve training and curriculum, as well as the quality of the results.

Kuwaiti university education contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goals by providing males and females with equal opportunities for admission, disciplines, social care, and equal rights and responsibilities. It also places a high value on professional and applied skills, which it teaches to young people and adults in order to help them enter the labor market. It establishes and spreads the principles of participation and knowledge interaction in education and training institutions, as well as educational paths and creative thinking skills in various training institutions. Furthermore, university education directs scientific research to benefit the knowledge economy and expand educational and training disciplines in the technical and vocational education sectors in areas where local manpower is scarce.

The First Voluntary Report: Sustainable Development Goals, State of Kuwait.

Higher education	Pre-university education	Technical and vocational education and training
↓	↓	↓
41st rank	**50**th rank	**82**nd rank

The first voluntary evaluation of Kuwait 2018
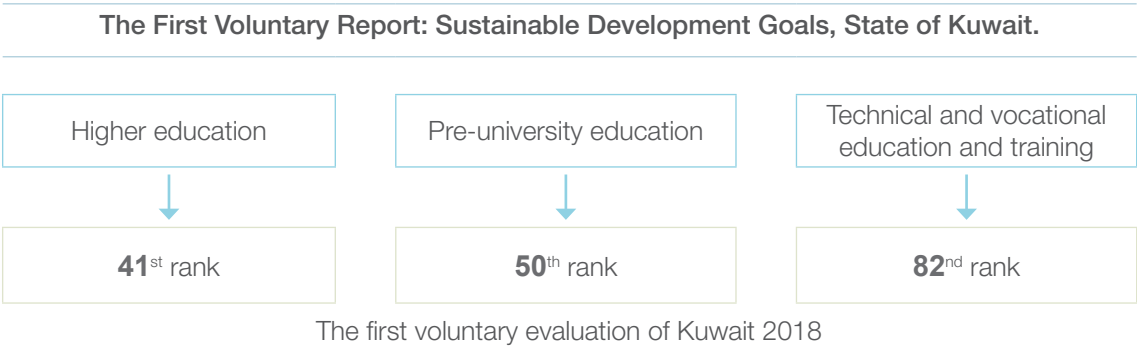
According to the statistics for 2018/2019, Kuwait University enrolled 35,873 students during the academic year, with 74% female students and 26% male students. The number of students enrolled in the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training has increased to 15,635 students, with females accounting for 45% and males accounting for 54.9%.

In terms of higher education students in private universities, the number of enrolled students has increased by 1.2% for females and 1.1% for all students between 2015/2016 and 2019/2020, as shown in the graph below:

Statistical data for private university students

Enrollment 2015-2016

Kuwaitis		Non-Kuwaitis		Total	
female	Total	female	Total	female	Total
13261	21415	4296	7451	17557	28866

Graduates 2015-2016

Kuwaitis		Non-Kuwaitis		Total	
female	Total	female	Total	female	Total
1468	2627	383	684	684	3311

Enrollment 2019-2020

Kuwaitis		Non-Kuwaitis		Total	
female	Total	female	Total	female	Total
15464	26273	4969	6721	20433	32994

Graduates 2019-2020

Kuwaitis		Non-Kuwaitis		Total	
female	Total	female	Total	female	Total
2615	4268	888	2476	3503	6744

The National Report for the Fourth Goal – Kuwait 2019

Target 4-4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youths and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

In response to changes in the labor market and societal needs, the State of Kuwait is constantly developing policies and programs for education and training in technical and vocational fields, as well as the skills needed in the business world. It also develops the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies for decent work opportunities. In a similar vein, it focuses on supporting young people's vocational guidance, as the project was designed to encourage support for small projects. These projects aim to improve this group's professional and vocational abilities in order to support the growing trend of self-employment in the private sector, as well as craft and professional work, and to teach technical skills and professions that require keeping up with digital education skills.

To encourage young people to pursue careers in the future, the government passed Law No. 98/2013, establishing the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise Development, with complete independence and a capital of two billion Kuwaiti dinars, and with the goal of financing small and medium enterprises with up to 80% of their capital, subject to certain conditions.

> Law No. 98/2013 aims to support young people, combat unemployment,
>
> and enable the private sector to achieve economic growth in Kuwait.

Target 4-5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people and children in vulnerable situations

Kuwaiti investments in the human element are aimed at people of all ages and backgrounds, whether Kuwaiti or not. Kuwait is a major contributor and donor in a number of international forums. It has hosted two donor conferences on its soil in order to help the Syrian people. Kuwait's total commitments at the second conference, held in 2014, totaled nearly $500 million. As a human right, the state also supports the right to education for refugees, displaced people, and illegal immigrants.

The government permits the establishment of a variety of private schools for various races. Students' educational systems determine which schools they attend. The government is promoting a positive educational culture in order to fully integrate children from refugee families and illegal immigrants into society. It also names an independent educational

agency to look after their educational needs and provide them with free public and higher education.

Data and indicators of gender equality at all levels of education:

Levels	Schools	Male	female	Gender equality indicator
Primary school	public	76046	82188	1.1
	private	59760	51535	0.9
Middle school	public	58793	63551	1.1
	Religious	930	516	0.6
	private	38584	31273	0.8
Secondary school	public	35692	42080	1.2
	Religious	704	606	0.9
	private	23819	16819	0.7
All levels	public	111738	124268	1.1
	Religious	60464	52141	0.9
	private	82612	80370	1.0
	Total	254814	256779	1.0

The National Report for the Fourth Goal - Kuwait 2019

The state guarantees women's rights to education, missions, work, nomination, and election in all fields, as well as all forms of material and moral support. As a result, Kuwaiti women hold a large number of leadership and administrative positions.

The important human role that women play in society is emphasized in school curricula. Reproductive health and education are covered both implicitly and explicitly in class. In accordance with the Islamic religion and the Kuwaiti constitution, they also assert that they have equal rights to men.   The illiteracy rate among females has decreased significantly, and women's rates of enrollment in education has increased, thanks to the constitution's support for women and their full rights to an equal education.

41 %

Ratio of females to males in secondary education
2019

59 %
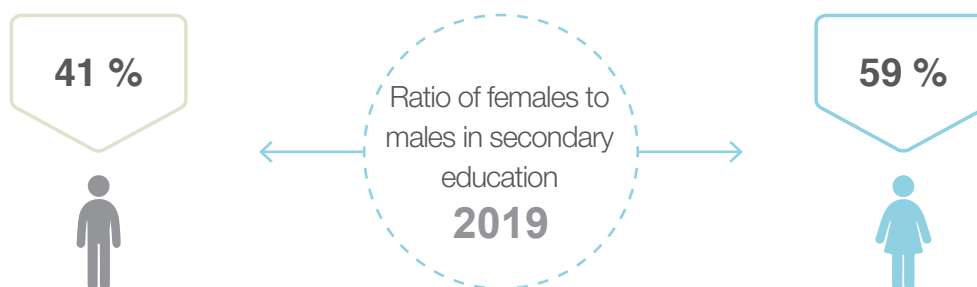
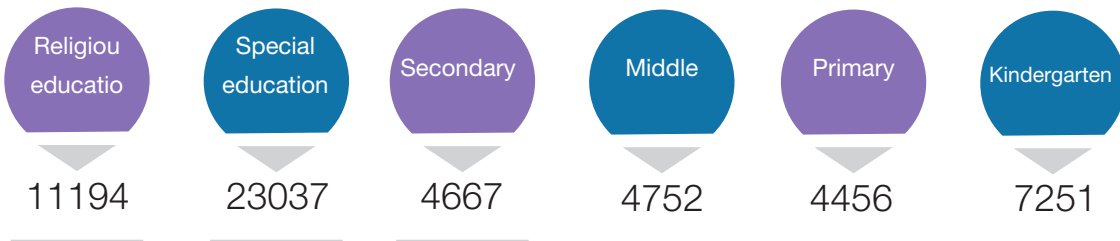The National Report for the Fourth Goal - Kuwait 2019

In accordance with Cabinet Resolution No. 855/2013, the Charitable Fund for the Education of Needy Children was established. The fund receives financial assistance from the government in order to help it fulfill its mission.

The Ministry of Education provided them with all modern capabilities for their education through free educational institutes centers, based on the humanitarian principles set forth in the Kuwaiti constitution in Articles 7,8,9,10, and 25, concerning educational development for learners, including those with special needs. It also created special education curricula and policies for integrating people with special needs into formal education, regardless of their various needs and categories. It set aside classes for them, complete with all educational services, in order to help them grow academically. They also have the option of attending higher education institutions, depending on their individual needs and abilities. In accordance with Article 2 of Law No. 8/2010 regarding the rights of those with disabilities, services and care was provided to the children of illegal residents at all levels of education, including higher education. The Ministry of Education works hard to eliminate all forms of discrimination against students with special needs and to provide all logistical services in educational facilities that aid their progress and education.

Kuwaiti law No. 8/2010 protects the rights of Kuwaiti people with special needs to education, training, and qualifications. The facilities are designed to meet their requirements.

Kuwait spends a lot of money on education. The average cost of education per student is 4,336 Kuwaiti dinars (approximately $14,340 USD).

Amount of Expenditure on Student Education by Education Level 2018

| Religiou educatio	Special education	Secondary	Middle	Primary	Kindergarten
11194	23037	4667	4752	4456	7251

The National Report for the Fourth Goal - Kuwait 2019

Target 4-6: By 2030, ensure that all youths and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

Since 1950, the state has been interested in eradicating illiteracy and spreading literacy by teaching the fundamentals of Arabic and arithmetic to a large group of elderly people who had no opportunities to learn previously. This period lasted until 1957, and after this the second stage of illiteracy eradication began, which lasted until 1981. Two literacy centers were established at this time, one for men in 1958 and one for women in 1963. In 1980, they were around 78 centers.

The third stage of education was framed by the issuance of the Literacy Law of 1981, which helped to reduce illiteracy rates across the country from 54.4% in 1957 to 2.8% in 2018.

In this regard, people with disabilities were not overlooked. The Special Education Department's first adult education and literacy center opened in 2001. It accepts all deaf and disabled children, as well as those with motor disabilities, into various literacy classes with the assistance of teachers who have been trained to work with this population.

Progress in literacy in Kuwait

2018
2.8%

1957
54.4%
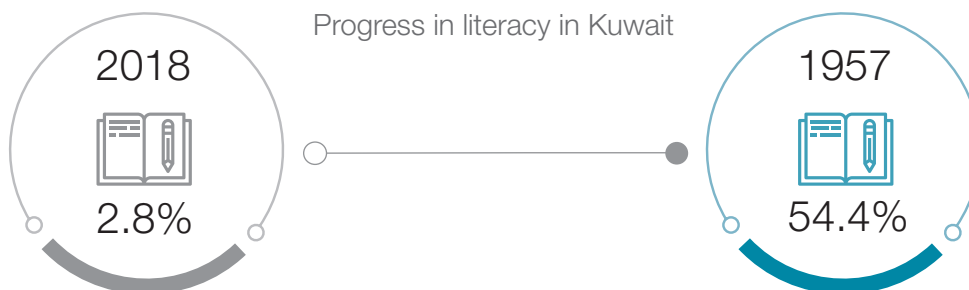
The National Report for the Fourth Goal – Kuwait 2019

Target 4-7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development – including (among others) through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

In the educational policies of the State of Kuwait's Ministry of Education, the right to education has always been linked to human rights. Its current stage of development was a result of and a continuation of previous stages that took into account general human values and followed conscious trends in creating content that achieves the fourth goal of quality education while meeting the demands of productivity, sustainability, and human values of proper co-existence and non-discrimination. The same stage complied with international and regional human rights conventions. The Ministry's experience began to take a more clear form after taking into account the reasons and factors of sustainable development, not only by developing an educational curriculum, but also by incorporating the concepts and values of global citizenship, peaceful co-existence, tolerance, and non-discrimination into educational activities and curricula. These elements are included in all courses that include real-life situations with content and objectives that impact emotional and psychological formation and help students adapt to a variety of changing and continuous situations and events throughout their lives. The concept of citizenship and global literacy incorporates the national curriculum's performance indicators. In addition, the Ministry is working to improve the educational environment and increase family participation in education as a primary partner in child and women's rights programs, as well as participating in activities and events related to sustainable development and citizenship.

To create the educational environment, the Ministry of Education was interested in working on several thematic areas of sustainable development and global citizenship, such as:

☐ Supporting and empowering educational institutions by engaging in human rights education activities and courses, preparing the educational field, providing relevant courses, whether in public or university education, and directing activities for learners centered on promoting sustainable development skills and global citizenship.

☐ Developing teaching methods through the continuous development of educational tools used to support the state's plan for sustainable development, emphasizing the development of teaching methods such as cooperative learning, the approach to values education, problem-solving, brainstorming, dialogue, simulation, and crisis management, as well as focusing on field visits and research, reporting, and monitoring humanitarian situations.

☐ Expanding social participation in the spread of human rights culture by focusing on the role of civil society institutions, media organizations, and families.

Target 4-A: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

Kuwait has achieved international standards in buildings that are consistent with the psychological and social formation of students at various educational stages, indicating that it places a high value on the educational environment that supports education. Academic facilities have improved as a result of the implementation of modern school management systems, such as the building management system (BMS). This is a smart system that manages and operates a school building during working hours while also disconnecting electrical power after hours and on weekends. It is also programmed to monitor and operate the building in order to reduce electrical power consumption.

The Ministry has also begun experimenting with solar-powered schools in the hopes of implementing this in all of the country's schools within the next few years. In addition, all schools have access to the Internet, computers, basic sanitary facilities, drinking water, and hand-washing facilities.

The Ministry is currently constructing physical and health education halls in schools, with 125 halls completed by the end of 2019.

100 %   100 %   100 %

100 %   100 %   100 %
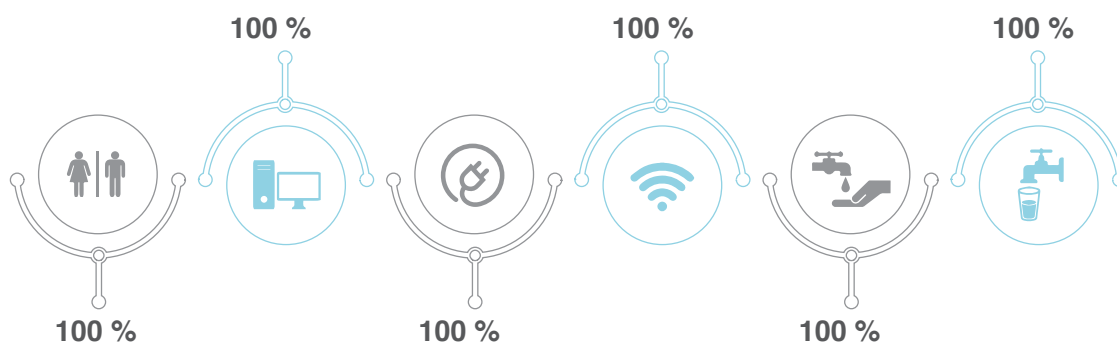
Protecting students from any form or method of corporal punishment, as well as other inappropriate methods, is an educational responsibility shared by the Ministry and the community, as they are physically and psychologically incompatible with the idea of sound education. Article No. 10 of the Kuwaiti Constitution contains constitutional and legislative provisions that take into account the human dimension required by each learner's interest.

Through community education, media, places of worship, conferences, and seminars, the Ministry of Education increases awareness-raising programs aimed at all groups involved in child rearing, whether they be families or schools. It also commemorates the International Day of Non-violence, the International Day of Tolerance and Peaceful Co-existence, and the International Human Rights Day with students.

On the other hand, the Ministry reinforces the concepts and values of co-existence and non-discrimination in the curriculum and student activities. Corporal punishment, abusive language, and humiliation are all prohibited under its rules. It collaborates with non-profit organizations that provide educational services to children and teenagers.

Target 4-B: By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programs - in developed countries and other developing countries.

Kuwait promotes cultural exchange with a number of sister and friendly countries around the world. The Kuwaiti University, for example, supports the scholarship system for students and assists them in achieving academic excellence. The university awards more than 200 international student scholarships in Kuwait, with 48 embassies and foreign entities benefiting from this. There are 150 seats available to study the Arabic language, and 151 countries compete for them. Kuwait is also one of the world's most prominent donors in the field of humanitarian aid, particularly financial aid, including education.

....

The Kuwaiti Constitution states in Article (10) that

"the state caters for young people and protects them from exploitation

and moral, physical, and spiritual neglect".

....

Target 4-C: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially the least developed countries and small island developing States

Kuwait's serious efforts to qualify human cadres capable of teaching according to modern educational trends as a basic pillar to support the indicators of Goal 4, is one of the factors that has contributed to Kuwait's success in supporting the sustainable development agenda for this goal. This will assist teachers in playing a more effective role by allowing students to achieve educational understanding and education in accordance with the curricula they teach. The Ministry established the agency to prepare and qualify teachers to meet the demands of their profession by enrolling some teachers and mentors in local, regional, and international courses and workshops, holding technical mentor training courses, and hosting seminars and panel discussions to raise awareness of the national curriculum based on the new evaluation mechanisms.

The Ministry uses a new mechanism to select teachers which is based on an understanding

of the importance of the teacher and his role in education, as well as humanitarian incentives that guide their classroom behavior and professional competencies. A national qualification, at the very least a bachelor's degree, is required of all teachers. Kuwait generally promotes teaching as a desirable profession by paying high salaries to teachers.

In collaboration with higher education institutions designed for teachers, the Ministry of Education focuses on training and qualifying teachers both before and during service with ongoing professional development. The goal is to ensure that certification and training, both before and during service, are aligned with the Ministry's standards. This is accomplished through pre-school training for all teachers, as well as technical follow-up prior to technical guidance and educational preparation based on workshops and technical sessions.

In all stages of education, the volunteerism document focuses on the mental side of teachers, including psychological balance and mental health, increased motivation, meeting their needs and dispositions, increasing self-confidence, and overcoming stress and tension.

In the academic year 2018/2019, Kuwait had around 70,317 public school teachers, 18,498 private school teachers, 683 religious institute teachers, and 1,218 special education teachers.

In Kuwait, all teachers are given structured training and certification at all levels of education. The percentage of teachers who have received training and certification has surpassed 100%.

100%

Teachers qualification and training rate 100%

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Target 4-1: By 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to free, equitable, and high-quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

The educational system provides education to everyone who lives within the Kingdom's territory. It focuses its efforts on educational development and infrastructure strengthening in order to achieve the Kingdom's Vision 2030 goals through laws and policies governing teaching and learning.

The Ministry of Education has a strategic focus on improving classroom teaching and learning processes, particularly the modification of assessment systems and tools as primary tools for assessing student performance. The structure of curriculum standards was defined by the development of general education curriculum stages in accordance with the Kingdom's educational philosophy and objectives, as well as modern global trends, which included the requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in terms of skills and knowledge, all of which contributed to meeting societal and labor market demands.

The same can be said for efforts aimed at assisting students and improving their academic performance through digital transformation. In order to rely on scientific tools with international credibility in evaluating the reality of education, the Kingdom took part in the PIRLS and TIMSS tests to measure reading and writing skills, as well as the PISA 2018 test.
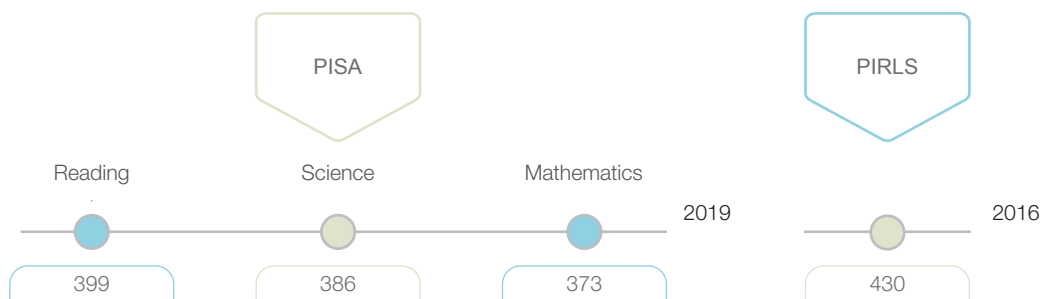
The Kingdom scored 383 points on the fourth-grade mathematics test, compared to 410 points in 2011; and 368 points on the eighth-grade mathematics test, compared to 394 points in 2011. Students in the Kingdom did well in the 2019 TIMSS study, scoring 398 points in fourth grade mathematics and 394 points in eighth grade mathematics. Students in the Kingdom scored 402 points in fourth grade science skills and 431 points in eighth grade science skills.

The Kingdom scored the same points in the PIRLS test in 2011 and 2016 (c. 430 points). It also scored 373 points in the PISA mathematics test, 386 points in science, and 399 points in reading.

In response to the need for improved educational outcomes and increased academic achievement, the Ministry changed the regulations for primary school exams and allocated five minutes for written applications in each of the five lessons per day. It also disseminates low-performing student programs and helps teachers to improve their performance. It aims to increase the number of mathematics and science classes while also improving teacher performance, and teachers' science and mathematics teaching methods.

Saudi Arabia's results of international tests

TIMSS Science	TIMSS Science	TIMSS Mathematics	TIMSS Mathematics	
Eighth grade	Fourth grade	Eighth grade	Fourth grade	2015
396	390	368	383	

TIMSS Science	TIMSS Science	TIMSS Mathematics	TIMSS Mathematics	
Eighth grade	Fourth grade	Eighth grade	Fourth grade	2019
431	402	394	398	

PISA				PIRLS	
Reading	Science	Mathematics	2019		2016
399	386	373		430	
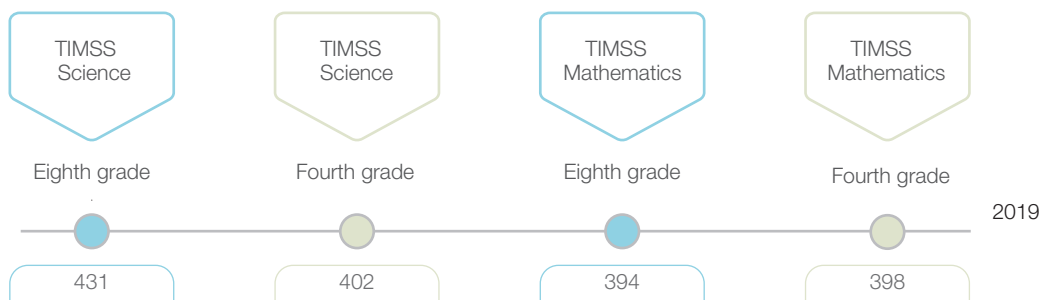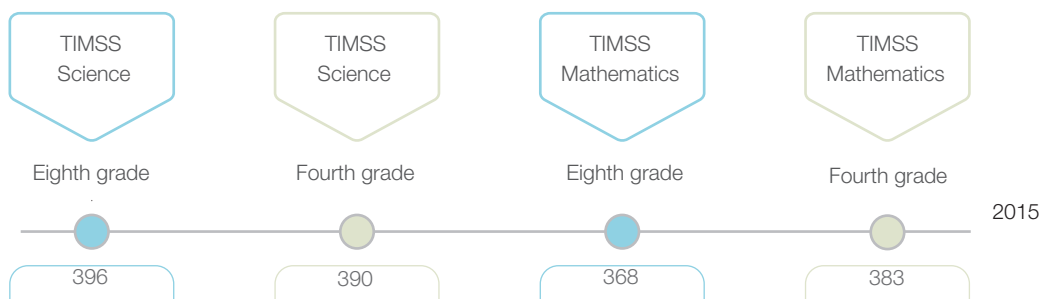
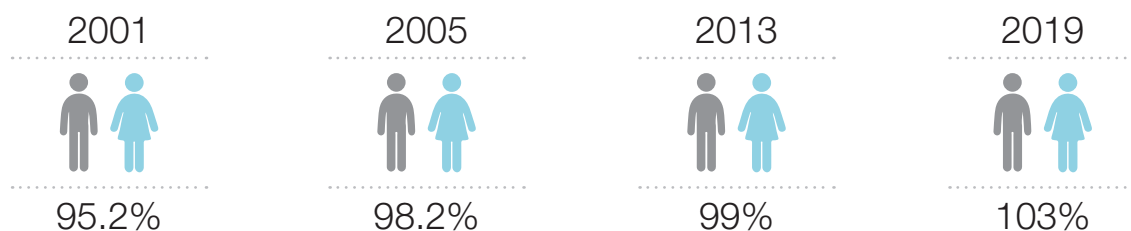Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal 2019

The Kingdom also conducts national tests in the fourth and eighth grades to determine how well students have mastered the necessary skills and knowledge in Arabic, mathematics, and science at the national level. These tests have a frame of reference established by the National Center for Measurement.

In accordance with Cabinet Resolution No. 139, the Kingdom provides free compulsory public education for children aged six to fifteen for a period of twelve years. According to the most recent statistics on total admission rates in the Kingdom, the primary stage has increased significantly from 95.2% in 2001 to 103% in 2019. They reached 97% at the middle stage, while the percentage of children not enrolled in school in the primary stage was 11.0%; 16.6% at the middle stage; and 25.7 % at the secondary stage in 2019/2020.

%25.7	16.6%	%11.0
Percentage of those who are not enrolled in schools in the secondary stage in the academic year2020 / 2019	Percentage of those who are not enrolled in schools in the middle stage in the academic year	Percentage of those who are not enrolled in schools in the primary stage in the Academic year
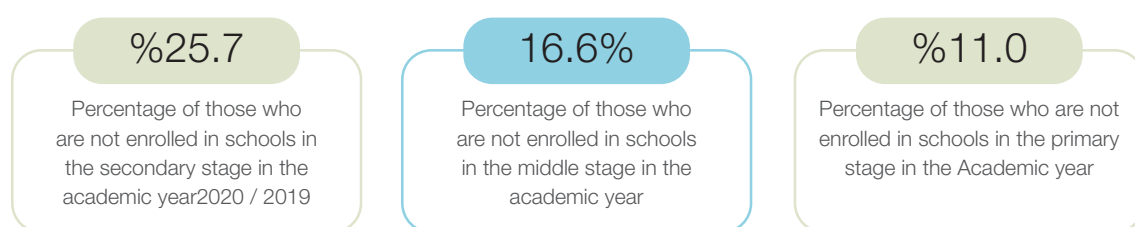
Overall admission rates

Primary stage

2001	2005	2013	2019
95.2%	98.2%	99%	103%

Middle stage

2019

96%	98%	97%
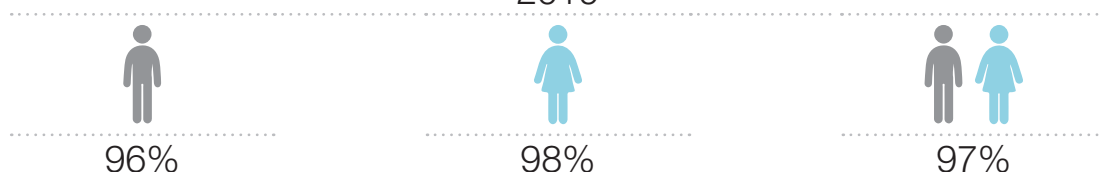
Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal 2019

Completion rates increased between 2.15% and 2.19% at various educational levels. Simultaneously, efforts are made to teach students the fundamental knowledge and skills required at each educational level.

Completion rate

2015			Educational level	2019		
74.2%	74.2%	74.2%	Primary	94.3%	92.7%	93.5%
82.8%	81.0%	81.9%	Middle	95.3%	93.6%	94.4%
82.8%	81.1%	82.0%	Secondary	92.9%	93.1%	93.3%
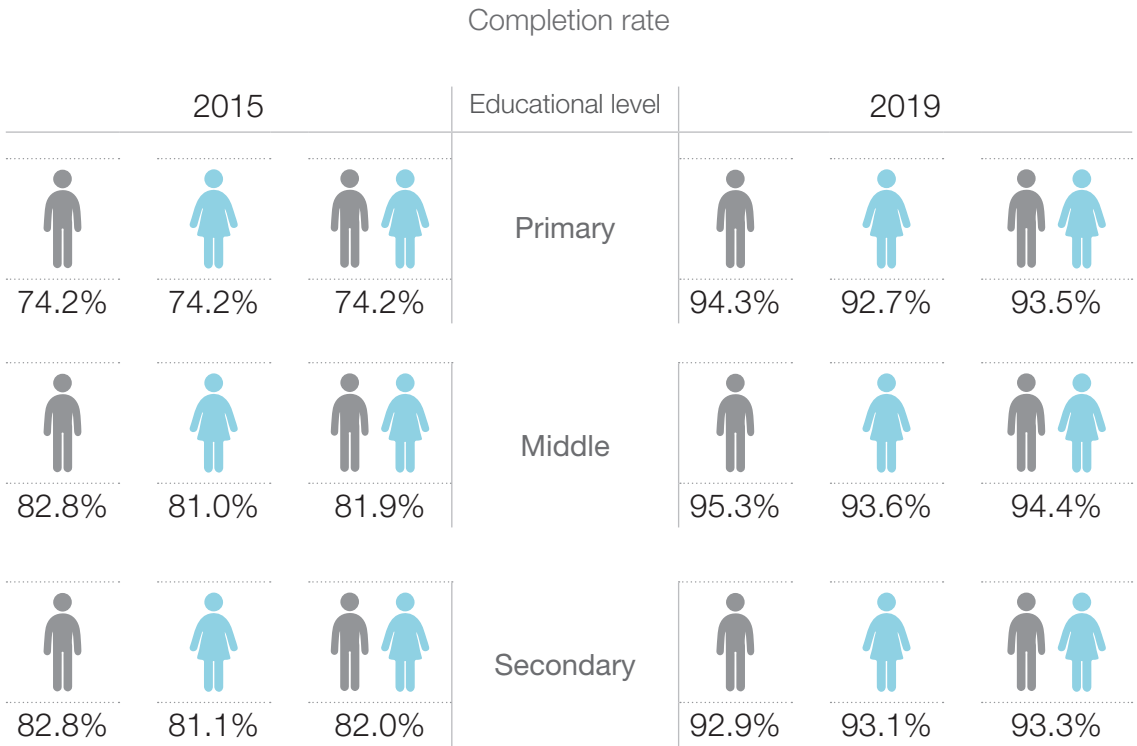
Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal

The percentage of children in primary school (ages 1-6) was around 5.3%, and the percentage of children in middle school was about 10.7%.
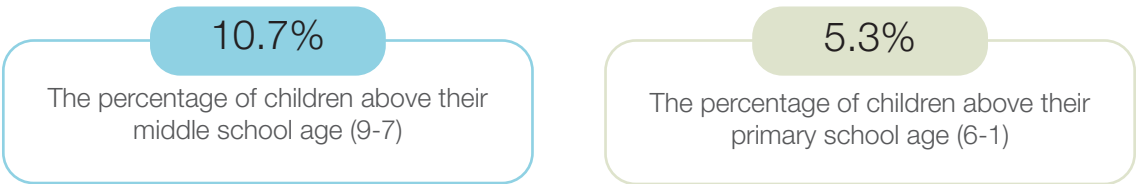
10.7%
The percentage of children above their middle school age (9-7)

5.3%
The percentage of children above their primary school age (6-1)

Target 4-2: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education.

The Kingdom's Vision 2030 asserted that every child has the right to a high-quality education, recognizing the importance of this stage in shaping children's personalities, improving their educational outcomes, and influencing the student's subsequent educational stages. As a result, the Ministry of Education devised policies and increased enrollment rates for this stage. It began a project to expand early childhood education, which included kindergartens (KG2 and KG3) as well as elementary schools (the first, second, and third years). In 2019, 313 kindergarten classrooms will serve over 82,825 male and female pupils.

According to the most recent data from the General Authority for Statistics, nearly 37.2% of children begin formal education one year before the official primary school enrollment age. The percentage of children who live in an educationally positive and motivating home environment is currently at 34%. According to the Education Statistics Center's data, the total enrollment rate in kindergartens for children aged 3-5 is 17%.

The rate of children who live in an educationally positive and motivating home environment

Participation rate in formal education
one year before primary education

38.6%	35.8%	37.2%
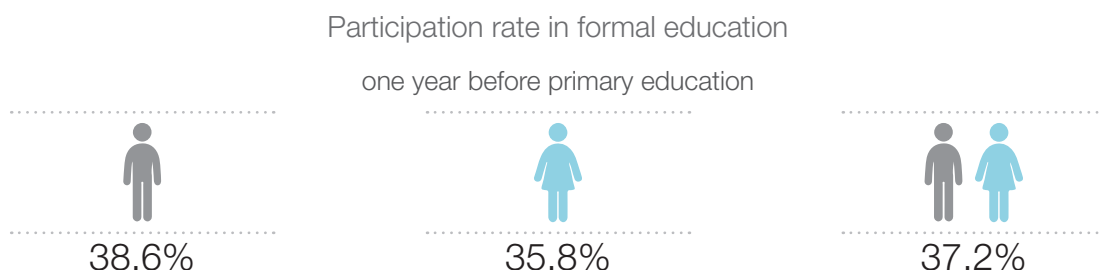
Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal

The rate of children who live in an educationally positive and motivating home environment

Early childhood 3-5 years	Primary stage 6-11 years	
34%	29%	31.5%
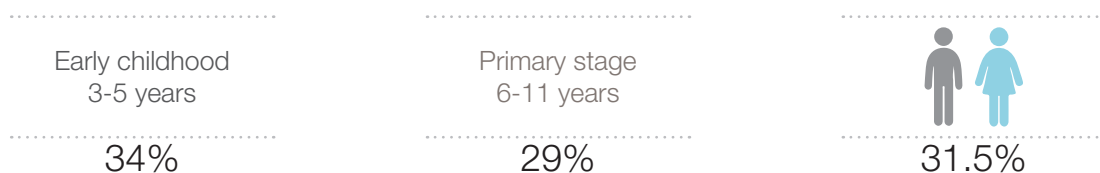
Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal

The Kingdom is working hard to ensure that all children have access to pre-school education by integrating early childhood with the first, second, and third grades and launching a virtual kindergarten for children. It also establishes nursery and kindergarten programs, expands their services, undertakes a number of expansion initiatives, and develops advanced curricula appropriate for the stage.

Child Helpline 116111: is a toll-free hotline that records all complaints involving children under the age of eighteen and offers advice, care, and protection, as well as referrals to appropriate authorities and follow-up.

Overall enrolment rate				Net enrolment rate		
Children aged 3-5			2015	Children aged 4-5		
16%				22%		

Overall enrolment rate				Net enrolment rate		
Children aged 3-5			2019	Children aged 3-5		
13.3%	20.9%	17.0%		12.1%	19.4%	15.6%

Overall enrolment rate				Net enrolment rate		
Children aged 4-5			2019	Children aged 4-5		
18%	28.4%	23%		16.3%	26.1%	21.0%
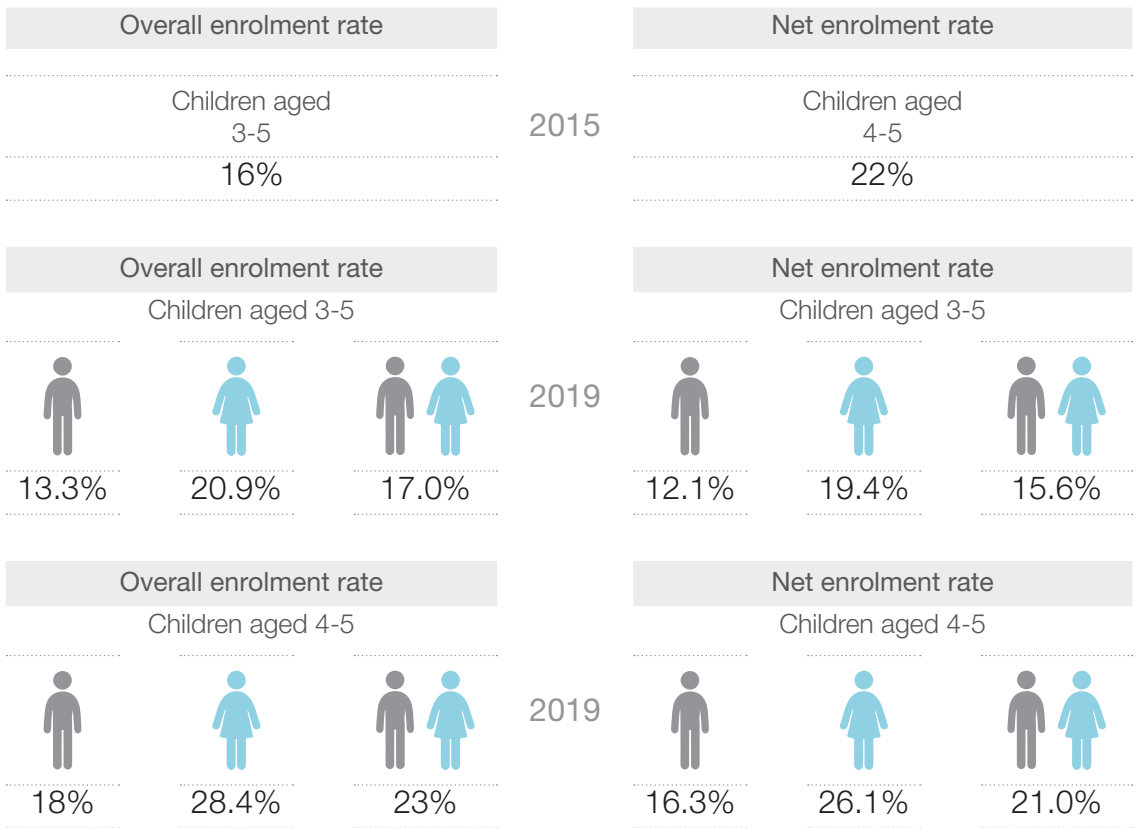
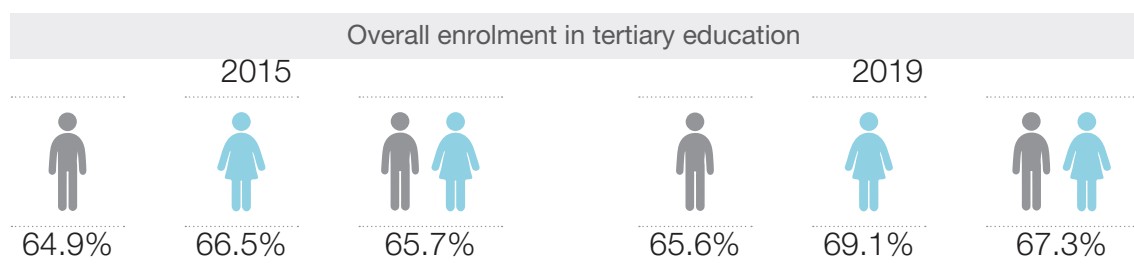Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal

Target 4-3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university.

The Ministry of Education oversees all types of education, including pre-school, general education, technical and applied education, and higher education. This is one of the Kingdom's distinguishing features. As a result, follow-up, policy formulation, and data standardization and accuracy are all simplified.

In developing the organizational structure of university education, the Ministry of Education has made a quantum leap. The Ministry of Education received approval from the Council of Ministers for the university system, allowing them to carry out their responsibilities within a framework of coordination and joint work with the ministry's competent authorities. This allows universities to exercise their authority on their own.

Around 28 public universities, 10 private universities, 19 private colleges, 75 technical colleges, and 63 industrial institutes are located throughout the Kingdom. In 2019, the total enrollment rate was 65.6%, up from 64.9% in 2015. The scholarship program is also being developed, and its operational efficiency is being improved. Scholarships are tied to the labor market, and there were 99,245 scholars in 2018. The Scientific Research and Innovation Program was established by the Ministry to encourage universities to research and innovate, transfer technology knowledge, and improve university competitiveness.

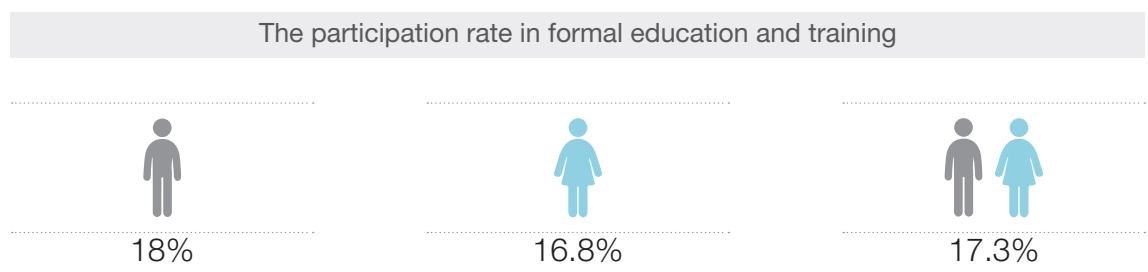| Overall enrolment in tertiary education					
2015			2019		
64.9%	66.5%	65.7%	65.6%	69.1%	67.3%

Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal 2019

The most important goal of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 for technical education is to "develop the entire technical education and training system and sector in order to become an integrated system capable of providing the appropriate manpower that the Saudi labor market requires."
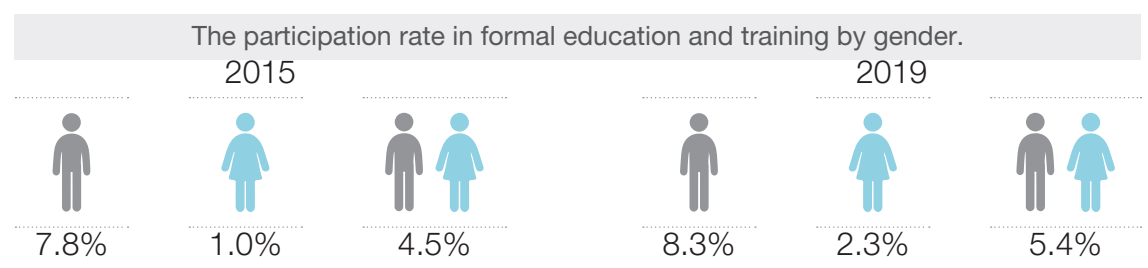
Specialized scientific centers have been established to link formal and non-formal education through a variety of activities and programs in order to spread scientific and technical culture in society and create an educational environment in which male and female students can invest their energies. About 17.3% of the population is enrolled in formal education and training.

The Kingdom is expanding its applied technical education system by establishing applied universities to encourage enrollment in applied technical education and improve its quality to meet labor market demands. This type of education is an important post-secondary higher education path. The Ministry hopes that by doing so, it will be able to develop and qualify young people's technical skills, as well as provide multiple job opportunities for Saudi citizens.

According to the Ministry of Education's Education Statistics Centers, the participation rate in technical and vocational education programs for those aged 15 to 24 years old increased to around 5.4% in 2019, up from 4.5% in 2018.

The participation rate in formal education and training

18%	16.8%	17.3%

Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal 2019

The participation rate in formal education and training by gender.

2015			2019		
7.8%	1.0%	4.5%	8.3%	2.3%	5.4%

Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal 2019

Target 4-4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youths and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills - for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.

The Kingdom's policies are aimed at dealing with the rapid changes in the labor market, developing the skills of both young people and adults, and providing them with the skills they need to find decent work and self-employment. A practical framework is built to ensure that the outcomes of undergraduate majors are consistent with the needs of the labor market by aligning educational and training programs with the needs of national development, strengthening the educational system's capacity, motivating and directing higher education institutions to align their outcomes on a continuous basis, and raising the skills of graduates.

Many initiatives exist to help young people and adults improve their professional and technical skills. INJAZ Saudi Arabia, for example, is a national initiative that teaches leadership skills to young people aged 6 to 24 and encourages them to start their own businesses. It also aims to improve life skills and prepare young people for the labor market by managing the transitional period between the educational system and the labor market and enacting a strategic partnership with volunteers and the public and private sectors. In a similar vein, the Ministry of Education offers technical workshops in schools to prepare students for careers, improve their attitudes toward them, and foster values and skills. It also enhances the educational environment, which promotes creativity, innovation, and higher enrollment rates in professional and technical programs.

Percentage of young people and adults with ICT skills by type of skill 2017

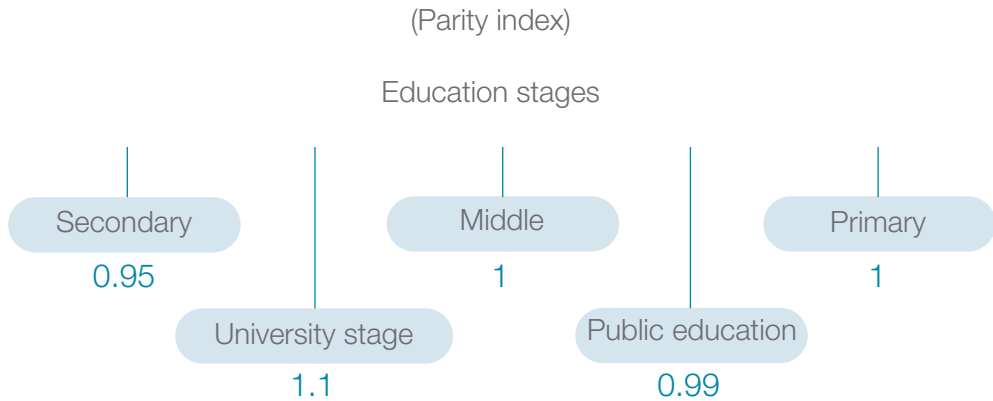| Skills	15 - 25	15 +
Copying or moving a file or folder	29.13 %	27.68 %
Using copy and paste tools to repeat or move information within a document.	17.1 %	16.05 %
Sending emails with attached files such as documents, photos, and videos	13.86 %	15.26 %
Using basic calculation formulas in your spreadsheet	5.4 %	6.01 %
Connecting and installing new devices such as: modem, camera, printer	10.86 %	10.86 %
Finding, downloading, installing and configuring software.	5.35 %	5.39 %
Creating electronic presentations using presentation software including text, images, audio, video, or charts.	6.38 %	5.91 %
Transferring files between your computer and other devices.	10.47 %	10.75 %
Writing a computer program using a specialized programming language.	1.46 %	2.1 %
Total	**36.7 %**	**29.61 %**

Saudi Codes Initiative:

Through collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Microsoft, it aims to promote a programming culture and develop the necessary skills for male and female students. It involves 307,000 students and 4,000 trainers across the Kingdom, resulting in 40,000 hours of programming and a participation rate of more than 75% among girls.

Target 4-5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people, and children in vulnerable situations.

Article 30 of the Basic Law of Governance states that "the State shall provide public education and commit itself to the eradication of illiteracy". All forms and stages of education are free, according to Article 233 of the general education policy. We should note that the Kingdom's educational system prioritizes gender equality in all aspects, including admissions and enrollment in various stages of education, curriculum and tests, teacher and lecturer qualifications, and educational facility quality, particularly with the ongoing construction of a number of student hostels. Male-female parity indexes were balanced as a result of the Kingdom's relevant policies. Because of the Kingdom's male-dominated

population structure, the parity index at the general education level was low (0.99). In comparison to males at the secondary level, the index at the university level is (1.1) in favor of females because they have more opportunities to complete studies and perform well.

(Parity index)

Education stages

Secondary		Middle		Primary
0.95		1		1
	University stage		Public education	
	1.1		0.99	

Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal

Based on the principle of providing inclusive education and paying special attention to the excluded, vulnerable, and refugees, the Kingdom established policies and facilities for the admission of Syrian and Yemeni students in public and private schools, regardless of their conditions or how they entered the country. This issue was governed by laws and circulars, and all of the issues that arose as a result of it were resolved. There were 382,717 Yemeni and Syrian students in the Kingdom's schools up until 2019.

The category of people with disabilities received a lot of attention because the Kingdom's education policy included a lot of foundations and constants about special education. Article 36 emphasizes the individual's dignity as well as the provision of appropriate opportunities for them to develop their abilities and contribute to development. Articles 56 and 55 deal with the care of physically or mentally disabled students, as well as the creation of permanent and temporary special programs tailored to their needs. Article 88 declares that the state is responsible for teaching the mentally or physically disabled and developing diverse special cultural and training curricula that are diverse and aligned with their conditions, based on each person's own capabilities.

In light of the national strategy for people with disabilities, the Ministry has recently developed special education, increased the number of beneficiaries of programs, and improved services provided to people with disabilities by developing a national strategy for teaching people with disabilities. It also provided early intervention services for this group, bringing the total number of students receiving special education services to 200,000 and resulting in the creation of 80 early intervention programs.

The Kingdom followed through on its clear commitment to provide the necessary budgets that may lead to equitable and inclusive education by implementing equal spending and improving governance and accountability. This is accomplished by increasing student spending in public schools, universities, and technical training.

	The amount of expenditure on the student in public, university and technical education.	
	Cost per student in public education	25000 riyals
	Cost per student in tertiary education	44000 riyals
	Cost per student in technical education	34000 riyals

Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal

It is a financial incentive for the teachable category to encourage enrollment, non-dropout, and inclusion in schools for people with special needs. In 2018, the amount spent on this category was 780 – 478 – 226 Saudi riyals.

Target 4-6: By 2030, ensure that all youths and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

New numbers in literacy and adult education have been achieved as the Kingdom recognizes the principle of lifelong learning and its efforts, based on Vision 2030, to provide all of its residents with at least appropriate levels of competence in functional skills of literacy and numeracy. Appropriate policies and strategies were developed, and long-term budgets were set aside for them. The Ministry of Education has taken steps to expand adult education, eliminate illiteracy, promote lifelong learning values, and provide diverse education and training opportunities to people aged 15 to 60. It also aims to assist them in gaining access to knowledge, leading a decent and secure life in society, and expanding their employment opportunities.

The Neighborhood Education initiative aided in the development of a more comprehensive understanding of lifelong learning. It is aimed at those with a high school diploma or less, and it helps them gain the necessary skills to enter the labor market by improving their cultural, health, social, and economic levels. Vocational programs, life skills programs, and other educational and awareness programs are all part of the program. This enabled a 30% increase in the number of neighborhood education centers, bringing the total to 305 by 2020.

The development of the eradication of illiteracy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is as follows:

99.5%	Literacy among young people 15-24		99.5%	Literacy among young people 15-24
	2019			2015
94.5%	people 15 and above		94.5%	Literacy among young people 15 and above
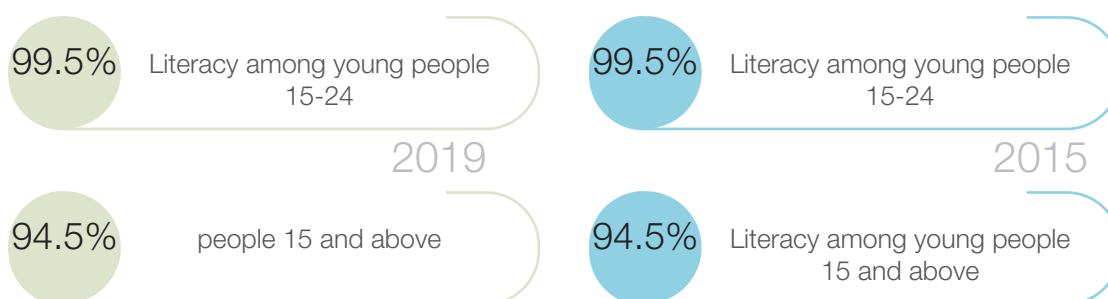
The Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal

Target 4-7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development – including (among others) through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

The Saudi educational system places a strong emphasis on global citizenship and learning for long-term development. According to the Royal Decree No. 49346, issued on 21st July 2017, the Sustainable Development Goals must be included in the educational curriculum. In December 2017, the Ministry of Education led the coordination in this area, hosting a workshop in which a number of officials from all parties involved in the Sustainable Development Goals were present.

The Kingdom has made significant efforts to promote sustainable development and global citizenship concepts and values. It has established an intellectual awareness center that provides specialized programs to support and enrich the values of male and female students and their families. The goal was to promote national identity, promote values of moderation,

tolerance, and otherness, and to promote a dialogue culture. It also aimed to promote the values of discipline and public property preservation, as well as provide digital tools to enhance the national character to 1.9 million users.

The national educational entertainment neighborhood clubs project, which aims to invest in community members' leisure time, has aided in the promotion of student values and skills, the creation of an attractive and safe neighborhood, the development of life skills and labor market skills for all, and the advancement of Saudi Arabia's cultural arts contribution. There are approximately 1,000 neighborhood clubs in operation today, serving one million people of both sexes.   The Ministry of Education implements the Promoting Positive Behavior Program, which uses scientific methods to support and develop positive behavior in a motivating and appealing environment. It also aims to improve the capabilities and skills of student mentors, as well as the educational system as a whole. The program's implementation resulted in the creation of the Behavioral Excellence Award and the certification of more than 373 trainers across all education departments. The program was implemented in 16,804 schools.

Many private sector and charitable initiatives, such as the Leadership and Values Program and the MiSK Global Forum, are also implemented and supported by the MiSK Foundation.

The Irtiqaa Initiative:

aims to increase school participation in the educational process by involving families and the community. Its goals are to promote a community-wide partnership culture, increase parents' satisfaction with the quality of education their children receive, and increase participation.

Target 4-A: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

The Ministry of Education pays close attention to the educational environment and its tools. The school is one of society's institutions for preparing good citizens who can think, work, and be productive. As a result, the educational environment must be based on positive values, principles, and practices. To support teaching and learning, the most up-to-date specifications and standards for school buildings must be in place.

Percentage of schools with facilities, infrastructure, technology and internet

90 %   100 %   100 %   100 %

100 %   100 %   100 %
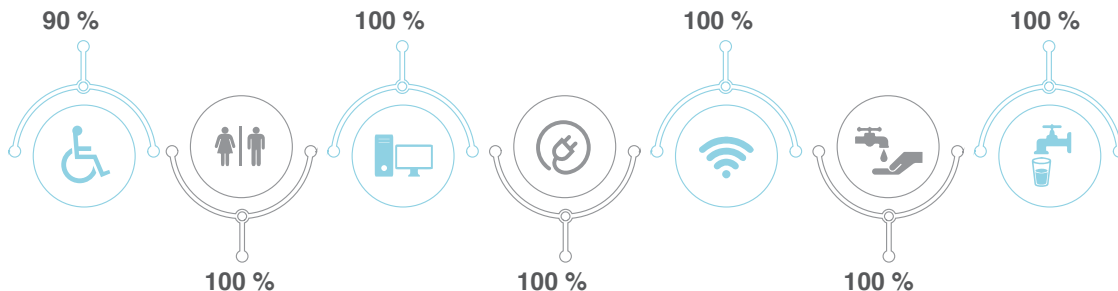
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The Ministry of Education introduced the "Rifq" program as a mentoring, preventive, curative, and constructive program to reduce violence among public education students. This is based on scientific foundations that are consistent with psychological theories and the characteristics of the age group, as part of developing policies, strategies, and initiatives to protect students and all staff from violence and create good learning environments.

In addition, the Ministry launched an initiative to improve school security and safety. The initiative provides schools with the necessary safety equipment to deal with accidents and emergency situations, thereby increasing the rate of security in schools and protecting lives and property. It also aims to train personnel responsible for security and safety, as well as encourage private sector investment in security services.

Target 4.B: By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education.

Scholarships:

The government of Saudi Arabia, based on its leading role, carries out its noble mission at the international and regional levels to serve Islam and Muslims in all fields, including human resource development and qualifications. This is accomplished by awarding scholarships to outstanding international students in theoretical, scientific, and research disciplines from all over the world, including developing and the least developed countries, to study in the Kingdom's government universities. Universities, on the other hand, set aside 5% of academic seats for them. Scholarship students are treated the same as their national counterparts in every way.

8,000-12,000 seats annually

A student who is accepted for a scholarship in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia can also benefit from the following benefits and incentives:

1. Health care for himself and his family members in case they are brought to reside with him, if the regulations so require.
2. Monthly bonuses and allowances.
3. Free accommodation.
4. Student and recreational activities.
5. Free training programs.
6. Social care.
7. Annual travel tickets taking into account the regulations that are governed by those who organize this.

King Salman Relief Center:

This center allocates an annual budget to support the targeted countries in the humanitarian sectors based on the UN's humanitarian need plan and response to relieving distressed people from anywhere in the world. Education is at the forefront of sectors because it provides assistance to the greatest number of people while maintaining the highest levels of quality and efficiency. Furthermore, the center works on projects that assist children in reintegrating into schools so that they can exercise their right to education in accordance with international humanitarian law for child protection. Its projects focus on promoting laws that protect children's rights, focusing on the general and specific protections afforded to children

by international law, and investing in the implementation and development of humanitarian intervention projects for children with disabilities. These measures are designed to ensure a just humanitarian response while also respecting the dignity and rights of all people in needy areas.

Target 4-C: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially the least developed countries and small island developing States

The National Institute for Educational Professional Development was founded as part of a teacher professional development program, and it has legal, financial, and administrative autonomy. A Board of Directors made up of representatives from various government agencies oversees the organization.
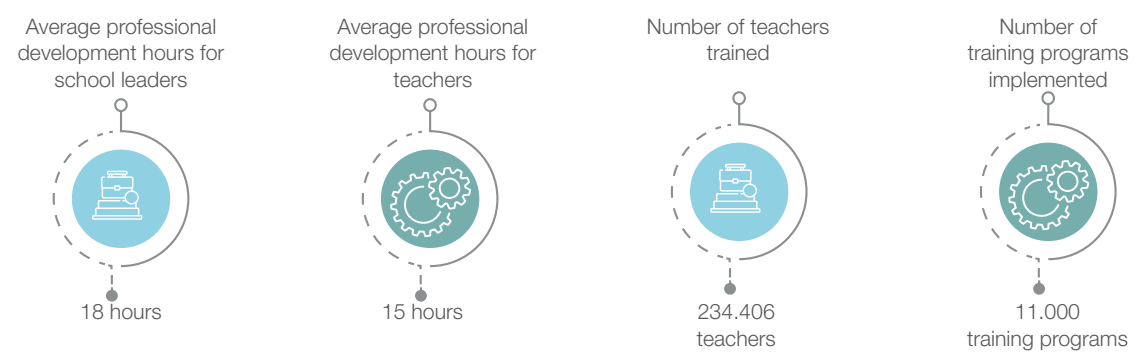
Its goals include advancing professional educational practices, establishing a system for professional development in the education sector, organizing development and quality control, and preparing educational leaders. The following are its main high-quality programs:

- The "Experiences" Qualitative Professional Development Program, which aims to develop professional educational practices for leaders, supervisors, and teachers, as well as provide student guidance, in accordance with international standards and the Kingdom's Vision 2030. So far, 3,348 people have been targeted.

- The "Research Lesson": training program aims to implement a professional development model that allows the school community to practice long-term professional development and continuous learning.

- The Summer Program for Educational Professional Development: In 2019, there were approximately 5,983 training programs with a total of 207,158 trainees.

- The International Teachers' Forum: aims to integrate international and local educational experiences into sound educational and pedagogical practices, as well as to improve and manage teachers' roles in the classroom.

- Through specialized training portfolios: the New Teacher Project aims to empower new teachers by providing them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and guidance to keep up with scientific and technological development.

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Through specialized training portfolios, the New Teacher Project aims to empower new teachers by providing them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and guidance to keep up with scientific and technological development.

Percentage of teachers who received in-service training in the past 12 months:

Average professional development hours for school leaders	Average professional development hours for teachers	Number of teachers trained	Number of training programs implemented
18 hours	15 hours	234.406 teachers	11.000 training programs

Saudi Arabia's National Report for the Fourth Goal 2019

100% of qualified teachers

Percentage of students per qualified teacher by educational stage					
Kindergarten			Primary		
-	12	12	12	13	13
Secondary			Special education		
12	10	11	2	2	2
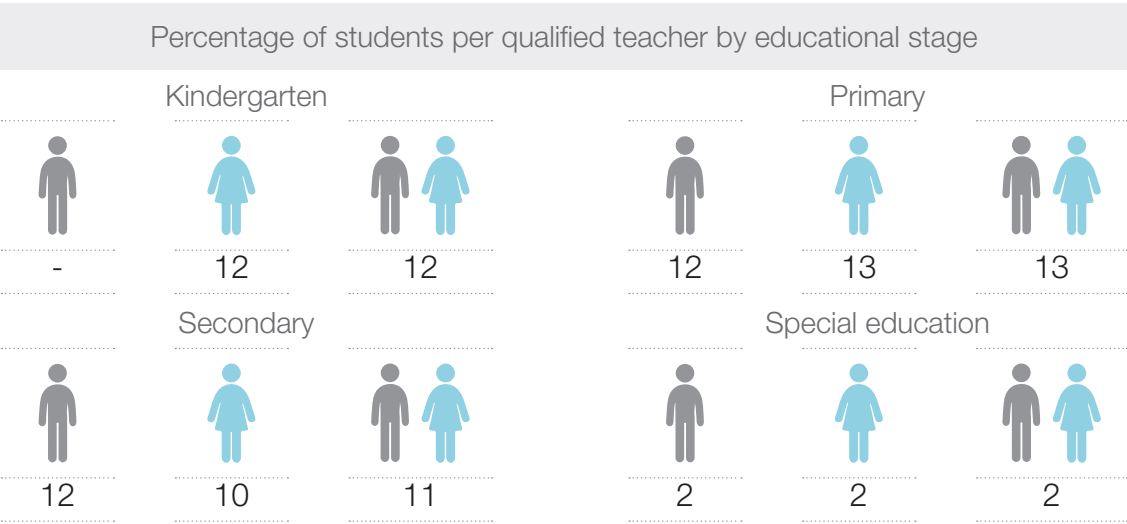
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During the first 12 months of 2018, 234,406 male and female teachers were trained through 11,000 implemented programs, with an average of 15 training hours for teachers and 18 training hours for school leaders.

Sultanate of Oman

Target 4-1: By 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to free, equitable, and high-quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

The Basic Law of the State (the Constitution) guarantees education as a fundamental right for all, and declares that gender equality and quality in education are among the basic guiding principles of educational work in the country. The government provides free education to all regardless of gender and without any discrimination, from the first grade to the twelfth grade. Education is compulsory until the tenth grade in accordance with the Child Law 22/2014. In order to obtain quality outcomes the Sultanate has taken in this field a number of steps towards measuring the extent to which the quality and inclusion of education is achieved for all and improving and developing the aspects that need interventions. The education authorities conducted a number of evaluation studies with the World Bank and international think tanks and other studies focused on curriculum.

The Sultanate took part in TIMSS and PIRLS, and its students scored significantly higher on the TIMSS-2015 math test for eighth graders. In comparison to the 2011 session, the students scored 403 points, a difference of 37 points (366 points). In the 2011 session, the same grade on the science test received 455 points, a difference of 35 points (420 points). In all sessions, the achievement gap between males and females narrowed after it was largely widened in favor of females. In the 2019 TIMSS session, the Sultanate also made significant progress. The students scored 431 points in mathematics for the fourth grade, 411 points for the eighth grade, 435 points in fourth grade science skills and 457 points for the eighth grade.

Progress made by the Sultanate in the 2019 session of TIMSS
in the fourth and eighth grades for mathematics and science

Eighth grade	Fourth grade	Eighth grade	Fourth grade
Science	Science	Mathematics	Mathematics
411 points	435 points	411 points	431 points
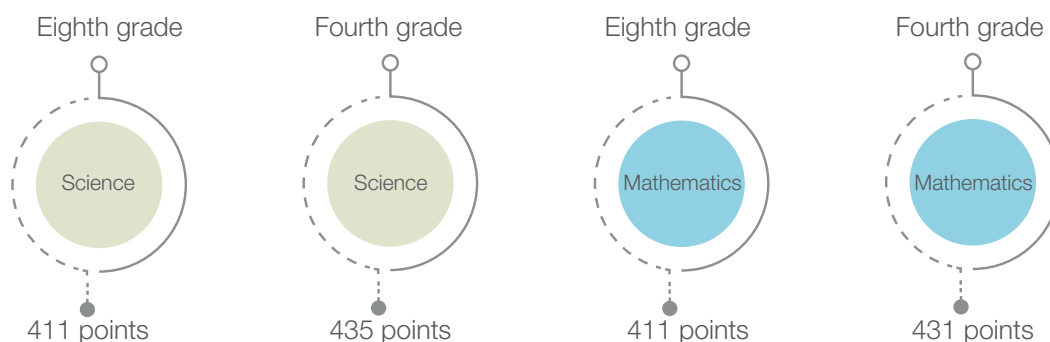
Likewise, students made a huge leap in the 2015 session in fourth grade mathematics test and scored 425 points by a difference of 40 points in the 2011 session (385 points).

Percentage of students who achieved minimum competence
in mathematics for the fourth grade TIMSS:

2015

59%   47%
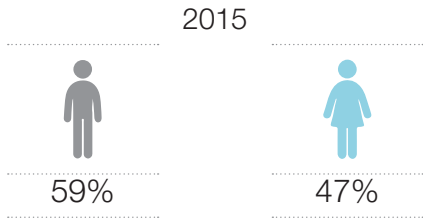
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Percentage of students who achieved minimum competence in mathematics for the
fourth grade TIMSS:

2011   2015

51%   41%   59%   47%

The National Report for the Goal 4 - Sultanate of Oman 2019

In the PIRLS study, students improved significantly from the 2016 session to the 2011 session, increasing from 391 to 418 points; a difference of 27 points.

In order to improve the measurement of learning outcomes, the Ministry of Education began conducting national tests for public and private schools in the fourth, seventh, and tenth grades in the academic year 2017/2018, in accordance with Ministerial Resolution No. 240/2017. They were used in Arabic, English, science, and mathematics, with the condition that they be used on an annual basis for the three aforementioned grades.

The Ministry of Education aims to achieve a balance between quantity and quality in its plans by developing education and improving its quality in accordance with the National Education Strategy 2040's first recommendation, which calls for the implementation of plans and policies aimed at providing high-quality school education for all (the National Education Strategy 2040). According to the most recent statistics, the total enrollment rate in the final grade of primary school was 102.5% in 2017. In lower secondary education (grades 7-9), the same rate was 104%.

104.0 %	102.5 %
The same rate in the lower level of secondary education (7-9) in 2017	Total enrolment rate of the final grade of primary school in 2017

Department of Statistics and School Map - Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education has implemented some policies and programs to improve students' progress in education levels and maintain their seats in the basic education during the primary and secondary education (grades 1–10). It also aimed at creating an accurate database to track their progress both inside and outside the school system, based on the recommendations of the National Education Strategy. According to the most recent data, the percentage of out-of-school children in primary education (ages 1-6) in 2017 was 1.70%. 3.50% of adolescents in the first stage of secondary education (ages 7-9) were out of school. In 2017, 1.70% of primary school-aged children (ages 1-6) were out of school, according to the most recent data. 3.50% of adolescents were out of school in their first year of secondary school (ages 7-9).

The Sultanate's low percentage of children at the basic education stage (1-9) who are older than their classmates demonstrates the effectiveness of policies, programs, and legislation that ensure that all students enroll in school on time. The Child Law and the Ministry of Education's document governing student affairs are two such examples. In 2017, the percentage of students in the first cycle of basic education (1-6) was 0.72%, and the second cycle of basic education (7-9) was 6.19%.

3.50 %	1.70 %
Percentage of out-of-school adolescents at the age of the first stage of secondary education (7-9) in 2017	Percentage of out-of-school children at the age of primary school (1-6) in 2017

Department of Statistics and School Map - Ministry of Education

72, %	6.19 %
Percentage of children older than their grademates in the primary education stage (1-6) in 2017	Percentage of students older than their grademates in the second stage of primary education (7-9) in 2017.

Department of Statistics and School Map - Ministry of Education

Target 4-2: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education.

Recognizing the importance of investing in this segment of society, which will be one of the main pillars of the Sultanate's future development, the Sultanate placed a strong emphasis on early childhood development in social, health, educational, and cultural fields. The Social Action Strategy (2016-2025), the National Strategy for Childhood (2016-2025), and the National Action Plan for Early Education (2016-2025) all mention childhood (Childhood Development Project within the Cooperation Program with UNICEF 2015-2020). The Child Law governs all of this.

The child-rearing institutions supervised by the Ministry of Social Development play a major role in ensuring the growth, well-being, and health of children. The number of nursery schools was 295 in 2018 compared to 139 in 2015. Other institutions supervised by the Ministry of Social Development include children's crèches, which are one of the activities of Omani women's associations across the Sultanate and provide basic, cultural, educational, social, and recreational services to all children. In 2018, there were 76 children crèches and 6,705 children who benefited from them.

Number of nursery schools in the Sultanate

nursery schools in 2015	nursery schools in 2018

139 nursery schools   295 nursery schools

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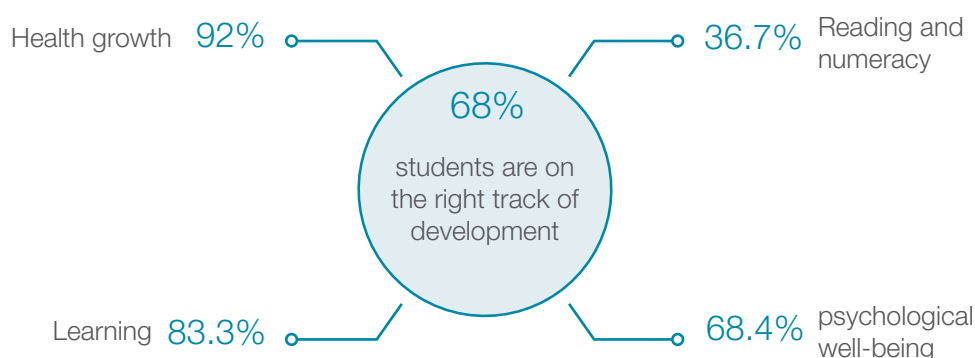The number of children benefitting   10285   The number of children enrolled in nursery schools in 2018
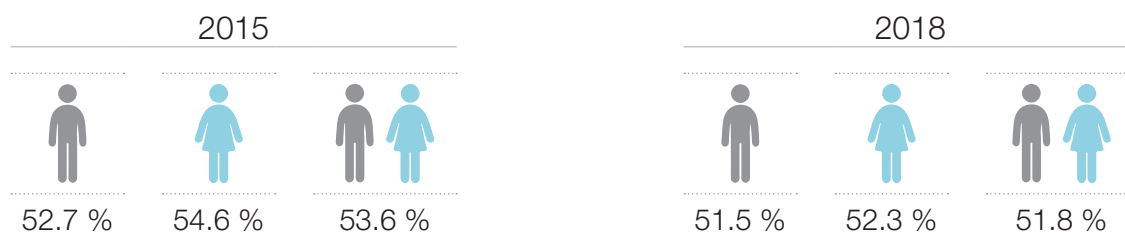
There are also child development centers, which are a civil social activity that assists in the development of a child's personality by providing educational, social, cultural, and recreational opportunities. Civil committees are in charge of them, and the local community development centers supervise them. In 2018, 1,688 children benefited from 11 centers spread across three governorates: Al Dakhiliyah, Al Batinah, and Al Dhahirah.

According to the findings of the 2014 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 80.7% of children under the age of five live in a positive and educationally motivating home environment in the Sultanate.

Health growth **92%**   **68%** students are on the right track of development   **36.7%** Reading and numeracy

Learning **83.3%**   **68.4%** psychological well-being

Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014 - the National Center for Statistics and Information

The data in the table below shows that overall enrollment rates in pre-school education increased to 52% of all children in 2018. In the same year, the participation rate in organized education increased to 82.3%, up from 64% in 2015. This improvement is a natural outcome of efforts to increase the number of children enrolled in educational programs and activities at this age. As one of the most important government initiatives to achieve this goal, the Ministry of Education also provides pre-school education to some remote areas where private institutions do not provide pre-school education services. In 2018, there were approximately 89 schools with induction classes, with nearly 2,356 male and female pupils enrolled.

Overall enrollment rates in pre-school education

2015			2018		
52.7 %	54.6 %	53.6 %	51.5 %	52.3 %	51.8 %

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Participation rate in organized learning (one year prior school)

2015			2018		
62.9 %	64.6 %	63.7 %	79 %	85.7 %	82.3 %
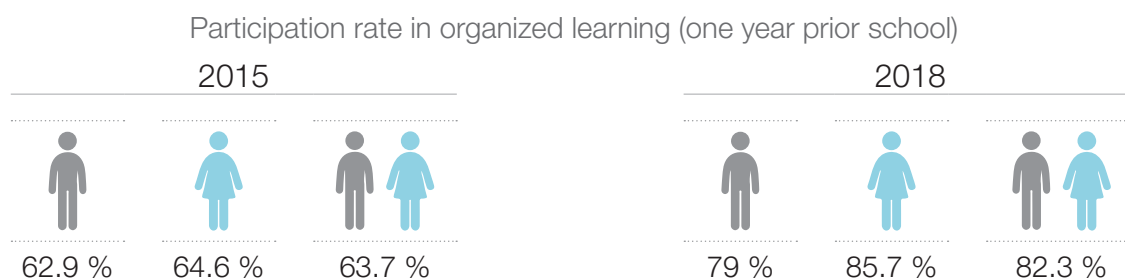
The National Report for the Goal 4 - Sultanate of Oman 2019

The concerned entities represented by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health work closely together in the areas of nutrition and school health. A Department of School Health is part of the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Education also has a Department of Student Activities and Awareness, which collaborates to provide a healthy environment and appropriate nutrition for children. In 2017, the incidence of protein-energy malnutrition was 1.5 per 1000 children under the age of five, according to child health records. According to the data from the annual health report for 2017, no malnutrition-related deaths have been reported in the last three years.

The integrated concept of childcare and development, which consists of overlapping elements such as health, education, and social care, is one of the main challenges facing early childhood care and education in the Sultanate. This also includes a lack of integration of services and curricula between nurseries and kindergartens, as well as enrollment in pre-school education and how to improve its rates and quality.

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Target 4.3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university.

1. Tertiary education:

According to academic year statistics, the Sultanate's tertiary education system includes 70 academic institutions: 41 governmental institutions and 29 private institutions distributed geographically across the Sultanate's governorates and states.

The government provides free tertiary education for students enrolled in government institutions. Meanwhile, it offers nearly 9,000 internal scholarships to students wishing to attend private tertiary institutions. The Sultanate's educational policy is based on ensuring that all students who meet the admission requirements according to their achievement in the General Education Diploma or its equivalent, both males and female students have equal access to competitive opportunities of enrolling in tertiary education.

According to the statistics for the academic year 2017/2018, the overall enrollment rate in higher education reached 46%.

Overall enrollment rate in tertiary education for the age group (18-22) total population

2016 - 2017			2017 - 2018		
36%	%59.6	46.5%	%35.4	%59.2	46%
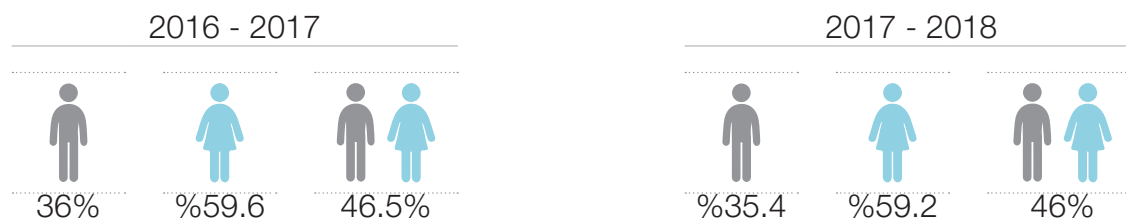
The annual report of the Ministry of Higher Education 2018

A number of students are sent to complete their first university degree in international universities as part of a program to take advantage of international experiences in the field of tertiary education. Between the academic years 2011/2012 and 2018/2019, 9,324 students were awarded scholarships to study in 14 different countries. Around 40% of successful applicants were females. A proportion of these scholarships were allocated to students with visual, audio, and mental disabilities. In the academic year 2018/2019, 65 students in this category were admitted to receive tertiary education: 27 studied in government tertiary education institutions, 36 studied in private tertiary education institutions, and 2 studied abroad. The Sultanate also attracts a large number of international students to study in its tertiary education institutions each year. In the academic year 2017/2018, the Sultanate's tertiary education institutions had 3,263 non-Omani students.

The Ministry of Higher Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development, empowers and qualifies children from low-income families so that they can develop self-reliance skills. As a result, the Ministry of Higher Education awards 2,138 scholarships to study in private universities and colleges each year to children from low-income families and difficult cases who wish to attend university but do not meet the admission requirements at government-run institutions.

2. Technical and vocational education and training:

There is a system in place in the field of technical and vocational education and training which produces high-quality technical and professional outcomes that meet the market's qualitative and quantitative demands. As a result, the Sultanate's governorates have seven technical colleges: engineering, information technology, business, applied sciences, pharmacy, and fashion design are among the 35 programs available. Technical colleges award technical diplomas, advanced technical diplomas, and bachelor's degrees in technical science.

Male to female ratios for each academic year in technical colleges

2015 - 2016		2018 - 2019	
46.1 %	53.9 %	66.5 %	33.5 %
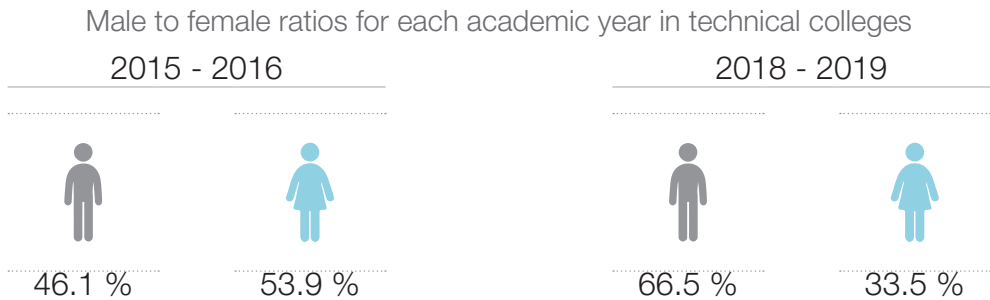
The National Report for the Goal 4 - Sultanate of Oman 2019

In looking at the percentages in Figure 15, it can be seen that there was a decrease in the percentages from 2015 to 2019. This is because the admission proportions were changed and the names of vocational institutes were changed to vocational colleges. As a result, the number of students enrolling in technical education, particularly males, decreased by 2,000 students in the scientific branch, resulting in a shift in the male-to-female ratio.

Number of young people 15-24 years who are enrolled in vocational training programs

2015		2018	
624	566	1973	1184
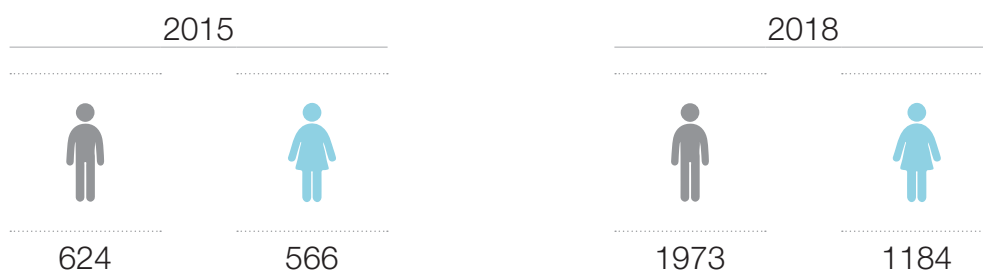
The National Report for the Goal 4 - Sultanate of Oman 2019

Seven vocational colleges in addition to the vocational college for marine sciences are located throughout the Sultanate's governorates. Engineering, commercial studies, health and beauty care, agricultural technologies, navigation technologies, fishing, and marine science are among the 30 programs available.

Target 4-4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youths and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills - for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.

The Sultanate has embarked on a bold initiative to bring its economy and society into the age of advanced information technology and to create an Omani digital society. "The National Strategy Project for an Omani Digital Society" is the new name for this project. This strategy applies to all fields of knowledge and human abilities in all economic activities in order to develop and operate knowledge quickly and efficiently in order to achieve goals and provide electronic services.

Proportional distribution of Internet users by age group for 2019

74%	94%	94%
50 years and above	30-49 years	18-29 years
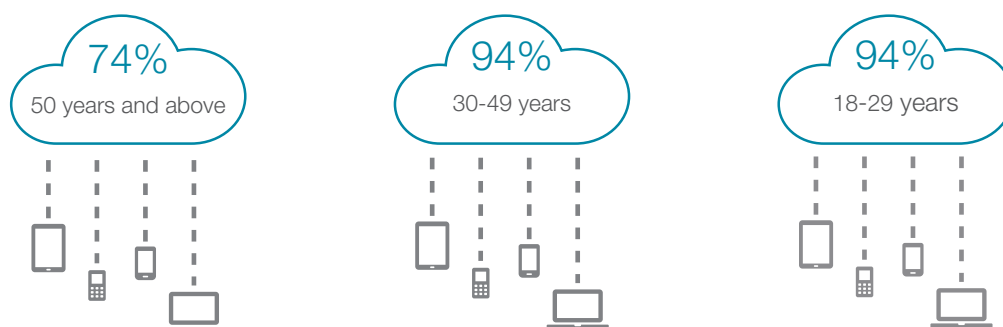
A survey measuring access and use of information and communication technology 2019

Data from the survey measuring access and use of information and communication technology carried out by the National Center for Statistics and Information in January 2019 show that 94% of young people in the 18-29 age group use the Internet. Young people in this age group also use more than 4 social media apps.

A survey measuring use of information and communication technology 2019
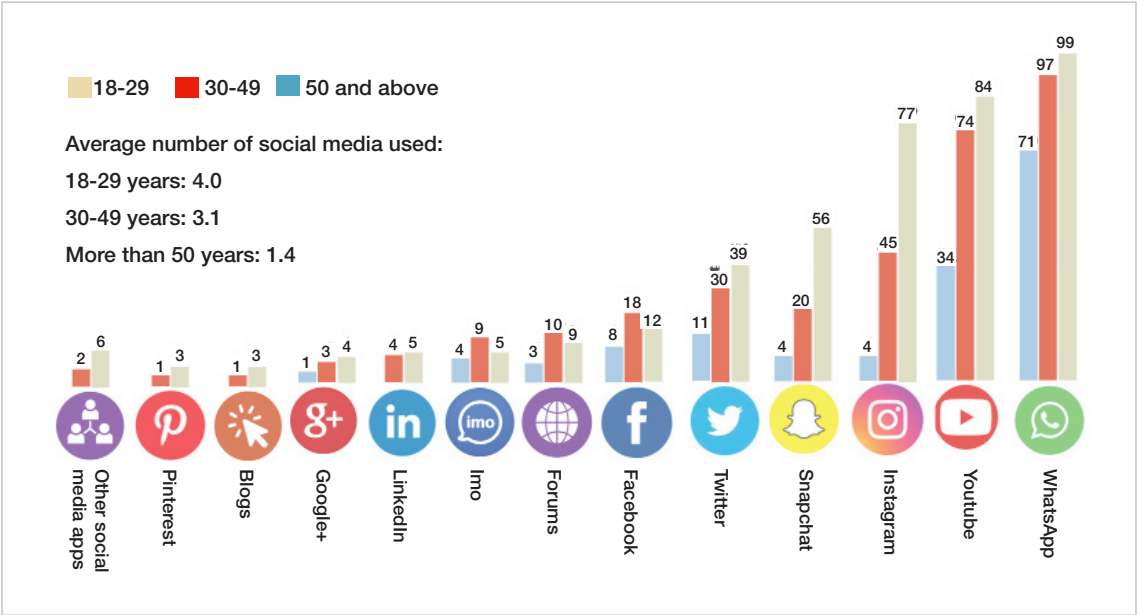
The National Report for the Goal 4 - Sultanate of Oman 2019

Percentage of individuals (18 years and above) who have some computer skills by gender

17 %	Writing a computer program using a specialized programming language	**21 %**
52 %	Finding, downloading or installing software or adjusting settings	**51 %**
63 %	Using simple basic arithmetic formulas	**54 %**
73 %	Doing simple tasks like watching videos by clicking on icons	**80 %**
80 %	Using copy and paste tools	**81 %**

45 %	Creating electronic presentations using presentation software	**57 %**
58 %	connecting and installing new equipment	**60 %**
70 %	Transferring files between your computer and other devices.	**68 %**
78 %	Send emails with attached files	**77 %**
84 %	Copying or moving a file or folder	**81 %**

10 %

10 %

Other activities

Survey of access and use of information technology and communication

Target 4.5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people, and children in vulnerable situations.

In conformity with the principles of human rights and equal opportunities, all policies and legislation in the Sultanate affirm that the right to education goes beyond providing opportunities for all to access free and compulsory education. Rather, they emphasize this full right and provide a level playing field for all members of society in order to maximize each person's potential. Article 13 of the State's Basic Law states, "The government is committed

to providing public education and combating illiteracy". The Ministry of Education's mandate is defined by the Royal Decree No. 37/2008, which emphasizes "spreading basic and post-basic school education in all governorates of the Sultanate in accordance with the principle of equal educational opportunities for all citizens, and providing literacy and special education programs for vulnerable groups".

Article (36) of the Child Law guarantees that: "the child has the right to free education in government schools until the completion of the post-basic education stage; and the education of the child is compulsory until the completion of the basic education stage, and the guardian is responsible for enrolling the child, school attendance, and preventing his dropout of it". A disabled child has all the rights stipulated under the provisions of this law without discrimination on the basis of disability", according to article 51 of the same law. Article No. 52 stipulates that: "the state guarantees the care and rehabilitation of the disabled child in accordance with the provisions of the Law on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Disabled; the state and the guardian work together to enable the disabled child to enjoy all services of care and rehabilitation of the disabled". The document's educational philosophy emphasized the development of awareness of people with disabilities' needs, as well as respect and interaction with them. As shown in the table below, the Sultanate's latest statistics show gender parity and equality in education, with minor differences in indicators due to the Sultanate's population structure favoring males.

The development of the gender parity index in a number of basic indicators:

Moving from basic education to post-basic education	Staying in education until sixth grade	overall enrollment in grades 10-12	overall enrollment in grades 7-9	overall enrollment in grades 1-6	overall enrollment in first grade	overall enrollment in pre-school education	
1.06	1	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	1.04	2015
1.04	1	0.99	0.98	0.99	0.99	1.04	2017
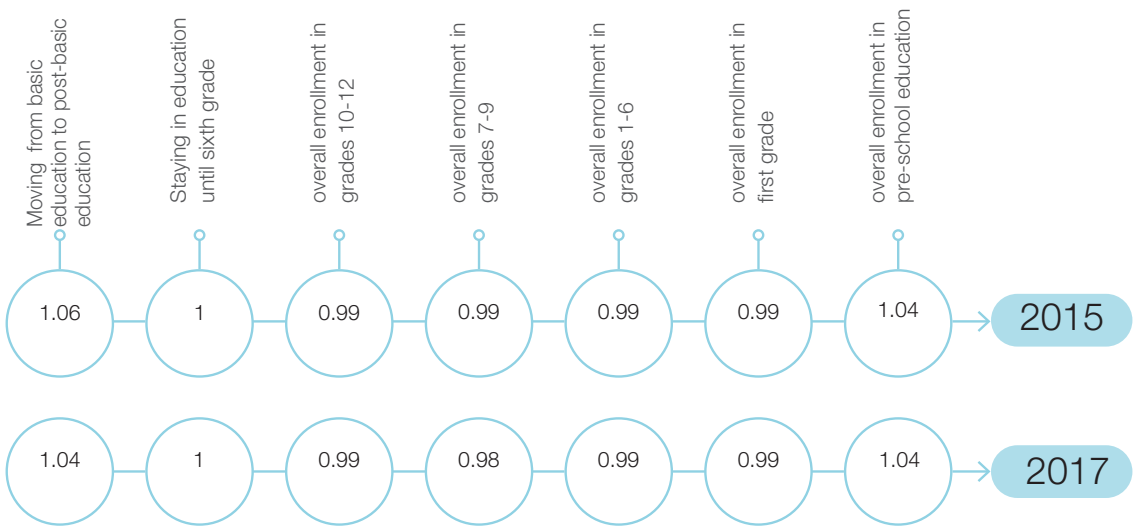
The National Report for the Goal 4 - Sultanate of Oman 2019

Proportional distribution of those enrolled in higher education according to gender for the academic year 2017-2018

57% Females

%43 Males
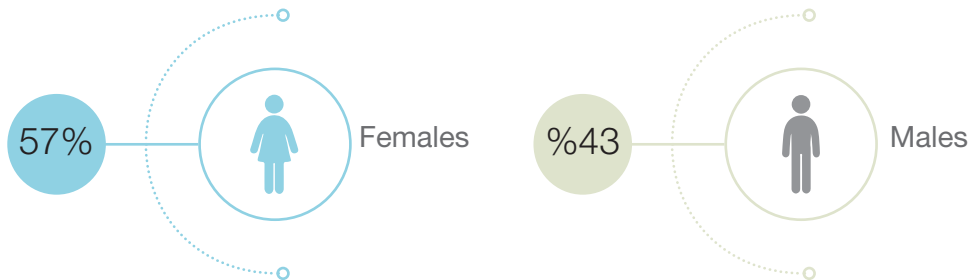
The National Report for the Goal 4 - Sultanate of Oman 2019

Since the early 1970s, the Sultanate has not ignored the educational needs of people with disabilities. It was keen to accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, or linguistic circumstances, and the National Education Strategy 2040 made a specific recommendation in this regard. "The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Development, shall prepare a national plan for educating people with disabilities," it says.

According to Ministry of Education statistics for the academic year 2017/2018, out of the total number of students with disabilities of education age, 2,288 received educational services from the Ministry of Education. They were educated in integrated schools, where about 20% of public schools offer this service, or in special education schools (Al Amal School for the Deaf, School of Intellectual Education, and Omar Bin Al Khattab Institute for the Blind). In addition, the Ministry sends 31 disabled male and female students to study outside of the Sultanate. The Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research, and Innovation also empowers and rehabilitates children from low-income families in order to help them develop self-reliance. As a result, the Ministry (2138) provides an annual scholarship to study in private universities and colleges for children from social security families and difficult cases who fail to meet the admission requirements in government higher education institutions. For the academic year 2018/2019, more than 200 university seats have been reserved for people with disabilities. According to the data, 73 %of all applicants with disabilities were accepted in the academic year 2018/2019.

There are 359 private training institutions who provide vocational training programs and training services each year. People with disabilities are trained in vocational colleges under the supervision of the Ministry of Manpower with the goal of providing equal training opportunities and rehabilitation of the disabled in accordance with their physical qualifications, mental aptitude, talents, abilities, and dispositions. In addition, there are international schools and others for foreign communities in the Sultanate's governorates for those who wish to open them in accordance with the Ministry's laws and regulations. The Sultanate is one of the states that spends a significant amount of money on education and

provides the necessary financial resources. Education spending as a percentage of gross domestic product reached 6.6%. In 2017, education expenditures accounted for 15.5% of total government spending.

Average student cost according to the type of education and grades - in Omani Riyals

| Type of education	Grades	2016/2015	2017/2016	2018/2017	2019/2018
Basic education	1-4	2,384	2,150	1,969	1,608
	5-10	2,279	2,086	1,966	2,166
Post-basic education	11-12	3,385	3,054	2,824	2,308

The National Report for the Goal 4 - Sultanate of Oman 2019

Target 4.6: By 2030, ensure that all youths and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

The Basic Law of the State (i.e., the Constitution) specified in Article No. 12 of the Social Principles, declares that "justice, equality and equal opportunities are pillars of society guaranteed by the State". Article No. 13 of the Cultural Principles states that "the state shall provide public education, combat illiteracy and encourage the establishment of private schools and institutes under the supervision of the state and in accordance with the provisions of the law". The Sultanate's literacy rate for the age group (15 years and above) reached 96% in 2018, and 97.97 %for the age group (15-44 years) in the same year, demonstrating the Sultanate's commitment to reducing illiteracy and putting the right to education into practice.

Literacy rates of the total population

2018	2016	
96.2 %	96 %	Literacy rates (15 years and over)
97.97 %	97.99 %	Literacy rates (15-44 years)
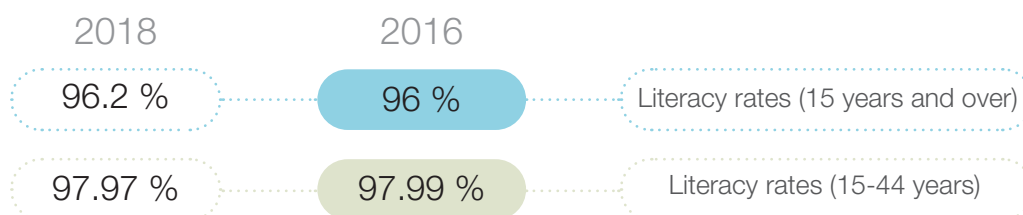
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In line with the Global Framework for Action for Education 2030, to expand effective adult literacy and skills education programs for adults in which civil society and the private sector involve as partners; a number of programmes, projects and initiatives have been implemented, which have played a significant role in the literacy of a large number of Omani people.

Ongoing and emerging programs and projects:

- **Learning Village:** this is a project that aims to educate all of the village's illiterate residents at the same time. The project started in the 2005/2004 academic year and is still going strong. By the end of 2018, there were a total of 30 learning villages. This was carried out as part of the Arab Bureau of Education for Gulf States' joint work programs.

- **Cooperating Schools:** this project received a lot of support from government schools all over the Sultanate in terms of establishing literacy divisions within them or providing external assistance to them, as well as utilizing the capabilities and services that these schools have in the field of illiteracy eradication. The project began in the 2003/2004 academic year, and by the end of 2018, there were 96 participating schools.

- **Eradication of Omanis' Illiteracy in Offshore Islands and Villages:** this is one of the newer projects aimed at eradicating illiteracy among Omanis in the Dhofar Governorate's Al-Halaniyat Islands, the Southern Sharqiyah Governorate's Masirah Island, and the Musandam Governorate's Lima and Kumzar offshore villages. During the 2017-2018 academic year, 75 people joined the project.

- **Eradication of Illiteracy among Private Sector Workers:** this is one of the literacy-related projects based on collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the private sector. It is directed at illiterate Omanis in the private sector. It began in the 2018/2019 academic year. This project has a one-year study period with an intensive study plan for teaching Arabic, Islamic education, and mathematics to ensure illiteracy is eliminated.

- **Literacy of People with Disabilities:** this project began in the academic year 2018/2019 and is aimed at illiterate Omanis with disabilities who are able to learn thanks to a collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the relevant authorities.

Target 4.7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development – including (among others) through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

The Sultanate has long recognized education's strategic role in achieving sustainable development, and has incorporated education for sustainable development and citizenship into all educational policies in order to achieve educational outcomes that include concepts such as tolerance and respect for others, gender equality, volunteerism, values, human and child rights, and citizenship education. This is formed from the Basic Law of the State, the Document on the Philosophy of Education in the Sultanate of Oman, and the National Strategy for Education 2040, in its recommendation No. 28. By constantly developing curricula and textbooks, training teachers, and providing learners with knowledge and skills that will help them better understand social, economic, and environmental sustainability issues and participate in finding sustainable solutions, the Ministry of Education is continuously integrating and addressing basic topics into education for sustainable development.

The concept of overcoming poverty is one of the main concepts addressed in the curriculum of sustainable development issues. Islamic education, social studies, information technology, life skills, and environmental sciences, as well as new post-basic education subjects, such as science and technology and the environment, are all covered within the documentation. Furthermore, the inclusion of gender equality programs in educational activities has bolstered the concept of equality in curriculum development. This considers the diversity of topics in various school subjects in order to cater to the interests of both sexes. The life skills curriculum effectively introduces two major themes of education for sustainable development, namely, cultural and linguistic diversity and peace and understanding between cultures.

The Sultanate of Oman has been recognized internationally for its long-term commitment to preserving and protecting its natural resources. In this regard, the Environmental Education Unit emphasizes the importance of sustainable production and consumption in science and social studies curricula. We can see that the eleventh and twelfth grade syllabuses cover important topics like economic growth, employment, life skills, and administrative and financial skills, all of which help students understand the issues of sustainable production and consumption. The new information and communication technology (ICT) courses have also made a significant contribution to raising student awareness by providing them with information on these important issues and topics. Cabinet Resolution No. 2012/634 aims to establish a citizenship department within the Ministry of Education, which instills positive citizenship values in schools and supports teacher training programs in topics such as sustainable development, citizenship and common global values, and implemented

by the Specialized Center for Teacher Vocational Training. The most recent program, in collaboration with the UNESCO Regional Office in Doha, is the training program "Education for Sustainable Development". In addition, since 2018, Sultan Qaboos University has offered a "Global Citizenship Education" elective course to all university students.

Through the efforts of the Ministry of Education, represented by the Department of Guidance and Awareness Programs, the Sultanate is extremely keen to promote sustainable living methods for school students, with a coverage rate of 100% of schools teaching multiple life skills regarding HIV.

The methods for gathering data on the indicators of this target, particularly with regards to the assessment of learning skills to support sustainable development, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity, and the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, are all relevant challenges. These topics, on the other hand, have long been integrated into school curricula, teacher training, and policy documents, as well as being actively promoted among school communities, the surrounding community, and young people's social circles.

Target 4- A: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive; and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

Buildings, playgrounds, electronic networks, electricity, the Internet, and other facilities provide the infrastructure that allows schools to function as learning environments. This improved infrastructure assists teachers in carrying out their responsibilities for teaching students, as well as providing a rich learning environment and experiences for students to progress according to their abilities across subject areas.   The Sultanate was eager to provide all educational services throughout the Sultanate, as represented by the Ministry of Education. It has also started using renewable energy (solar energy) to run some schools in order to continuously replace renewable energy and ensure that all schools have enough energy to work effectively.

The Ministry of Education was aware of the need to address negative student behavior such as bullying and violence. It adopted an action plan from 2017 to 2020 to reduce bullying among school students, which included training programs to provide human cadres of social workers and psychologists in schools. A training program was created to improve the efficiency and skills of these specialists in dealing with student behavior, and training portfolios were provided in respect of early intervention skills for school students' bullying and how to reduce such inappropriate behaviors.

In order to monitor school behavioral discipline, achievement, and student school attendance, the Ministry of Education also issued regulations on student affairs in public schools.
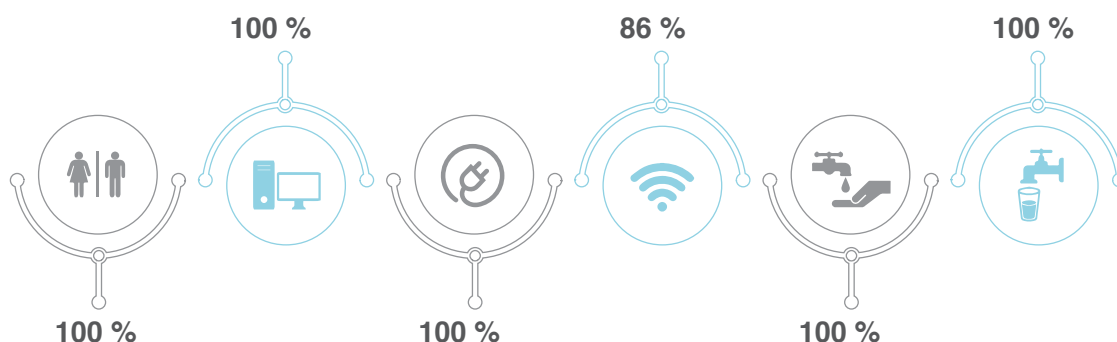
Department of Statistics and School Map - Ministry of Education

Target 4-B: By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education.

Through education, the Sultanate places a greater emphasis on cultural and scientific cooperation with other countries around the world. This is because of its contribution to prosperity, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. In this regard, the Omani Program for Cultural and Scientific Cooperation awards a number of scholarships each year to students from sister and friendly countries who wish to pursue higher education in the Sultanate's public and private institutions. In the academic year 2018/2019, there were approximately 175 scholarships available. The number of beneficiary countries was 66. The government of the Sultanate incurs the costs of tuition fees for 100 scholarships, the costs of tuition fees, visas, travel tickets, and monthly allowances for 75 scholarships.

Target 4-C: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially the least developed countries and small island developing States

Teachers are the backbone of educational systems, making them one of the most important types of human resources. As a result, the teacher is regarded as one of the most important active partners in advancing education, developing and implementing educational programs and activities, and implementing the school curriculum. The teacher is also responsible for shaping students' personalities, expanding their knowledge, honing their skills, and instilling values. To improve teacher effectiveness, the Ministry of Education has created practical plans, initiatives, and projects. They have established the Omani National Framework for the Teaching Profession, as well as the

Professional Licensing Office. These organizations are working to create a comprehensive system of teaching references, systems, controls, foundations, and principles. The Sultanate's average student-to-teacher ratio was around 10.3%. In government schools, about 85.78% of teachers have a bachelor's degree (males and females). For the academic year 2017-2018, those with postgraduate diplomas accounted for 7.78% of all students (males and females); those with a master's degree accounted for 1.9% of all students (males and females); and those with PhDs accounted for 0.03% of all students (males and females). As a result, according to international standards, the percentage of qualified teachers has reached 100%.

Percentages of teachers in public schools by qualification for the year 2018–2017

%0.03	%1.9	%7.78	%85.78
PhD	Master	Postgraduate diploma	Bachelor
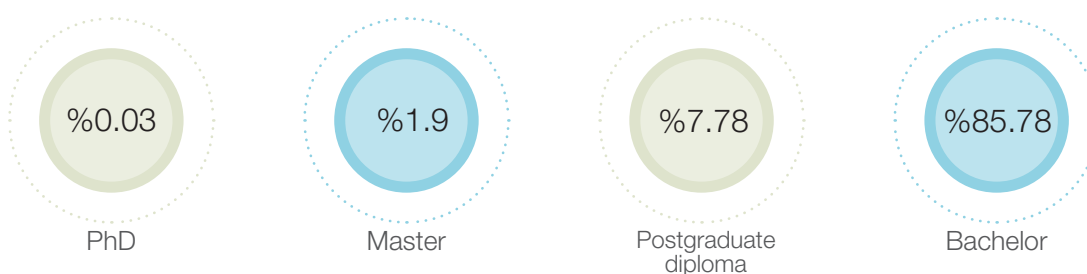
Professional Development Report 2018 - Ministry of Education

According to training indicators, there were 588 centralized or decentralized professional development programs and activities in 2018. A total of 26,139 people were enrolled in these programs. The Specialized Center for Teacher Vocational Training offered 14 different programs to 3,872 people.

State of Qatar

Target 4.1: By 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to free, equitable, and high-quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

Education has been given top priority by the State of Qatar, which seeks to devote all of its resources and energies to spreading and improving education at all levels as a fundamental human right. All those who live on the state's territory have this equal right, thanks to such laws and legislation. It provides education to all in a high-quality manner that leads to effective learning outcomes and higher learning skills (the State of Qatar's National Report on Combating Discrimination in Education, 2016), as part of an integrated system of educational development and modernization based on Qatar Vision 2030, the National Development Strategy, and the Education and Training Strategy. This strategy's programs are based on ensuring that all students have equal access to education and improving student performance in school subjects. The State is also committed to achieving free and compulsory education, as stated in Law No. 25, enacted in 2001, which states that "education shall be free and compulsory for all children from the primary stage to the end of the preparatory stage or until they reach the age of 18, whichever comes first". Furthermore, the Qatari constitution states that: "education is one of the fundamental pillars of society that the state shall guarantee, sponsor, and seek to spread".

Scientific Excellence Award: this award promotes educational innovation and excellence. It is aimed at nine groups of people: secondary school students with secondary certificates, university graduates, master's degree holders, PhDs, teachers, schools, and scholars who carry out excellent scientific research. This is accomplished through the adoption of international standards, the implementation of high-quality programs, and the integration of individual and institutional efforts to improve instructional outcomes.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education is implementing national third-grade tests in Arabic, English, and mathematics, as well as the sixth-ninth grade tests in Arabic, English, mathematics, and science, in order to measure and evaluate students' levels, improve teaching and learning quality, acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, and achieve meaningful learning outcomes. Females in general outperformed males in the three subjects on the national primary stage test. In 2018, the percentage of female students who took exams and achieved minimum competence in reading was 77%, compared to 69% for males, and 90% for females compared to 87% for males in mathematics.

Percentage of students who took the national test and scored minimum achievement for the third grade for 2016- 2018:

2016				2018		
%70	%74	%72	Reading	%69	%77	%73

2016				2018		
%82	%82	%82	Mathematics	87%	90%	%89
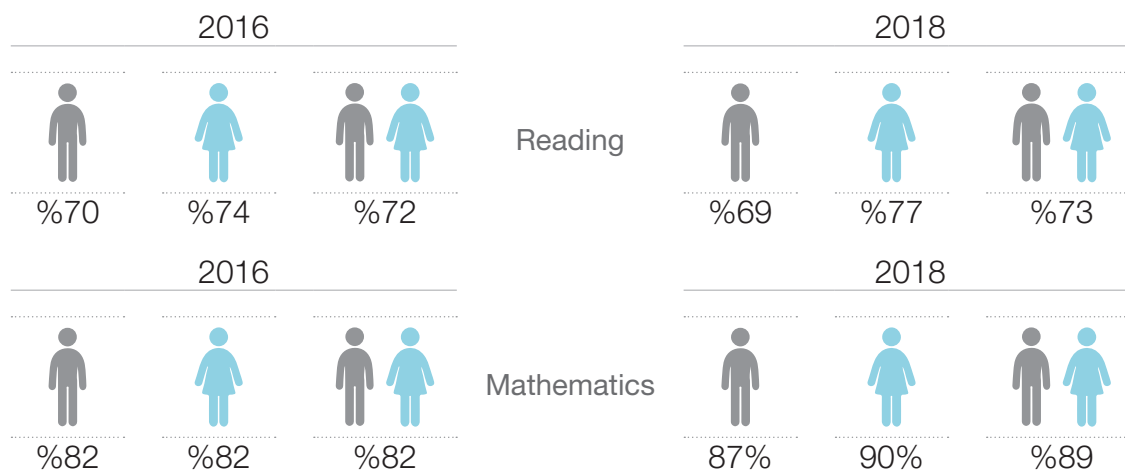
The National Report for Goal 4 - the State of Qatar 2019

The same can be said for the national tests administered in the sixth grade at the end of the primary school year. As shown in the table below, females outperformed males in achieving minimum competence in reading, mathematics, and English.

Percentage of students who took the national test and obtained the minimum achievement proficiency for the sixth grade during the period 2016-2018

2016				2018		
%81	%86	%84	Reading	%69	%85	%78

2016				2018		
%85	%84	%84	Mathematics	%49	%69	%60
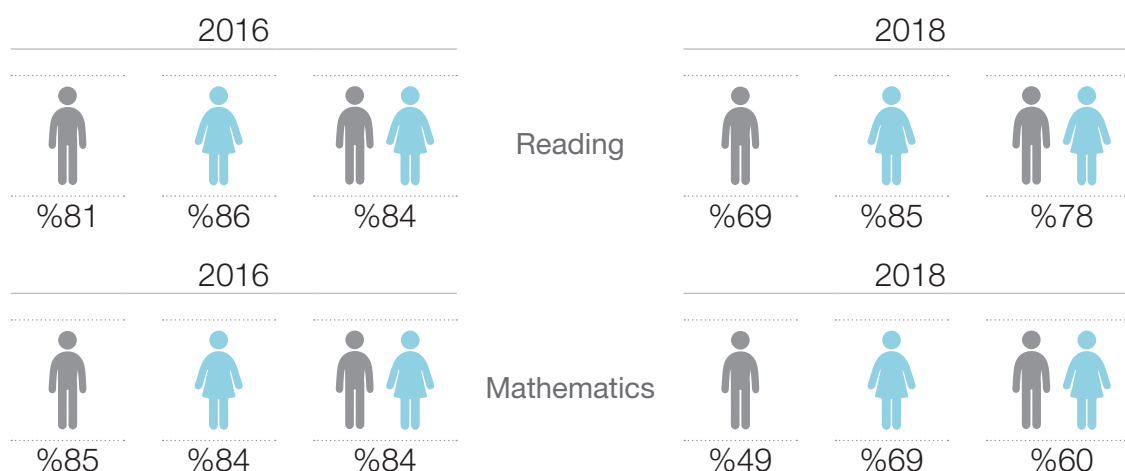
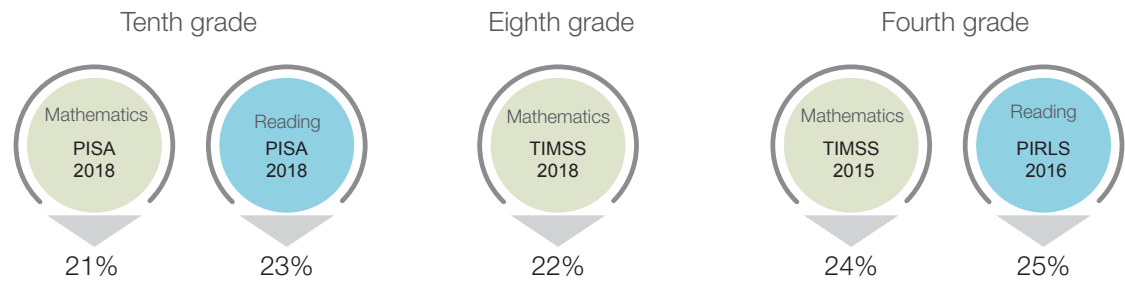The National Report for Goal 4 - the State of Qatar 2019

Through a variety of procedures, the Ministry of Education is currently working to develop and improve student performance. This includes developing a diagnostic test to determine a student's level and identify strengths and weaknesses; This includes developing a diagnostic test to determine a student's level and identify strengths and weaknesses; developing pilot

test guides to determine a student's level after training and the implementation of remedial plans; and an emphasis on the importance of national tests at student, school, and societal levels. Qatar, like the rest of the Council members, made progress during the 2019 session of the TIMSS study. Students scored 449 points in fourth-grade mathematics, 443 points for the eighth grade, and in fourth-grade science 449 points, with 475 points for the eighth grade.

Percentage of students who achieved the minimum or average in international tests:

Tenth grade		Eighth grade	Fourth grade	
Mathematics PISA 2018	Reading PISA 2018	Mathematics TIMSS 2018	Mathematics TIMSS 2015	Reading PIRLS 2016
21%	23%	22%	24%	25%

The National Report for Goal 4 - the State of Qatar 2019

According to the latest statistics, the total enrollment rate in the last grade of primary and lower secondary education in the academic year 2017/2018 was 103.5% and 101.0%, respectively, compared to 97.2% and 94.4% in the academic year 2015/2016.

Overall enrollment rate in the last grade of the primary stage
and the lower stage of secondary education:

2015 - 2016			Sixth grade	2017 - 2018		
%99.6	%94.7	%97.2		%104.3	%102.7	%103.5

2015 - 2016			Ninth grade	2017 - 2018		
%88.8	%100.8	%94.4		%102.2	%99.7	%101.0
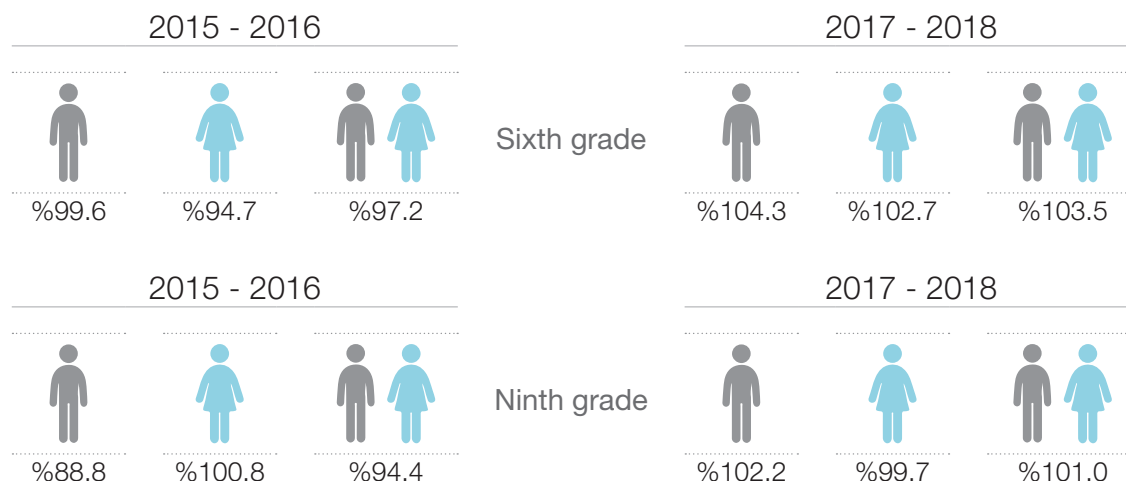
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Students are encouraged to complete all levels of education in order to continue their studies in higher education and this is set by laws, legislation, and regulations. In 2018, the primary stage completion rate was 96.6%, and the secondary stage completion rate was 76.2%.

The completion rate in the primary, preparatory and secondary stages from 2016 to 2018

2018	2016	
96.6 %	97.4 %	Primary stage
94.4 %	92.0 %	Preparatory stage
76.2 %	76.9 %	Secondary stage

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Education in the GCC Countries Towards Achieving Sustainable Development
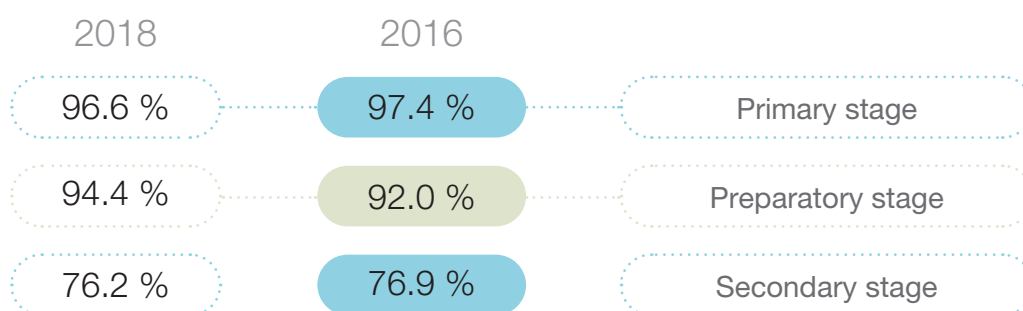
In comparison to relevant international standards, the proportion of students in primary, preparatory, and secondary schools who are older than their classmates is generally low. During the academic year 2017/2018, this figure reached 0.3% in primary school, 1.8% in preparatory school, and 2.2% in secondary school.

Percentage of children older than their grademates
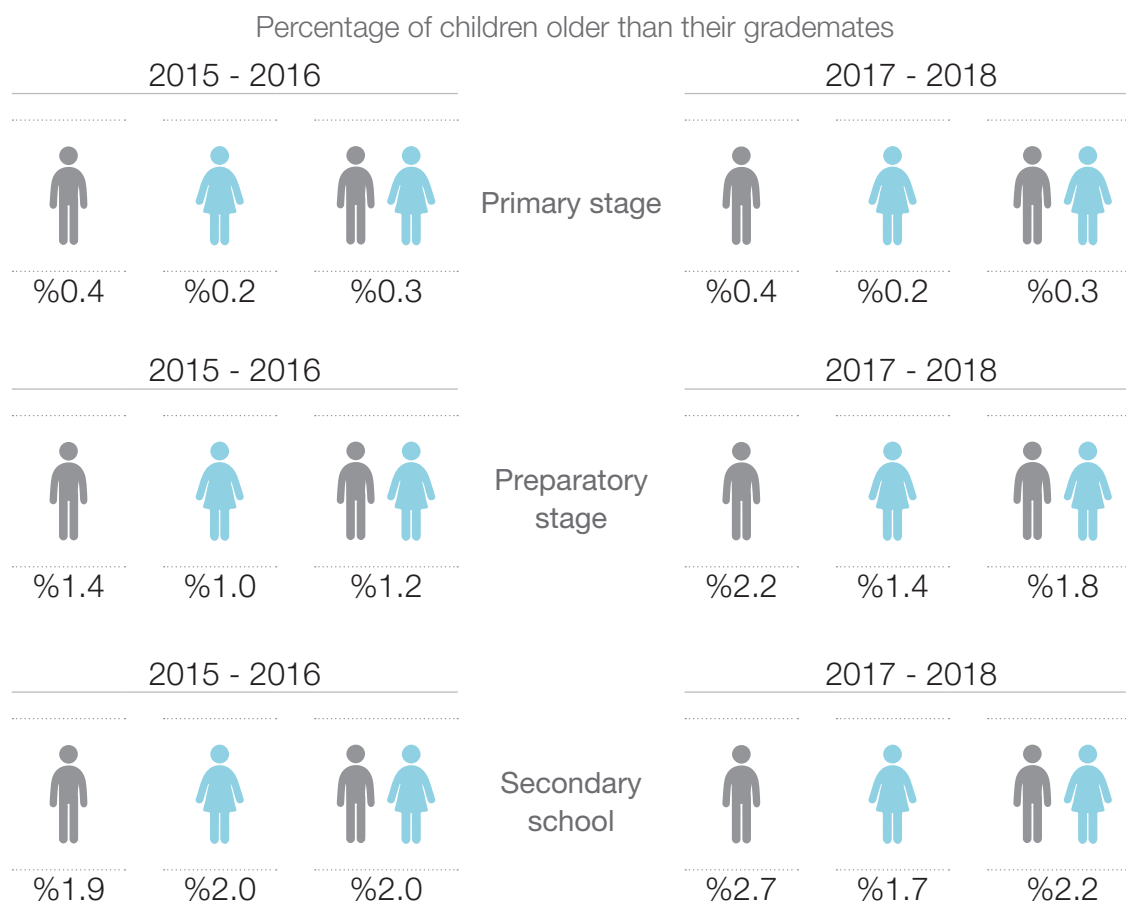
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Target 4.2: 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

Qatar has prioritized early childhood education. Therefore, it has enacted numerous laws to protect this right, and ratified a number of relevant international conventions. Early education policy aims to prepare a good citizen who is capable of living, facing challenges, and adapting to change. There were 296 kindergartens in the academic year 2018/2017, up from 37 the previous academic year. The number of nurseries increased by 31, to 177, during the academic year 2018/2017. Kindergartens have computer labs, a children's

library, a professional reference library for teachers and teaching assistants, and play and learning spaces that promote creativity and broaden children's minds.

The program "Raising the Quality of Early Education in Kindergartens and Public Schools": This program aims to improve students' linguistic and arithmetic achievement rates at this stage, as well as develop children's social, emotional, and physical abilities, increase teacher and school leader efficiency, and provide children-centered inclusive education.

According to UNICEF data from 2012, the percentage of children under the age of five who are on track in terms of growth in the areas of health, education, and social welfare is around 83.9%. In 2018, the male and female participation rates in organized education one year before the official age for enrollment in primary school were 92.4% and 94.2%, respectively.

The percentage of children under five, who are on the right track in terms of growth in the areas of health, education, and social welfare

%83.9　　　　　　　　%85.4　　　%82.6
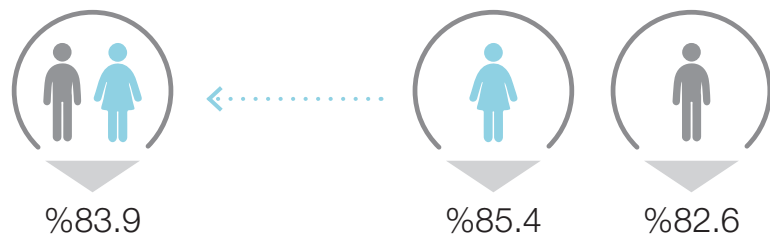
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According to the 2012 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), 88% of children aged 36 to 56 months benefited from the involvement of an adult family member in four or more educational and school readiness activities.

Percentage of children whose family members participate in activities
that help learning and school readiness:

A family member who participated in
four or more activities

Parents who participated in one activity

%88.6 %88.3 %88.4

%86.8 %82.9 %84.9
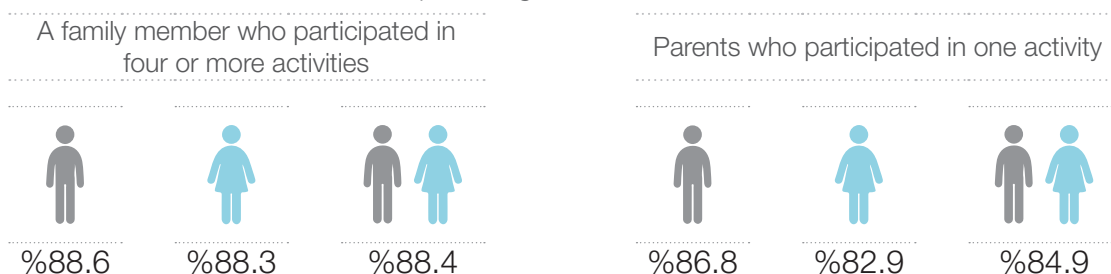
The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2012

The main result identified by the second education and training sector strategy related to early education is providing equitable opportunities for all children, regardless of gender, age, or abilities, to enroll in high-quality early education programs. The state offers free, non-compulsory post-kindergarten and pre-school education in a variety of settings, including independent kindergartens, those affiliated with public schools, and private schools with fees approved by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. To help students achieve better learning outcomes at this stage, the state focuses on increasing enrollment rates to meet international standards. In the academic year 2017/2018, the overall enrollment rate was 56.3%.

Overall enrollment rate in pre-primary education (3-5 years):

2015 - 2016

2017 - 2018

%62.8 %63.1 %62.9

57.1% 55.5% %56.3
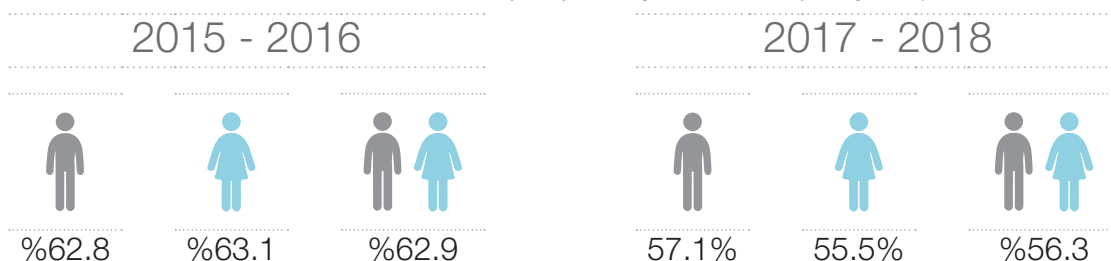
The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2012

Target 4-3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university.

Qatar is committed to directly providing education at all levels, equally and equitably, in accordance with the Constitution's Articles and international conventions. It has made investments in both male and female technical and vocational education. Qatar has also established technical evening schools to help those whose circumstances prevent them from completing their technical and vocational education during the morning hours.

With 28 universities and colleges across the country, higher education has a strong and diverse infrastructure of public, private, and international universities and colleges. There are also a total of 30 research centers.

The overall enrollment rate in education for the academic year 2017/2018 was 17.6%, with a significant difference in enrollment between the sexes, as shown in the table below. This is because men prefer to enroll in vocational colleges in their home country or study at international universities.

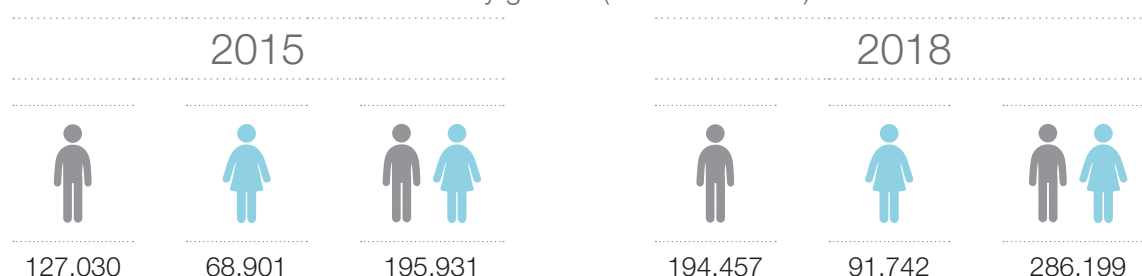Overall enrolment in tertiary education

2015 - 2016			2017 - 2018		
%6.1	%48.3	%14.9	%6.6	%66.2	%17.6
Gender equality index			Gender equality index		
%8			%10.1		
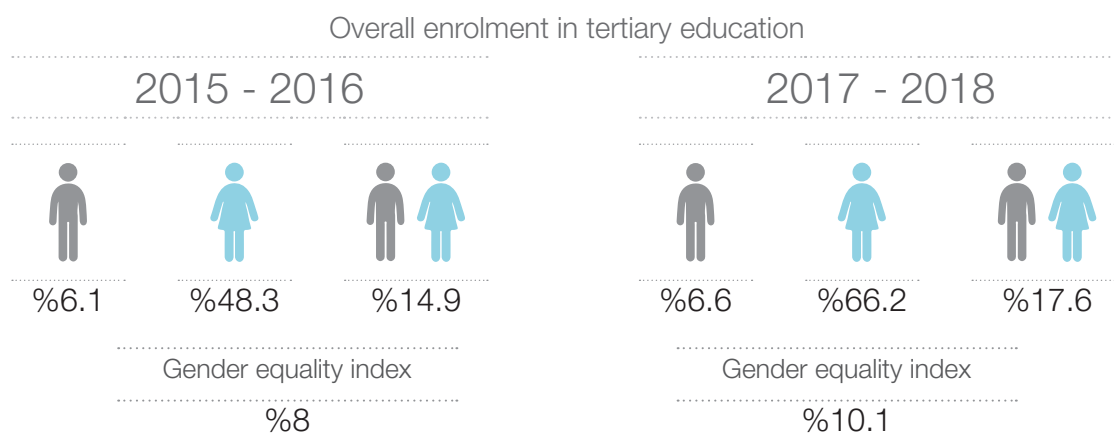
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....

UNESCO Chair for Technical and Vocational Education and Training:

The College of the North Atlantic in Qatar was awarded this chair in 2017. It primarily aims at achieving comprehensive development, which benefits all sectors of society, and maintaining sustainable development, which aims to reduce the negative effects of economic growth and development on the environment.

....

The education and training sector strategy allocated funds to programs and projects aimed at increasing female and male enrollment in post-secondary education, whether this be higher education or technical and vocational education. It also expanded its opportunities by establishing a number of high-quality, specialized schools, including the Debekai School for Health Professions, the Qatar School for Banking Sciences, and the Secondary Business Administration for Girls. A number of professional colleges have also been established: in 2018, there were 286,000 trainees in training centers, up from 196,000 in 2015.

Education in the GCC Countries Towards Achieving Sustainable Development

Trainees by gender (2015 and 2018)

2015

| 127.030 | 68.901 | 195.931 |

2018

| 194.457 | 91.742 | 286.199 |

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Participation rate in technical and vocational education programs for those aged 15-24 during the academic year 2018/2017 reached 2.5% for males, compared to 0.5% for females.

Participation rate in technical and vocational education programs for those aged 15-24

2017 - 2018

2015 - 2016

Percentage of overall enrolment	697	22	600	90
Overall enrolment rate	%2.8	%0.1	%2.5	%0.4

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The difficulty of meeting labor market requirements, national development priorities, directly linking its outcomes to the labor market, post-secondary education governance and institutions, and standardization of supervision and follow-up of this sector are all challenges facing technical and vocational education.

Target 4.4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youths and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent job prospects and entrepreneurship.

Qatar's education and training strategy is intertwined with the fourth target of the SDG4. The importance of the competencies and skills required for the world of work and its variables was emphasized in the general framework of the national educational curriculum. The goal of the education and training strategy was to ensure that information and communication technology are used in conjunction with other methods to improve the quality and diversity of teaching and learning in schools. It also aims to provide secondary school students with the knowledge, competencies, and skills outlined in the national curriculum framework, as well as to provide diverse and high-quality adult education opportunities and to strengthen the role of technical and vocational education and training.

The government's efforts have paid off, with each student and teacher receiving a computer and each school housing an electronic library. It has also digitized curricula and established a number of specialized science and technology schools aimed at improving young people's information and communication technology skills.

Percentage of young people and adults with ICT skills by the type of skill

No.	Type of skill	Gender	2015	2016	2017	2018
1	Send emails with attached files	Male	59.60	58.30	57.03	58.14
		female	52.50	54.87	27.25	55.93
		average	**56.00**	**56.55**	**57.14**	**57.01**
2	Using copy and paste tools to duplicate or move information within the document	Male	32.90	34.70	36.50	38.29
		female	33.50	37.55	41.10	44.64
		average	**33.50**	**36.16**	**38.84**	**41.53**
3	Connecting and installing new devices	Male	25.30	26.98	28.65	30.32
		female	29.40	32.07	34.77	37.64
		average	**27.30**	**29.58**	**31.77**	**33.96**
4	Using a basic arithmetic formula in a spreadsheet	Male	36.60	34.91	33.21	31.51
		female	27.00	25.49	23	22.37
		average	**31.80**	**30.10**	**28.48**	**26.35**

5	Writing computer programs using a specialized programming language	Male	5.10	5.41	5.75	6.10
		female	6.10	5.61	5.12	4.63
		average	**5.60**	**5.51**	**5.34**	**5.35**
6	Creating electronic presentations using presentation software	Male	26.90	25.32	23.75	22.18
		female	25.80	25.41	24.97	24.54
		average	**26.40**	**25.36**	**24.37**	**23.38**
7	Finding, downloading, installing and configuring software	Male	34.90	36.28	37.63	38.98
		female	39.70	38.33	36.98	35.36
		average	**37.30**	**37.32**	**37.30**	**37.27**
8	Transferring files between a computer and other devices	Male	46.80	44.07	41.32	38.57
		female	40.10	37.04	33.98	30.91
		average	**43.50**	**40.48**	**37.57**	**34.66**

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The State of Qatar is working on a number of digital projects for youth and adults, including: Makers Oasis, Studio 6, Your Ambitions, the Green Computer Club, Hour of Programming, and the Cyber Safety Program are just a few of Qatar's many digital initiatives for children and adults. These programs aim to improve young people and adults' ICT skills, cultivate the necessary skills for emerging technologies, instill a green technology culture, improve programming principles, and establish a digital security and safety culture.

As a result of efforts to expand opportunities for equitable access to education and training, the percentage of employees with primary and preparatory education out of total employees 15 years and older increased from 40% in 2013 to 49% in 2018. In 2018, 47% of the Qatari workforce had a university degree or higher.

Al-Bairaq Program:

This is an educational program that aims to engage secondary school students in practical and scientific activities and exercises alongside scientists and researchers in order to solidify their understanding and appreciation of the importance of the work that these scientists do, as well as to open up new opportunities for them to begin their scientific careers.

The numbers of economically active population (15 years and above) by gender and educational attainment for the period 2016-2018

Year	2016			2017			2018		
Gender	Male	female	Total	Male	female	Total	Male	female	Total
Illiterate	26.275	2.187	28.462	21.789	1.940	23.729	16.754	1.405	18.159
Literate	203.255	23.658	226.913	202.759	23.578	226.337	186.305	18.550	204.855
Literacy	1.270	98	1.368	1.398	154	1.552	37	0	37
Primary	370.434	49.281	419.715	370.966	50.072	421.038	378.595	43.041	421.636
Preparatory	499.397	45.213	544.610	499.114	45.914	545.028	540.242	57.836	598.078
Vocational Training	30.328	0	30.328	30.954	106	31.060	12.732	0	12.732
Secondary	309.525	48.164	357.689	307.903	48.823	356.726	309.035	54.980	364.015
Diploma	86.502	14.352	100.854	87.131	15.073	102.204	89.257	13.525	102.782
University	227.770	80.373	308.143	226.792	83.606	310.398	245.645	86.569	332.214
High Diploma	8.488	1.658	10.146	10.053	1.842	11.895	8.680	4.075	12.755
Masters	12.400	4.705	17.105	12.909	3.456	16.365	14.121	2857	16.978
PhD	6.066	1.288	7.354	6.689	1.481	8.170	8.529	1.877	10.406
Total	1.781.710	270.977	2.052.687	1.778.457	276.045	2.054.502	1.809.932	284.715	2.094.647

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Target 4.5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people, and children in vulnerable situations.

In terms of rights and responsibilities, the Qatari constitution, national charters, and laws state that there cannot be any gender discrimination. The state offers a wide range of educational options that are both diverse and equal. The education and training sectoral strategy programs place a strong emphasis on non-discrimination for any reason, with the goal of providing high-quality education opportunities to all people, regardless of gender, age, or ability. According to statistics from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, indicators of gender equality favor females by 1.5 in 2018, owing to a large disparity in higher education enrollment favoring females and males' preference for studying at universities abroad.

Gender equality according to educational levels

All stages	Higher education	Secondary school	Preparatory school	Primary school	Early education	2015
1.7	6.7	1.08	1.02	1.00	1.01	

All stages	Tertiary education	Secondary school	Preparatory school	Primary stage	Early education	2018
1.5	8.0	0.99	0.97	0.98	0.97	
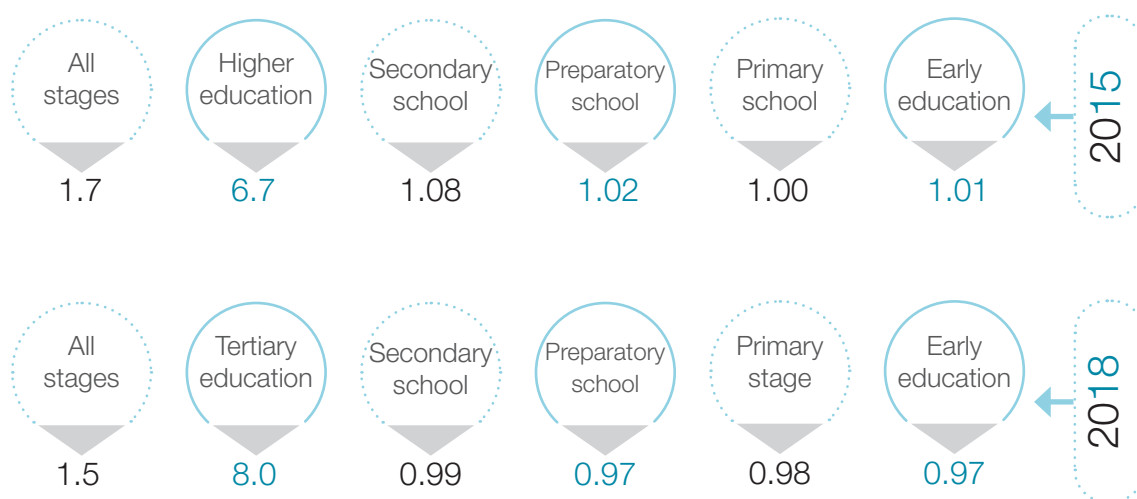
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The country's general and educational policies are tailored to meet the needs of a diverse group of students. In Qatar, all students are taught in their native language. In accordance with the provisions of the constitution and the compulsory education law, the state is eager to provide education for all groups. "Whoever has a permanent residence card and his children may have access to medical treatment and education in government institutions", according to Article 6 of Law No.10. In addition, "Refugees may have access to a variety of benefits and rights, including education", according to Article 9 of Law No. 11.

People with disabilities have the right to a high-quality, free education from kindergarten through to higher education, as well as the necessary measures to ensure that they have access to educational facilities and services, as well as all other facilities that provide equitable, diverse, and high-quality education programs. In order to conduct educational assessments for students, a vision center has been established. For students with disabilities and learning difficulties, the first specialized kindergarten was introduced. In addition, it was the first specialized school for students with autism spectrum disorders as well as minor and intermediate intellectual disabilities (Al-Hidaya School). 66 schools were then built to serve as integration centers for disabled students.

Education has received a significant portion of the state's budget. In 2018, education accounted for 9.3% of total government spending, with average spending per student in government schools reaching 72,734 Qatari ryals (QR) in 2017/2018, up from 62,565 QR in 2015/2016.

Qatar is a leader in providing development assistance to developing countries, implementing numerous projects and programs such as Educate A Child to assist them in achieving long-term development goals. In 2018, this program educated 10 million disadvantaged children around the world. The program involved 82 global partners. A grant of 40 million QR was also offered by the Qatar Fund for Development to help protect the Palestinian community.

The value of development aid for education during the period 2016-2019:

2019 $ 64.236.843 $ 124.673.854   2016
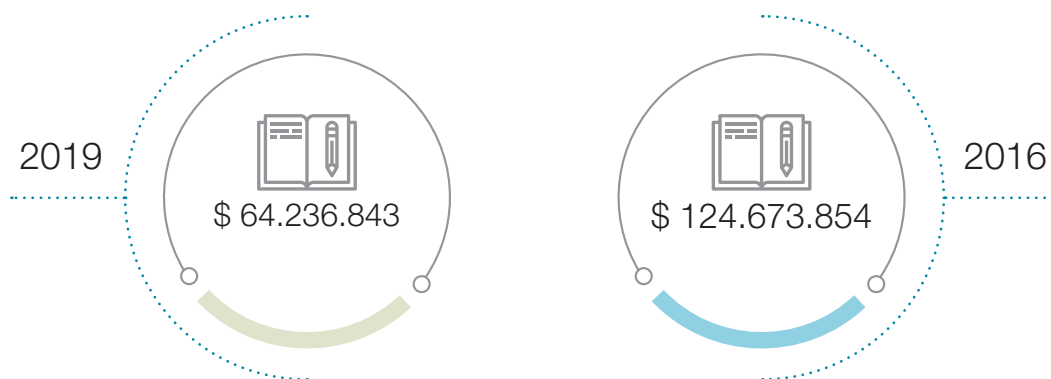
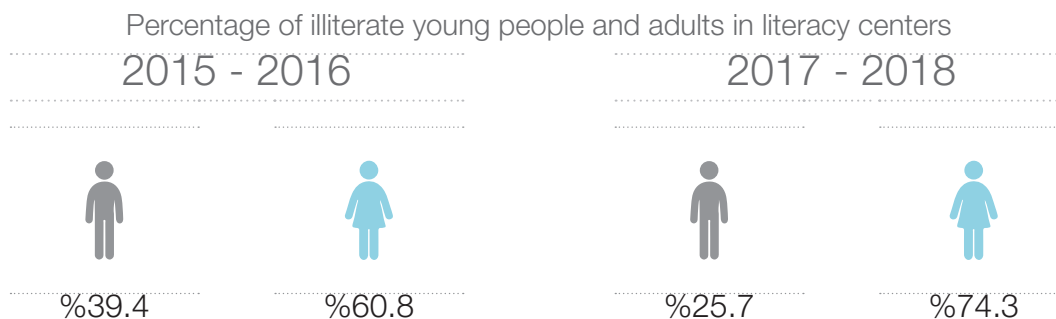The National Report for Goal 4 - the State of Qatar 2019

Target 4.6: By 2030, ensure that all youths and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

Qatar is working hard to ensure that all citizens, young and old, have a strong grasp of literacy and numeracy. Literacy rates were 99.32% for those aged 15 to 24, and 99.05% for those aged 25 to 44. Despite the fact that these figures have now become reality, the government continues to make progress by spreading and launching a comprehensive media awareness campaign within a number of sectors to raise the value of education among parents and society as a whole. It also aims to give people who want to end illiteracy the opportunity to learn basic skills without tying them to specific percentages or time frames.

literacy rates

2018	2015	
99.32 %	98.2 %	literacy rates 15-24
99.05 %	97.99 %	Literacy rates 15 and over
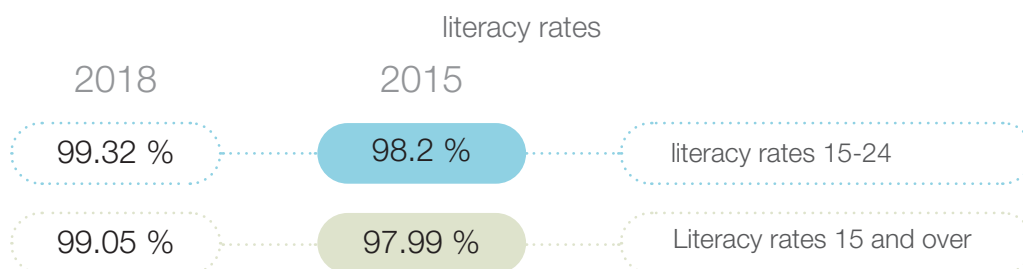
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By introducing electronic enrollment, opening additional centers for students in areas outside of the capital, and opening a technical evening center for adult education from tenth to twelfth grade, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education has developed learning methods and tools in literacy and adult education centers.

Percentage of illiterate young people and adults in literacy centers

2015 - 2016		2017 - 2018	
%39.4	%60.8	%25.7	%74.3

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Target 4-7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development – including (among others) through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Qatar's education strategy assists students in comprehending the concepts of sustainable development, citizenship, and human rights, as well as promoting values, tolerance, and respect for others through the integration of these concepts into school curricula. Many school curricula, including primary school social studies textbooks, included concepts and topics related to citizenship, as well as the promotion of rights and responsibilities and their interrelationship. The application of the principles and concepts of democracy, freedom, and justice were among the topics covered in preparatory and secondary school textbooks. Understanding, mercy, tolerance, forgiveness, abandoning violence, and the importance of environmental preservation are all taught in Islamic education. The tenth and eleventh grades, as well as the secondary stage, are taught life skills. Topics related to HIV (AIDS in biology) are also taught to the same grades. For students in kindergarten through to secondary school, a general framework for the value education curriculum has been developed. Many activities and initiatives are also carried out, such as the Intercultural Dialogue Program in UNESCO Associated Schools, the commemoration of international days such as International Women's Day, International Human Rights Day, and International Day of Persons with Disabilities, and educational plays on topics such as sustainable development, citizenship, rights, and responsibilities.

Human Rights Program for Students, Teachers and School Administration:

This aims to educate students at all levels, hold competitions in the daily press, form human rights groups in schools, and train teachers to spread the culture of human rights by establishing a human rights day in schools and giving students lectures.

Target 4- A: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youths and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills - for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education is working hard to improve the quality of school structures and equipment. This will contribute to improving educational systems and outcomes by creating a welcoming and safe learning environment that includes classrooms, science labs, computer labs, language labs, libraries, cafeterias, gymnasiums,

theaters, teacher rooms, administrative rooms, worship places, and meeting halls. School buildings are evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that all building policies and legislation are followed.

Percentage of schools with facilities, infrastructure, technology and internet

100 % **100 %** **100 %**

100 % **100 %** **100 %**
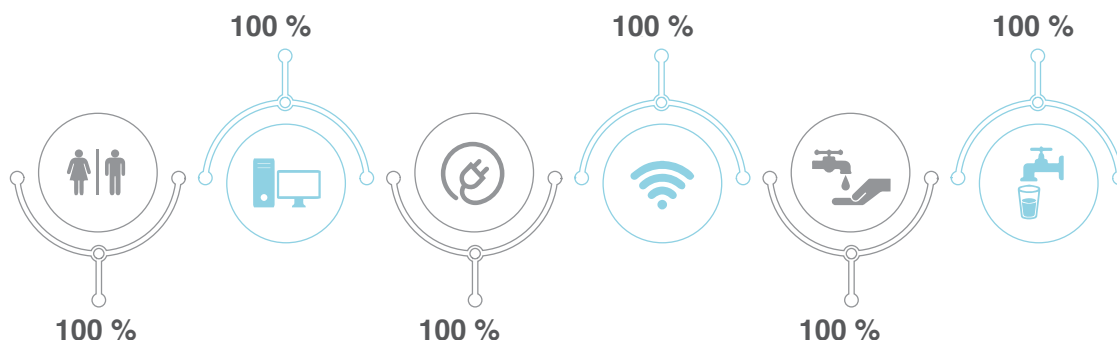
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Students with special needs are also considered in all of the school buildings. All schools built after 2000 were equipped with electric elevators, special equipment at entrances, parking lots, and facilities for the blind, including floors with protrusions at entrances and exits, as well as two different heights of water coolers.

Target 4-B: By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education.

The state recognizes that education is a fundamental human right that should be available to all people at all times. As a result, it places a high priority on providing education for disadvantaged people in other countries by strengthening partnerships with various organizations and implementing and supervising a number of state-run programs through the Education Above All Foundation, such as:

☐ Educate A Child

☐ Al Fakhoora Program

☐ Reach out to Asia (ROTA)

☐ Emir Tamim's Initiative to provide quality education for every girl by 2021

The value of development aid in the field of educational grants provided by Qatar is $709,432.88.

Qatar Charity donated relief funds to help provide high-quality education. From 2014 to 2018, financial aid totaled $286 million, benefiting 2 million people in 45 countries. Qatar University has a number of scholarships available, which are awarded based on applicants' academic merit and competition. The University also offers a number of competitive scholarships for the Islamic world, including His Highness the Emir's Scientific Excellence Scholarships and Excellent Performance Scholarships. There are also non-competitive scholarships available for children from Gulf Cooperation Council countries, as well as short-term scholarships for non-native Arabic speakers to study the language.

Target 4-C: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially the least developed countries and small island developing States

Qatar is working on a program to improve teacher quality at all levels of education as part of its national development strategy (2018-2022). To ensure the efficiency of teachers, the Center for Training and Educational Development has been established, and a certification system developed. The Tomooh program was established to send students to Qatar University's College of Education to prepare cadres of qualified teachers. Qatar University also established the National Center for Educator Development.

According to statistics for the academic year 2017/2018, the percentage of teachers who are trained and qualified in accordance with national standards has reached 100 %. In government schools at the preparatory and secondary levels, the average number of students per qualified trained teacher is 9. In government-private schools, the average number of students per teacher is 12 in the primary and preparatory stages and 10 in the secondary stage.

Academic year	Type of educational institution	Average of students per teacher			
		Preschool	Primary	Preparatory	Secondary
2017 - 2018	public	9	8	9	9
	private	18	17	15	14
	Government-private	15	12	12	10

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Many training programs are offered by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, which are directed by training and educational development centers. In the 2017-2018 academic year, there were 106 of these such programs. Approximately 40% of public school teachers were trained during the same academic year.

Percentage of trained teachers

2015 - 2016			2017 - 2018		
Number of teachers	Number of trainees	Percentage of trainees	Number of teachers	Number of trainees	Percentage of trainees
14552	6339	%44	13841	5530	%40

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The most prominent initiatives and practices (success stories)

This section of the report focuses on the key initiatives and success stories adopted by the Member States in the Arab Bureau of Education for Gulf States, that have contributed to the achievement of the fourth goal's targets. These initiatives highlight successful collaboration and partnership between various governmental and private institutions, as well as those of civil society. With the exception of the Republic of Yemen, each member state's national reports have been used to select five initiatives. Due to the difficult circumstances it is experiencing, Yemen has only reported one success story, which makes it difficult to obtain the required data and information for this report.

United Arab Emirates:

The Emirati School Initiative:

This initiative aims to redistribute curricula according to the educational ladder (4-4-4) in order to provide students with the necessary depth of knowledge and to create different educational tracks with outcomes related to the knowledge economy's requirements. It aims to give students every opportunity to choose a course of study that is appropriate for their skills, abilities, and interests, allowing them to develop 21st century and higher-order thinking skills. It also aims to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching, learning, and assessment, as well as to improve graduates' abilities to compete in the labor market and to continually adapt the study plan to their needs.

Study in UAE initiative:

This initiative provides education to all students by converting books and curricula into audio-visual content so that students can easily access them and benefit from multiple and equitable opportunities.

Early Childhood Care and Development Law Initiative:

This initiative aims to develop early childhood care, education, and quality assurance services for children aged 0 to 8, as well as develop a legislative framework, and policies, and procedures for establishing, managing, and improving the quality of all early childhood care and education centers.

The Initiative to establish applied technology high schools:

This initiative aims to develop national cadres of scientists, engineers, and technicians in response to economic development needs by offering technical and vocational education in English at secondary and higher education levels in a variety of disciplines. It also offers distinguished secondary school programs that combine vocational and technical training with a strong academic foundation.

The Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Smart Learning Program initiative:

This initiative aims to develop education by improving infrastructure, programs, and means of instruction, enriching electronic curricula, and developing administrative and academic programs as well as technical systems for students, teachers, decision-makers, parents, and school staff. With the goal of achieving sustainable development and involving everyone in issues of co-existence, these initiatives have become increasingly reliant on exchanging data with the public and private sectors.

Kingdom of Bahrain:

Professional Disposition and Abilities Scale Project for the Secondary Stage:

This project's goal is to assist high school students in finding the appropriate work environment for them based on their personality traits and mental abilities. This project has aided in aligning labor market requirements and academic guidance for students. It was accompanied by the creation of guidance portfolios in secondary schools in order to activate academic and vocational mentoring classes, which was one of the most effective academic guidance practices.

Literacy Strategy Project:

This project aims to improve students' literacy skills and encourage them to read in order to help them develop cognitively. It also aims to connect students' reading abilities to their diverse needs in everyday life, as well as their concerns about current advancements and societal requirements, through critical thinking, effective communication, and problem-solving.

Integration of deaf students in secondary school:

The Ministry of Education provided all of the resources necessary for this project's success, including sign language teachers who translate what various subject teachers say in class

and translate integrated students' interventions and questions for the teachers and other students. It also provides students with support lessons, places signs throughout the school, and gives educational lectures on how to treat such students.

Schools promoting citizenship and human rights:

This project aims to provide comprehensive civil education to students in Bahraini schools, emphasizing the values of good citizenship, peaceful co-existence, and respect for diversity and difference. Through the school curriculum and textbooks, the project aims to transform school into a framework of civil co-existence that promotes commitment to national unity, values of loyalty and national belonging, tolerance, moderation, pride in the Gulf personality, Arab identity, Islamic civilization and human values, mastery of dialogue skills, self-management, and peaceful problem-solving, mastery of dialogue skills, self-management, and peaceful problem-solving.

Digital Empowerment Program:

This program aims to help students, teachers, and educational staff leverage information and communication technology in the classroom by preparing and training them on a regular basis. It aims to develop national competencies capable of producing digital educational content and graduating generations capable of leadership, creativity, and innovation in this field. This is a collection of ambitious programs aimed at integrating technology into education, particularly interactive video applications and the incorporation of digital tools into classroom management. There are also a number of training programs in the area of integrating technology into education.

Republic of Yemen:

Despite the difficult circumstances in which the Republic of Yemen currently finds itself, the country has had some successes, the most prominent of which are:

Rural Female Teachers Program:

This program aims to provide female teachers to rural areas by organizing a 6-month qualification course during the summer vacation to fill the gap in female teachers in rural schools. Teachers receive two years of training in skills and teaching methods. The Higher Institute for Teacher Education and Training issues certificates to the successful candidates.

The program has had a lot of success in addressing the issue of a shortage of female teachers in these areas, which is one of the main reasons why it is believed girls are reluctant to go to school.

State of Kuwait:

Small Projects Initiative

The government established the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise Development to support national youth energies interested in independent private work. In order to achieve economic growth, this project aims to support young people, combat unemployment, and empower the private sector. The fund is an independent public institution with a capital of two billion Kuwaiti dinars that invests up to %80 of its capital in viable small and medium-sized projects owned by Kuwaitis. The law establishes specific requirements for projects that require financial assistance.

Initiative to support the education of children of illegal expatriates:

The state granted the right to education to children of illegal immigrants by establishing the Charitable Fund for the Education of Needy Children and providing support to help it achieve its goals. A total of 15,000 students, both male and female, were enrolled. The Ministry of Education reserves classes for people with special needs who are enrolled in private schools illegally. They additionally received university education from the government.

Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity:

The center aims to nurture Kuwait's talented and creative citizens by providing an appropriate environment and climate in which they can demonstrate and develop their distinction, talents, and creativity. It gives them appropriate opportunities to turn their ideas into tangible innovations, promotes a culture of creativity in the community by raising awareness, and discovers and nurtures young people's exceptional creative potential. It also helps talented and creative people gain experience and refine their skills.

National Volunteer Work Document:

This document contains details of the values, knowledge, and experiences that are required for sustainable development. Through educational competencies specific to each course and stage, work values in the school curriculum serve as an important goal for all public education courses. The document contains educational concepts in general (knowledge,

values, attitudes, skills, and applications). It also emphasizes the importance of the school's role in utilizing volunteer skills and fostering a positive learning environment. It provides the necessary educational activities, techniques, and programs, as well as qualifications and training expertise, as part of the school's ongoing collaboration with the surrounding community, the external environment, and relevant educational and research entities in order to achieve sustainable development goals.

Human Rights Education Project:

This project's goal is to incorporate democratic, constitutional, and human rights concepts into school curricula. It also aims to help students master life skills and promote human values such as the constitution and human rights issues. The project aims to develop positive attitudes toward these areas as well as focusing on the learner's patriotism and effective thinking skills. The main outcome of this project has been the creation of a twelfth-grade course on democracy, the constitution, and human rights.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:

The initiative to develop nursery and kindergarten programs and expand their services:

This initiative aims to support the expansion of early childhood education by providing care and education for children from birth to the age of six, as well as creating an integrated learning journey based on the number of qualitative and quantitative tracks available. The initiative calls for the establishment of a large number of public and private kindergartens across the Kingdom, as well as the integration of early childhood education into the first, second, and third primary grades. It creates a conducive environment, employs qualified female teachers, develops engineering designs, and constructs investment models.

Gifted People for the Future:

This initiative aims to provide an appropriate educational environment for gifted students in public schools to develop their abilities and demonstrate their talents so that they can contribute to the national economy as a valuable source of high-performing human resources. This can be accomplished by providing high-quality enriching educational materials that meet the needs of gifted students to educational programs, as well as enabling teachers and school leaders to care for gifted students, develop their abilities, and facilitate their support, follow-up, and evaluation in their classes through an electronic platform.

Intellectual Awareness Center:

The initiative aims to create an intellectual awareness center with the goal of highlighting and preserving national identity, promoting values of moderation, tolerance, and otherness, and spreading a dialogue culture among all target segments. It also aims to strengthen the values of discipline and public property maintenance, as well as the values of perseverance, excellence, and initiative, by using modern and innovative means to communicate with target segments effectively and interestingly in order to create a generation that embraces the principles of moderation, tolerance, and nonviolence.

Leadership Values Program:

This program aims to advance university students and develop their abilities in a professional manner, through observation, guidance, empowerment, training and debate. The program allows trainees to shadow government or private-sector leaders in order to gain the most benefit from their presence during working hours. This is a step in the program where trainees are introduced to the importance of workplace values, persuasion, and debate in order to develop a leadership personality that can contribute towards development.

Future Portal:

This initiative creates an interactive learning portal using information and communication technologies to help students and teachers transition to digital education. It relies on an integrated electronic digital environment that displays courses via electronic networks, provides guidance, organizes tests, manages resources and processes, and allows teachers to assess them. The same initiative includes improving schools' digital infrastructure by connecting them and providing students with the technological tools they need to make the most of the learning portal.

Sultanate of Oman:

Sultan Qaboos Award for Sustainable Development in School Environment:

This award aims to spread and consolidate the culture of sustainable development in the school and its local community, promote sustainable development values among school community members, and develop their attitudes toward issues in the school and local environment. It also aims to improve students' national identity by honing their skills, developing their competencies, and achieving the goals of education for sustainable development. Its goals are to instill good citizenship values within each individual, to develop a student's integrated personality, to provide them with 21st-century skills, and to help them develop their creative abilities.

Educational Indicators System:

The educational indicators system is one of the Ministry of Education's most recent digital services, developed as part of the ministry's ongoing commitment to digital transformation and the use of technology to improve education. The system is linked to the Sultanate of Oman's educational portal's massive databases, which has provided detailed statistical data on the performance of schools, teachers, and students for more than ten years by efficiently and quickly displaying cumulative data on all components of the educational system. It aids decision-makers in extrapolating and monitoring performance levels across the Ministry's various departments.

Localization of the Village Teaching Job Initiative:

The Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation has approved a project to train residents of remote villages in the Sultanate's governorates in educational specializations so that teaching jobs can be located in these villages.

Student Research and Project Support Initiative:

This initiative aims to promote the expansion of knowledge related to Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies by hosting forums for students, academic researchers, and experts from various sectors to demonstrate their skills and creativity in areas such as big data, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, block chains, network security and cybersecurity, and other Fourth Industrial Revolution-related fields.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship Support Initiative:

This initiative aims to create a strong partnership between academic institutions, government agencies, and private businesses in order to improve the role of innovation in entrepreneurship. The Ministry of Labor Innovation Award, which includes nine areas available on the Ministry's open data portal for the purpose of contributing to the development of a knowledge innovation-based economy, was launched as part of this initiative.

State of Qatar:

Qatar Schools of Science and Technology:

These are specialized secondary schools that aim to prepare and qualify generations of academically exceptional students who are motivated to complete their undergraduate, research, and postgraduate studies in order to become researchers, scientists, doctors,

and engineers. These schools use an integrative approach that emphasizes the integration of science, technology, mathematics, and engineering design while focusing on twenty-first-century competencies through the use of specialized laboratories in the schools. The approach focuses on science and integrates it academically with technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The General Framework of the National Curriculum:

The general framework serves as a point of reference for all curriculum-related decisions. A review of the opportunities and challenges of the twenty-first century is included in the framework, to which the developed educational curriculum responds. It also goes over the curriculum's components, such as values, goals, educational curriculum's basic principles, educational competencies, extra study materials, and co-curricular activities and issues. It also defines the concept of quality, as well as quality standards that can be used in the classroom. The framework emphasizes teachers' ongoing professional development as well as school monitoring, follow-up, and evaluation.

Al Hidaya Schools for Students with Disabilities:

These are a group of schools that cater to students with special needs, such as autism and mental disabilities. They aim to provide early intervention and specialized educational services through a multidisciplinary team, provide integrated educational services to meet all students' needs, and provide the best intensive services that are not available in public schools.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP):

These two programs are approved by the Council of International Schools and are available in both Arabic and English. They are concerned with the mental, social, emotional, and physical aspects of a student's personality development, as well as assisting students in dealing with challenges in a positive and open-minded manner. They also help students develop critical thinking, research, communication, and organizational skills, as well as prepare them for success and excellence in terms of knowledge and skills. Teachers evaluate children's education using socio-cultural assessment methods at this stage. Furthermore, teacher workshops emphasize the importance of lifelong learning by equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to teach for sustainable development, global citizenship, and a promoted culture of peace.

The National Qualifications Framework Initiative:

This is a mandatory framework for all educational institutions in the country, including higher education and vocational education. Its goal is to provide a framework for the design and development of qualifications that meet the needs of the state, the labor market, and individuals, and ensure that those who hold them have the skills needed for their future careers. It also aims to establish standards, processes, and procedures to ensure the quality of learning outcomes and to serve as a benchmark for evaluating and reviewing the quality of educational institutions and higher education institutions.

Challenges

This report recognizes the accomplishments of the Arab Bureau of Education for Gulf States member states in achieving the fourth goal of the Sustainable Development Goals and its objectives. These accomplishments include political will and the ability to put them into action. However, some issues arose, which differed from country to country. The following are the common denominators among these countries:

- Education depends on governments as the main source for funding.
- There are often poor results in international tests.
- There is a need for investment in education and the role of the private sector.
- It is necessary to pay attention to the member states' readiness to deal with technological development, innovation, and the requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.
- There is a lack of data and indicators in relation to some targets.

The following are the main issues that Member States are facing:

United Arab Emirates:

- There is a need for greater alignment between educational plans and programs and their outcomes, together with the needs of the labor market.
- There is a need to enhance students' analytical and applied skills in reading, mathematics and science in public education.
- There is a need to develop innovative policies to encourage more males to enter the teaching profession by attracting students to enroll in programs at colleges of education and universities.
- There is a need to improve the alignment of teacher preparation programs in universities with the Ministry of Education's development requirements and the state's human resource development trends.
- There is a need to standardize and link reliable data collection sources at the state level.

Kingdom of Bahrain:

- Overall there is poor infrastructure and outdated school buildings.
- There is student density in schools due to high populations.

- There is the need to develop educational curricula in accordance with the 21st century skills and technical and cognitive developments.
- There is the need for incorporation of artificial intelligence systems into the educational system.
- There is the need to enhance the alignment of technical and vocational education in secondary schools with labor market requirements.

Republic of Yemen:

Due to the current situation, Yemen has made no real progress toward the fourth goal of sustainable development. The main challenges are:

- Lack of statistical data from which verification indicators can be calculated.
- Failure to take part in international tests has made assessing educational quality difficult.
- Displacement and instability of large numbers of families and their complex living and economic conditions has resulted in a high percentage of out-of-school children, particularly females.
- The concepts of global citizenship, education for sustainable development, learning life skills and human rights education are not incorporated into school curriculum.
- There is a lack of strategies and plans that include programs based on sustainable development goals.

State of Kuwait:

- There is lack of clarity regarding the methodology used to calculate some indicators and the similarity of some of them in terms of meaning and targeted category.
- There has been difficulty in obtaining some data to draw certain indicators.
- There are different data according to national reports that rely on local justifications with UNESCO reports based on international surveys and estimates.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:

- There are regulatory issues that arise as a result of incomplete regulations, regulations, and organizational structures.
- There are unbalanced capital and operational expenditures in education funding.
- There is poor-quality public education, together with poor results in international tests.

- There is substandard participation in extracurricular activities and enrichment activities.
- There is inconsistent alignment of educational outcomes with labor market demands.
- There is low enrollment in technical and vocational education.

Sultanate of Oman:

- Education relies on the government as its primary source of funding, with no other options available to supplement this source. Tuition fees are the primary source of funding for educational institutions in the private sector.
- There are difficulties in meeting the demands of keeping up with the Fourth Industrial Revolution as required in analytical thinking, creativity and innovation, and scientific research skills, which has affected the acquisition of labor market skills.
- There is lack of clarity on methodologies used for calculating some indicators of the fourth goal, and lack of surveys to obtain the required data.
- There is the need to raise enrollment rates and quality of pre-school education, together with adopting the integrated concept of child care and development, which consists of overlapping elements, including health, education, social care, and the lack of interrelation between nurseries and kindergartens in terms of integration of services and curricula.

State of Qatar:

- Difficulty of keeping up with labor market requirements and national development priorities, especially in terms of linking technical education outcomes to the labor market and preparing technicians and specialists to contribute to labor sector development.
- Lack of standardized and coordinated post-secondary education governance, including vocational and technical education and training institutions.
- Poor skills among some higher education graduates to meet the requirements of work in the private sector.
- Scarcity of data on some indicators in relation to the fourth target of goal 4.
- There is a lack of data on private school teachers.

The GCC efforts
to complete education during Covid-19 pandemic

As an unexpected emergency, the Corona crisis posed a threat to all countries' existential security in varying degrees. The crisis's threat to halt the educational process was one of Covid's most dangerous ramifications. The Gulf Cooperation Council countries, represented by their education ministries, played a critical role in overcoming the education sector's challenges and dangers. Up until December 2020, the following efforts were observed:

United Arab Emirates:

Virtual Education in the Emirati School:

Smart Learning Program:

The "Mohammed bin Rashid for Smart Learning" program was launched in April 2012 under the auspices of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. This falls in line with the UAE Vision 2021, which aims to promote the idea of a knowledge-based economy and incorporate advanced technologies into the educational process.

The program aims to improve the educational system across the country by incorporating the best global learning methods and equipping classrooms with cutting-edge technology so that students can learn in an interactive and engaging environment.

Virtual learning scenarios:

Ordinary cases:

Hybrid model: virtual learning partially replaces required face-to-face classroom lessons, depending on the course.

The Ministry has the authority to increase or decrease the rate of hybrid learning based on the findings of a realistic study and any other developments relating to emergency and non-emergency situations, as well as after assessing the impact of the application in the field and its relationship to each student level.

Exceptional cases:

Additional Hybrid Model: in some cases, virtual learning replaced lessons at higher rates than the hybrid model predicted.

Complete Virtual Learning: in some cases, a virtual learning environment has been used with 100%.

Hybrid model:

Based on Vision 2071, the Ministry of Education has worked diligently to provide students with opportunities for innovative, sustainable education through the use of a cutting-edge virtual learning environment that is open to all, as well as a smart system with advanced educational solutions.

The Ministry of Education's hybrid model aims to ensure the long-term viability of teaching and learning under all circumstances by integrating classroom learning and teaching into the virtual environment.

Hybrid education model:

Types of learning in the hybrid model:

- **Schooling:** following traditional schooling methods so that the teacher and students can communicate in the classroom during the lesson.
- **Direct virtual learning:** learning via the internet.
    1. Material must be available throughout the lesson.
    2. Direct classes should be scheduled ahead of time.
- **Virtual Self-learning:** learning via the internet.
    1. The presence of a teacher is not required during self-learning classes.
    2. The timetable is more flexible and can be set by the student.

Teaching and learning method:

Through innovative use of technology and a blended approach to teaching and learning, the Ministry of Education improved virtual learning experiences and expanded learning opportunities.

This method allows for effective teaching and learning practices through:

1. Providing individual with learning paths.
2. Allowing students to participate in the decisions relevant to their learning experience.
3. Providing data about a student's level and progress.

Blended Learning Roadmap:

The Ministry of Education adopted a virtual learning model prior to the outbreak of COVID-19. As a result, tools, resources, plans, and infrastructure were seamlessly transformed into a fully virtual model, allowing for continuous education over time. The Ministry was able to complete 90% of the blended learning map, which includes the first stage, foundation, and the second stage, transition, before moving on to the sustainability stage at the expansion stage.

Smart Measurement and Evaluation:

The Ministry of Education's evaluation strategy is based on developing a balanced model that incorporates the three types of curricula: school curriculum (planned), curriculum implemented (implemented), and curriculum evaluated (evaluated).

1. The Ministry of Education's evaluation strategy is based on developing a balanced model that incorporates the three types of curricula: school curriculum (planned), curriculum implemented (implemented), and curriculum evaluated (evaluated).

2. Various evaluation stations: several assessment points have been set up to ensure that learning is verified at all levels.

3. Different Approaches: short, centrally designed tests support various types and tools of assessment.

4. Self-paced learning processes that reinforces the student's role as a self-assessment of their own progress and achievement throughout their learning journey.

5. Analytical data to support specialized education: analytical data from various assessments is used to support and provide adaptive learning resources.

Pre-Corona evaluation:

1. A written evaluation form.
2. Conducting a small-scale digital assessment.
3. Giving the central and summative evaluations more weight.
4. Conducting formative assessment by the teacher without students' participation.
5. Feedback given over a set period of time, and is not reflected in other assessment tools.
6. Multiple formative and summative assessment points designed by the teacher.
7. Giving formative assessment more weight.
8. Using self-assessment tools to involve other stakeholders in assessment, such as students and parents.
9. Timely feedback which has an impact on the rest of the evaluations.
10. Amount of data available to support AI and machine learning.

Post-Corona assessment:

1. Feedback given over a set period of time and is not reflected in other assessment tools.
2. Giving formative assessment more weight.
3. Using self-assessment tools to involve other stakeholders in assessment, such as students and parents.
4. Using self-assessment tools to involve other stakeholders in assessment, such as students and parents.
5. Timely feedback which has an impact on the rest of the evaluations.
6. Amount of data available to support AI and machine learning.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:

Early pandemic preparations and their impact on response speed and effectiveness:

With the guidance and support of the wise leadership, the Ministry of Education began its preparations for confronting the new Coronavirus (Covid-19) on February 1st, in response to developments in the global situation and the outbreak of the new Coronavirus (Covid-19). The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been praised for its quick response and ability to provide distance-learning solutions in record time both regionally and globally. To ensure a continuous high-quality and efficient educational process, the Ministry began updating internal emergency and crisis plans, increasing preparedness and awareness campaigns, and forming a number of committees and task forces to deal with the pandemic.

2020:

February 1: The Ministry of Education and Universities updated internal emergency and crisis plans, increased readiness and ramped up awareness campaigns.

February 3: Issuance of the Royal Decree regarding the response to Coronavirus.

March 8: Suspension of attendance at schools and universities across the Kingdom. .

March 9: Beginning of transition from in-person learning to distance learning through 14 TV channels for lessons for each grade and stage according to the planned instructional timetable, while continuing to use the iEN Ethraia system and Future Gate, and forming a higher committee to monitor distance learning activation in universities.

March 10: Identifying technical infrastructure needs, providing necessary support for university education, and launching the public education unified education system.

March 15: Enhancing technical support for educational platforms.

March 18: Developing guidelines for universities and public education's final evaluation mechanisms.

Following the suspension of in-person learning, these arrangements and preparations led to a seamless transition into distance learning within record time.

The following are the main elements that contribute to public education:

The school:

Providing a satellite broadcasting building with all of its requirements and equipment, explaining daily lessons, reviewing and broadcasting them via satellite and YouTube, and preparing diagnostic tests for the new academic year to determine students' levels and measure the extent of learning loss.

Curriculum:

Focusing curriculum content on fundamental skills and knowledge, as well as developing necessary precautionary plans - in the event of a 24-hour curfew - by explaining lessons from the homes of lesson providers or those reviewing them, and providing all necessary equipment.

The student:

Providing students with a variety of synchronous and asynchronous educational options that cater to various data and categories, whether or not Internet access is available, to enable them to complete their distance learning process while also providing teacher-student interaction tools in the form of assignments and activities.

The teacher:

Connecting teachers and students through standardized education, providing necessary programs for teachers such as Camtasia and Wacom, and training them in these programs online so that lesson providers can record and review lessons in a professional manner from home.

Proactive plans drawn up in a short time since the decision to suspend schooling was made:

☐ Developing plans and potential scenarios for crisis management and finishing the academic year while continuing the educational process for many public and university education institutions.

☐ Creating a focused content document for the courses that includes basic knowledge and skills and embracing the available resources and distance learning systems.

☐ Creating regulatory guidelines for distance learning, using appropriate content, and using ongoing and flexible teaching methods in proportion to educational material – which are all things that need to be considered.

☐ Setting criteria for selecting public school teachers who provide online lessons and motivating professors by training them to use the systems efficiently and quickly in order to adapt to their activation.

☐ Training and encouraging students to attend, share activities and assignments, and develop skills that are appropriate for the current situation.

☐ Developing review plans for all academic courses for public school students, conducting online test evaluations for university students, and supporting their needs during this crisis.

The Ministry has provided six distance learning options for public and private education students to meet all needs, including:

☐ Two interactive platforms for distance learning (the Standardized Education System platform - the Future Gate platform).

☐ Four open platforms for free education (iEN satellite channels - iEN lesson channels on YouTube- iEN Education Portal - Virtual Kindergarten.)

The rest of the academic year was invested in revisions to make up for learning loss after in-person schooling was suspended on March 8, 2020, and curriculum coverage was completed on April 16, 2020. From the available options, the best student score was calculated:

7. Approving the result of the first semester.

8. Approving the addition of assessment scores via distance learning options.

9. Conducting tests at the beginning of the next academic year (1442 AH) to diagnose learning loss and address it before the start of the next academic year.

For students who are expected to graduate from the alternative test at the secondary level, there are two methods of selection:

1. Taking the test online and meeting all of the requirements.

2. Students take in-person tests while taking all precautions necessary.

Statistics of successful distance learning in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

During the weeks when universities were closed, students browsed more than 108.727.469 pieces of digital content on educational platforms.

 Despite the effects of the Corona pandemic, Saudi universities have continued academic process in all aspects. Currently there are 1.161.289university students and 70.778.

1417 Master's and doctoral theses were examined online since the decision to suspend in-person schooling.

The total number of attendees in all sessions was28.758.050

 The total number of hours spent in the classroom was 2.898.911

The highest number of concurrent sessions was 464,711

The total number of files reviewed in universities was 1,087,275

The total number of university courses was 64,867

Challenges coping mechanisms

	Some technological tools and devices are unavailable for some students	Poor internet connectivity for some students	Internet service is unreliable for a small percentage of students.	Browsing is poor; networks and virtual classes do not have capacity for all students.
Challenge				
Coping mechanism	• Working on the initiative of distributing devices, providing data chips and providing the necessary support to those who deserve it. • Opening 20 satellite channels to broadcast lessons on a daily basis. • Equipping an online school for satellite broadcasting.	• implementing an initiative to make educational websites accessible without students incurring any cost. • Preparing study plans for courses, and broadcasting scheduled lessons through 20 satellite channels.	Providing satellite broadcasting to everyone who does not have computers or suffer from poor Internet coverage, with re-broadcasting of daily lessons and full lessons during the weekend.	The threefold increase of the capacity of the network, and increasing virtual classes to 40 times, the development of the entry of data on the educational process to more than 60 educational, academic, governmental and private entities.
Challenge	Lack of enough devices for the family in the same house, thus it is difficult for more than one student to access the system at the same time.	A segment of the participants in the educational process fail to receive adequate training that qualifies them to skillfully deal with virtual classroom technology and distance learning platforms.	Limited e-learning systems, as there is a basic system, namely Blackboard and the emergence of some challenges such as the temporary interruption of the e-learning system from the operating company.	Some students are concerned about changing teaching style and poor communication with faculty members
Coping mechanism	Recording all lectures and making them available on the network so that students can access them at any time	Preparing educational videos, holding training workshops and providing direct support, with the aim of assisting transition to distance learning	• Increasing and activating some educational systems that assist in holding synchronous meetings and some educational activities. • Increasing server capacity for Blackboard system.	Launching the Virtual Academic Advising Initiative, and virtual office hours in universities, advising centers in education departments, and providing support hotlines.

Post-Corona distance learning in the Kingdom:

1. The Ministry is conducting two studies in order to examine and document distance learning's experience and lessons learned.

2. The Ministry has created two tests: one for schools to assess earlier academic accomplishment, and another for the Ministry to examine the state of education.

3. Creating a national testing platform for public and higher education courses, as well as question banks.

4. Devoting two weeks to revisions and catching up on missing work at the start of the academic year.

5. Creating customisable scenarios for the upcoming academic year that reflect the health and environmental situation of each school, educational office, or institution.

6. Finishing construction and investing in a virtual school to save costs and increase educational quality.

Kingdom of Bahrain:

The Minister of Education issued a direction to obey the Coordinating Committee's recommendations on ensuring sustainable learning, which were led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander, and First Deputy Prime Minister at the time.

7. Processes of learning are sustainable.
8. Linking learning processes to ongoing evaluation.
9. Appointing a special evaluator.

The Ministry of Education took a number of steps to guarantee that students continue to learn, including the following:

☐ The educational satellite channel was launched on March 22, 2020, in conjunction with Bahrain TV, to broadcast the 375 televised classes delivered by Ministry professors and professionals throughout the previous semester.

☐ 2,221 lessons and extensions covering basic, technical, vocational, and special education have been published to the Ministry's official YouTube channel through 14 sub-channels.

☐ For special education pupils, 507 digital extension classes were created, and 368 lessons and extensions were posted to the educational portal.

☐ Providing sign language teaching to deaf pupils as well as audio lessons to students with visual impairments.

☐ The "Finna Khair" initiative distributes 10,000 computers to disadvantaged pupils as part of efforts sanctioned by His Highness Sheikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa by the envoy of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs.

Manpower Training and Development:

1. Implementing 270 training programs for more than 12,000 employees of the Ministry, as well as meeting 650 employees' professional advancement requirements.
2. Developing and implementing an online training plan to improve the efficiency of instructors and educational technology professionals in the management of His Majesty King Hamad's Schools of the Future project's training programs.
3. Teachers and specialists can receive online training to help them integrate the ISTE standards into their teaching and learning.

Continuation of distance learning for all school levels during the second semester of the academic year 2019-2010

Learning method	School curriculum	Return of students	Return of staff	School timetable
Virtual classes	Reconsidering curricula and focusing on the main competencies that are needed for moving to a higher level	Distance learning	All teachers work from home	Preparing standardized school timetables so that all lessons of common and disciplinary courses are presented to virtual classrooms and the TV channel
Televised lessons				
Educational portal			The administrative and technical staff are present at the workplace, with the possibility of coordinating their shifts	

Continuous efforts to provide educational services for the academic year 2020-2021:

In accordance with the Coordinating Committee's directions, the Ministry collaborated with competent authorities from public, private, and higher education institutions to guarantee a safe return to school.

1. public schools:

1. Identifying necessary lessons by concentrating on core educational competencies and constructing central lessons for them.
2. Allowing a parent to decide whether or not to allow his child to get distance learning totally or in part by visiting school two days a week and taking the rest of the classes online.
3. Determining the capacity of each class, taking into consideration social distance and adherence to the prescribed desk distance.
4. Keeping classrooms, educational buildings, and modes of transportation clean and disinfected.

5. Creating and disseminating a safe return guide that includes recommendations for protecting individuals as well as education for all parties.
6. Providing technical support and setting up Microsoft 365 accounts for students.
7. Distance learning channels are still in the process of being activated.

A plan for the return of middle and high school students:

Students' attendance is maintained by switching between levels during the week (level one and three - two days a week, level two - one day each week)

The primary stage: plans are Cycle One (Wednesdays and Thursdays) and Cycle Two (Wednesdays and Thursdays).

Learning method	School curriculum	Return of students	Return of staff	School timetable
Face-to-face student-teacher communication	Reconsidering curricula and focusing on the main competencies that are needed for moving to a higher level	About 30% of students attend school daily	Rotation of teachers by 50% through in-person or online school attendance through social media platforms	Preparing a school standardized timetable so that each level can attend one day alternately and the rest of the days are designated for distance learning through virtual classes and TV channels.
Virtual classes
Televised lessons	Integrating face-to-face with distance learning	The administrative and technical staff are present in the workplace,
Educational portal

2. **Private schools:**

☐ Private schools were mandated by the Ministry to ensure long-term learning for children by providing educational services for pupils online or through partial attendance, as preferred by parents, while maintaining safety safeguards.

- Providing free paper and electronic textbooks for national resources, as well as online training for private school teachers.
- Distributing the guidelines and requiring private schools to follow them (especially when coronavirus cases are discovered, for example, instruction was suspended at the British School for 10 days).
- Encourage private schools to collaborate with parents to minimize costs and provide payment choices for families who are struggling financially.

3. Higher education institutions:

- Students are expected to receive instructional services, such as lectures, from both public and private higher education institutions, either in person or online.
- Private universities have demonstrated their willingness to grant reductions, financial aid, or reschedule fees payments based on student and parent situations.

Providing support and assistance on an ongoing basis:

1. Creating interactive courses for students with special needs (learning impairments, autism, simple mental problems, academic brilliance) and facilitating distance learning through ongoing communication with parents.
2. Determining the required lessons and making them available to students studying abroad via various electronic platforms and channels, as well as providing a hotline to assist students and their parents.
3. Providing digital learning through digital lessons and instructional materials for continuing education centers.

Challenges:

At the level of the Ministry of Education:
- Distance learning practices coincide with the development of organizational structure within the initiatives of the national project for education and training.

At the school community level:
- Adapting digital curricula and individual differences.
- Providing educational services to all students, regardless of their educational system of choice.

- Providing schools with computers and internet networks.
- Developing the administrative and educational staff's capabilities and talents
- Creating a strong working relationship with parents and the community.
- Some learning-supporting activities and events are disrupted.
- Providing students in technical and vocational education with the practical skills and abilities they need to succeed in specialized fields.

At the community level:
- Providing computers and internet networks to students' families;
- understanding the need of opening communication links with the school community.

At the technical and technological level:
- Technical and technological challenges.
- Information security and hacking risks.

State of Kuwait:

At an Extraordinary Meeting on 26th February 2020, the Kuwaiti Cabinet decided to suspend study in private and public schools, universities and colleges, military institutions, and facilities of the Ministry of Awqaf and All Islamic Affairs for two weeks, beginning March 1, 2020. After that, the time frame was lengthened. The Kuwaiti education authorities were mobilized to study and discuss viable methods for resuming classes, taking into account the safe return of students, the health and safety of teaching and administrative staff, and all other educational stakeholders. A precise plan for resuming schooling in Ministry of Education schools was devised. This was included in a guide that also covered the academic agenda, work mechanisms and processes, and a return plan, which stated:

- All successful primary school students from kindergarten through ninth grade are promoted to the next grade level.
- Students in tenth and eleventh grades who are registered and have a score will be promoted to the next round.
- Twelfth graders will complete their studies online between August 9 and September 2020, the date of their actual distance learning course.
- Teachers' working hours begin in schools on August 4, 2020.
- Canceling paper tests and replacing them with weekly assessments of interaction points, attendance, and engagement, as well as providing computers to students and teachers.
- On October 4, 2020, the new academic year began for all Ministry of Education students via e-learning and distance learning in the first semester, with the remaining of the second semester being integrated with the next first semester.

Assessment Mechanism:

Twelfth grade

Assessment mechanism for the second semester of the academic year 2019/2020:

%25	%25	%25	%25
Reports	assignments	participation and interaction	attendance and absence
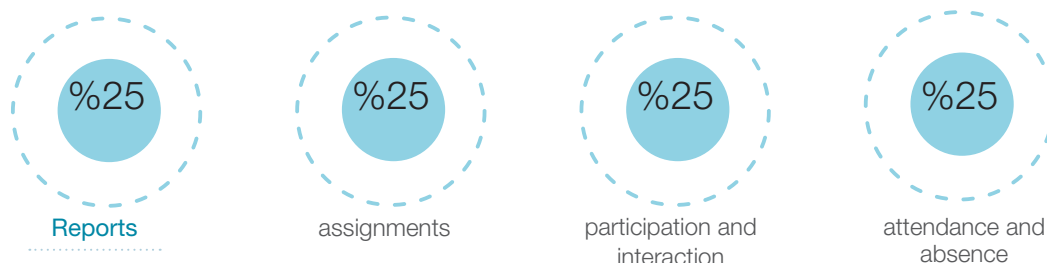
Academic specialists from the University of Kuwait were employed to analyze and assess the Ministry's existing status regarding distance learning and training in order to prepare for the academic year 2020/2021. Following this level, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Education, a committee was constituted to monitor the execution of the following expert recommendations:

- Activating the portal's role and connecting it to the virtual classroom system using the Microsoft Office licenses granted to the Ministry.
- For the twelfth grade, School Data Sync connects the student record and present organizational structure to Microsoft Teams.
- Using a standardized authentication mechanism linked to the Ministry's online record, a single sign-on is possible.
- Formulating a future strategy to establish a modified organizational structure for the new academic year that allows the platform and its tools more flexibility in order to be ready for the start of the academic year.
- Streaming subject material and videos to the Ministry from the cloud.
- Using data from the Student Information System (SIS) to build teams within the Teams system using the relevant methods.
- Using the Ministry's website to upload all changed curricula in PDF format.
- Changing the educational platform from a commercial to a government-owned platform while adhering to the Central Agency for Information Technology's relevant restrictions and controls.
- Kuwait's Education Portal is used to activate and expand all beneficiary accounts.
- Adopting an asynchronous education plan for kindergarten, first, second, and third grade students.
- Assigning an educational television station to broadcast instructional programs to all school levels on a set schedule.

Training Program:

The Ministry designed an integrated training program for all education target groups, particularly teachers, according to the timeline.

22-25/7/2020	Training all subject mentors to use Teams
27-30/7/ 2020	Training school administrations and teachers to use Teams
04-08/8/2020	Training twelfth grade students to use Teams
01-10/9/2020	Training teachers who were not trained in Teams at the previous stage
21-24/9/2020	Training the teachers of the remaining grade levels to use Teams

Challenges:

Reliable grading of students' effort during this period.

☐ Difficulties in providing laboratory materials, engineering, and clinical training.

☐ Monitoring tests.

☐ Many recent studies published during the pandemic show that students who used the distance learning system had a low rate of academic accomplishment, exceeding 50% in some cases, particularly in scientific areas.

☐ Providing feedback with the goal of increasing quality based on information provided and difficulties that may develop during implementation.

☐ Having no idea how long the pandemic will endure or when it will stop, as well as having no idea what the future holds.

☐ Adapting the curriculum to fit the capabilities of e-learning platforms, as well as ongoing contact between those in charge of designing general educational policies and curricula and those in charge of e-learning platforms and infrastructure.

Opportunities:

Opportunities for faculty members:

☐ Finding creative ways to keep students engaged.

☐ Instilling a culture of self-reliance in students to enable them to have ownership of their own learning.

☐ Identifying the best tools for content delivery, their evaluation, and masterful use.

☐ Proving to the community that the teacher is the main element in teaching.

Opportunities for government, universities, and technology companies:

☐ Reconsidering government policies and allocating funds for technology and human resources in education.

☐ Identifying and bridging gaps in technology and human resources to deliver an exceptional learning experience.

☐ Developing guidelines and criteria for implementing hybrid or distant learning programs.

Sultanate of Oman:

The Ministry of Education attempted to put forward a variety of scenarios, approaches, and solutions for operating schools securely in accordance with international trends for the academic year 2020/2021, while taking into account the Sultanate's educational setting. On 7/5/2020, the Ministry established the Technical Committee in accordance with Ministerial Resolution 94/2020 to examine all possible scenarios for reopening schools at the start of the academic year 2020/2021 and to recommend steps and actions. In light of this, the committee decided to take the following steps:

☐ The committee looked at regional and international experiences as well as international organizations' frameworks for the mechanism of returning to school during the Corona Virus Pandemic (COVID-19).

☐ The committee made the most important decisions, which included preparing a scientific framework paper outlining the methods of operating schools, their implementation procedures, potential challenges, and solutions.

☐ The committee held several meetings with the director-generals of the educational departments in the governorates, school principals, and representatives from some educational institutions (Sultan Qaboos University, the former Ministry of Higher Education, the former Council of Scientific Research, the former Ministry of Manpower, and the Ministry of Health) to discuss how to run schools in the academic year 2020/2021.

The Supreme Committee was presented with this proposed framework in order to examine a system for dealing with the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). The following was adopted by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, August 13, 2020:

☐ The academic year began for all students on Sunday, November 1, 2020, and for faculty members and relevant positions on Sunday, September 27, 2020, resulting in no less than 180 real school days, allowing students' and faculty members' vacations to be aligned with what is consistent with this.

☐ Adopting a blended learning approach for all schools, allowing students to attend some classes in their schools while also participating in distant learning in other classes, in conformity with the Ministry's norms and values.

The main pillars for the safe return of students in the Sultanate:

- Dealing with the safety of students, faculty, administrative staff and all other partners as a top priority.
- Adopting e-learning as part of a blended learning strategy, with a focus on distance learning.
- The health procedures document (health protocol) will be distributed as a fundamental reference for dealing with preventive health procedures in schools.
- Increasing public awareness of the current developments in school operations during the Corona pandemic at all levels of the media.
- Reducing student densities while continuing to use e-learning in conjunction with traditional face-to-face learning, provided that the number of students in each division does not exceed 16 students, with a space of one and a half meters between each student and another and in accordance with strict precautionary and preventive measures.

Instead of using the class system, the Ministry used the school hour system. The following categories were used to classify schools:

a. Adopting a blended learning approach for general education diploma students in the Sultanate's schools, by operating them according to student density, either daily or by dividing its students into two groups, with the first group beginning learning in the first week and the second group beginning in the following week, with an emphasis on the health protocol's precautionary measures.

b. Adoption of the distance learning strategy in grades 1-11 in schools with large student densities if epidemiological data indicates that blended learning cannot be used in those schools.

c. Adopting a face-to-face or blended daily learning strategy in schools in sparsely populated villages and locations with low connectivity, based on epidemiological statistics. The governorates' educational departments have been granted the ability to identify these schools in collaboration with Ministry of Health professionals.

Development of study plan

The Ministry conducted study plans based on the classification of operating schools as follows:

- Students are taught all subjects in the schools directly and continuously using face-to-face learning within school premises at 100% without interruption at a rate of 15 study hours per week and 3 study hours per day, as well as e-learning platforms.

- Students in blended learning schools are directly taught all basic subjects inside school premises at a rate of 20 study hours per week, at a rate of 4 study hours per day, and 15 hours of distance learning per week when the student is at home (5 accredited hours for courses taught in synchronous instruction of individual skills, information technology, and life skills, and 10 asynchronous study hours for the rest of the basic subjects).

- Students in blended learning schools are directly taught all basic subjects inside school premises at a rate of 20 study hours per week, at a rate of 4 study hours per day, and 15 hours of distance learning per week when the student is at home (5 accredited hours for courses taught in synchronous instruction of individual skills, information technology, and life skills, and 10 asynchronous study hours for the rest of the basic subjects).

- Students in e-learning institutions are taught all basic subjects using a platform intended for first-year kids, Google Classroom, for students in grades 5 to 12, at a rate of 15 study hours per week and 3 study hours per day (to include one synchronous hour per week for each subject).

Supplementary program:

The Sultanate's Supreme Committee decided to suspend study in all educational institutions across the Sultanate at all levels as of Sunday, March 15, 2020, based on local and global epidemiological data and indicators of Covid-19 and the Sultanate's precautionary measures against the spread of infection. Following that, a decision was made to extend the suspension and conclude the academic year. The implementation of the study plan created for the curricula of the academic year 2019/2020 has been halted as a result of the decision. This caused students to miss out on nearly three months of learning opportunities, which was more than enough time for them to pick up a lot of new information, skills, and beliefs. As a result, the supplementary program is critical for compensating for students' lost skills and knowledge during that time and empowering them by attaining the following goals:

Objectives of the supplementary program:

- Reducing knowledge and skill loss as a result of the suspension of studies and early termination of the academic year 2019/2020.
- Assuring that students gain the essential knowledge and abilities to progress to higher grades.
- Reducing the difficulties that students and teachers may have when implementing the higher grade curriculum without sacrificing the lower grade's scientific content.

The roles of teachers and learners in e-learning:

The e-learning regulatory document is designed to control the use of e-learning by defining the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and beneficiaries. There are two parts to this document: a conceptual part and a procedural one.

The conceptual aspect focuses on the most significant educational words associated with e-learning, such as learning, educational content, evaluation, supervision, and so on. The publication emphasizes the value of e-learning systems in supporting the educational process and accomplishing efficient and high-quality teaching and learning goals.

The procedural aspect consists of a set of responsibilities and regulatory procedures that beneficiaries must follow within specific axes related to educational platforms, teaching and learning, information security, and existing relationships between beneficiaries, whether inside or outside of school. Beneficiaries in this text refer to those who are involved in the educational process because of the responsibilities or roles they play.

Educational content:

This depends on several criteria, including:

- The basic knowledge and skills acquired by students.
- Values and life skills to be instilled in students.
- Their appropriateness for the learning time and the study plan prepared for the next academic year 2020/2021.

E-learning platforms:

Students are taught online through the Ministry's e-learning systems, which include Google Classroom for grades 5-12 and another environment for grades 1-4.

Student Learning Assessment:

The general document was created to assess student learning in light of recent advancements. One of the most important aspects of the development of these documents is the development of a student learning assessment system that will operate on an annual ongoing basis (for the entire academic year), with tests administered in grades 5-12 at the end of the academic year as an exceptional measure to ensure educational quality in light of the development of COVID-19.

Student Affairs Regulations:

The Student Affairs Regulations have been aligned with blended learning and e-learning by suspending some of their provisions, amending others, and adding new ones in relation to the admission and enrollment of students, the academic regularity, and student behavioral discipline.

TV channels:

The "Dars" program is broadcast live on the channel of Oman Live for the twelfth grade, "Oman Cultural" for the fourth grade, and grades 9-11 at a rate of four hours per day for each channel, thanks to a collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Information. These classes are taught by professors who have the necessary experience and teaching skills to convey what students need to know in their school topics.

Training Program:

From September 27, 2020 to October 29, 2020, all members of the administrative and teaching staff, as well as educational supervisors, were taught to gain the professional skills needed to use e-learning and support students in a variety of methods in order to achieve effective learning. This has been done in order to continue teaching and learning in the Sultanate despite the extraordinary circumstances that the entire globe is currently experiencing.

Document of Health Procedures in the School Environment in the Light of the COVID-19:

The document targets many groups related to the school community, including kids and parents, administrative and instructional personnel, and those who provide health and nutrition education in the classroom. It also covers bus drivers, employees, and school personnel, as well as detailing their roles in dealing with medical treatments.

Roles and responsibilities at the ministerial, departmental and school level:

At the Ministry and educational department levels, committees have been formed to accomplish integrated responsibilities and active participation in the implementation of documents and regulations governing the management of schools. These committees also aim to ensure that different groups receive the support they require, to identify and address challenges in a systematic manner, and to give governorate departments the flexibility to operate schools based on their capabilities and financial and human resource allocations, as well as transportation options.

The impact of the Corona pandemic upon the Sultanate's educational system:

- ☐ The educational system's readiness for a complete shift to e-learning.

- ☐ Most Sultanate schools have been closed, and opportunities for face-to-face interaction learning have been lost.

- ☐ Student learning assessment has a low effectiveness.

- ☐ Due to technical issues and internet networks, inequitable alternate e-learning and learning options exist.

- ☐ Learning loss, particularly in terms of polishing skills and fostering values, as e-learning falls short.

- ☐ The appearance of difficulties that children confront when beginning to use upper-grade curricula while losing lower-grade academic content.

- ☐ The reliance on online training hampered the implementation of the practical application part and resulted in inadequate acquired abilities, which hampered the training of teaching and administrative employees.

- ☐ Loss of cooperative learning chances that contribute to the development of students' personalities, social skills, and knowledge, particularly among students in the early stages.

- ☐ Economic costs associated with preparing schools to be safe and healthy places, particularly when health measures are implemented.

State of Qatar:

Efforts made by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to confront COVID-19 indicate that it succeeded in curbing its spread among the Ministry's affiliates. This is due to the ministry's decisions, preventative procedures, and preventive measures, as well as all employees' awareness and cooperation in implementing the relevant instructions and directions. We should also mention the shared services sector's pivotal role in combating the epidemic at the Ministry's headquarters, administrative buildings, and schools. By issuing instructions and guidelines, preparing a policy and preventive procedure guide to minimize COVID-19, and preparing detailed response plans by service providers in their respective regions, all necessary preparation and arrangements were made to face this pandemic at all levels in the State of Qatar. All service providers (COVID-19), including those linked with the Ministry and providers of integrated facilities services, were subjected to increased awareness efforts. They also insisted that all procedures and measures related to providing hygiene requirements and personal protective equipment are followed by installing hand sanitizer devices, providing masks, gloves, and thermometers in the Ministry's headquarters and administrative buildings, as well as all schools and testing centers.

Procedures related to the educational affairs of public schools:

- Suspension of education in public and private schools and universities for all students beginning Tuesday, March 10, 2020 and continuing until further notice as a preventative step, in order to curb the spread of coronavirus in all public and private educational institutions.

- From March 22, 2020 until May 7, 2020, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education announced the initiation of a distance-learning education system for public school students from first to twelfth grades to complete the current academic year 2019/2020 by using the Ministry's services on the Internet.

- Assigning a team from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education from all relevant sectors to oversee the process of implementing "distance learning" and dealing with any issues that may occur.

- Ensuring that all teachers are familiar with the abilities needed for distance learning systems by training project coordinators in the Learning Management System and MS Teams prior to the start of distance learning.

- Preparing an integrated handbook for distance learning in public schools to clarify the duties and responsibilities of school leaders, teachers, and administrative personnel, in order to best implement the system.

- Creating a policy for evaluating distance-learning students.

- Preparing revised quarterly plans for all subjects and grade levels, as well as plans that show the distribution of topics to school days based on previous content analysis to match distance-learning mechanisms and the time period for their application to ensure that students have no gaps when they move to the next academic level.

- Selecting 976 teachers from the most qualified and experienced teaching staff to create video lessons and assigning them to work within the team of distance learning lesson production, as well as assigning 126 specialized educational mentors to oversee the creation of lessons for each subject at each level; 13 centers were designated as filming locations.

- Creating standardized electronic lessons for students at all grade levels and in all subjects on a daily basis according to the weekly schedule and uploading them to the Ministry's platform (Microsoft Teams) so that schools and students could access them at any time; 27,861 video lessons were created for all public education levels, specialized education, special education, and integration schools.

- Requiring specialist schools to deliver video training in specific subjects.

- Adapted lessons were created in different schools (integrated schools, specialized schools) for diverse student cases in Qatar, taking into consideration students with special needs from various levels of support in the distant learning system.

- High school students from all walks of life were given special consideration by the Ministry. Comprehensive lessons in all areas were offered, as well as ongoing communication between teachers and students to ensure that learning objectives were appropriately covered across numerous learning platforms.

- Conducting high school and specialized tests on time while observing the strictest safety precautions.

- Completing the internal training plan for early education coordinators and teachers by holding training workshops on the Microsoft Teams platform and generating a form (distance communication) to track down government school administrations and electronically review application instructions.

- Distributing new instructions on schools' self-reviews for the academic year 2019/2020 and the annual executive plan 2020-2021 to incorporate the period of distance learning into self-review 2019-2020 and take it into consideration for the next academic year 2020-2021

- Creating a committee to revise the regulation of behavioral management for public school students who participate in online learning.

Education in the GCC Countries Towards Achieving Sustainable Development

Distance learning and teaching procedures:

Developing a distance learning portal to provide the following services:

1. The Teams platform and how-to guides

2. Password recovery service, allowing students to recover their own passwords from the Ministry's systems.

3. Direct access to instructional channels (Qatar Education 1, Qatar Education 2).

4. Examining the secondary school experimental assessments and sample responses, as well as the portal link to learning resources.

5. Direct YouTube links to instructional TV networks organized by school grades.

6. Creating the Learning Resources Portal, which includes textbook services for students in twelfth grades, as well as an Interactive English Curriculum.

7. Providing (2,194) computers to students who are unable to afford them.

8. Providing students without an internet server with 4,170 broadband chipsets.

9. Establishing a technical support team to give students and parents with round-the-clock technological assistance.

10. Creating a participation team to upload questions produced by the lesson recording team to Teams and to upload video lessons to YouTube channels.

11. Creating Microsoft Teams user guides for teachers, students, and parents.

Students with disabilities

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education aims to provide distance learning education to all students with disabilities at all levels and to ensure that this important group receives it on a regular basis. A special education distance learning guide was designed to define the tasks and obligations that school administrations must assume for the benefit of students receiving support services in support, integration, and specialized schools. In specialized schools (Al Hidaya School Series - Audio Education Complex) and integration schools - procedural plans for implementing distance learning, determining the mechanism of action, and recording video lessons for students according to their individual educational plans - are developed for all students who receive educational services across all levels.

Assessment in public and private schools affiliated with the national system:

a. **Distance learning system tests for grades one to eleven (daytime):** Using the distant learning system to implement a continuous assessment system so that the end-of-semester test would be successful. This is a weekly application for each subject that is presented to the student at the conclusion of each week through a distance-learning

system, and through which the student is tested and given a mark based on his performance level.

b. **Adult education tests for grades one through to eleven and twelfth graders (daytime and adult education):** these students are not included in the online learning system since their exams are administered differently. As a result, they were to take their examinations in June 2020, as indicated in the authorized school calendar, with the Ministry taking all necessary precautions to ensure the safety and security of students and personnel in schools during the testing period.

Private education:

Education in private schools in Qatar performed well, with most private schools following e-learning. The adoption of educational plans for private schools is necessary by the education system's technology support clause. When it came to implementing distance-learning, private schools faced no major obstacles that slowed down the educational process. When the decision to close was taken, the application appeared to go smoothly and without delay.

The academic processes in private schools were controlled and overseen by the private education sector in the following ways:

1. Following up on the educational process in private schools in order to discover their potential and the obstacles they face; and collaborating with them to overcome any adverse issues.

2. Communicating with synchronous learning firms to ensure that schools receive the necessary assistance and development.

3. Collaborating with the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Qatar Charity, and the Afif Charity to provide computers to a number of students in need.

4. Various educational programs and resources are being developed to enable distance learning, and schools are developing the required policies and strategies to support learning at this time.

5. Following up on and monitoring all precautionary steps in private schools that were unable to postpone their central tests, which were administered in accordance with international standards and under rigorous conditions and controls, resulting in the tests being administered on time.

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Education in the GCC Countries
Towards Achieving Sustainable Development

The Member States of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) pay close attention to sustainable development and the various initiatives associated with this. The report therefore reflects their leaders' current and future interests in qualifying people to lead safe and comfortable lives. In fact, the Arab Gulf States' development plans and programs have prioritized "education" as a key component of human development. This is due to members' conviction that education is the best method of achieving various developmental processes. The Bureau States have dedicated their strenuous efforts to education and lavishly spent on their plans to disseminate their findings to reach a wide audience. The Bureau States are also extremely keen to boost the report's efficiency and quality. Their efforts in this area are in harmony with the calls of the international community to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 4 on education, which seeks to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."

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Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States