

General Context

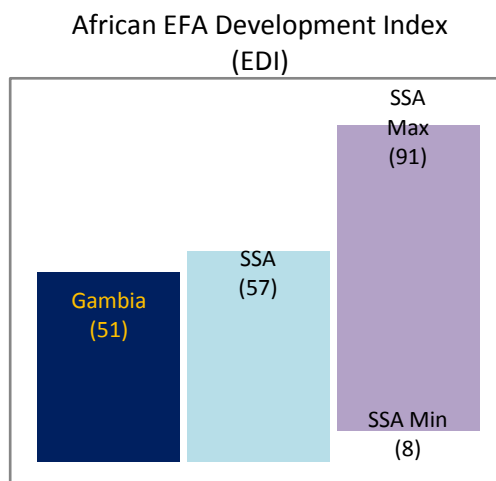
The Gambia is the smallest country of Africa, located in the west and bordered on all sides by Senegal. In 2012, the country numbered 1.74 million inhabitants. Given its HDI ranking (165th out of 187 countries), The Gambia belongs to the “low human development” group of countries. However, with economic growth levels being slightly superior to demographic growth (3.1 percent and 2.7 percent respectively on average per year over 2000-12), the quality of life of Gambians has slightly improved over the period, with GDP per capita reaching US\$ 529 in 2012. At that time the school-aged population accounted for close to 16 percent of the total population, a level slightly lower than that of Sub-Saharan Africa (over 17 percent). Despite this, the country does not yet seem to be in a position to enroll all children in school: in 2012, 26.3 percent of children of primary school age were not enrolled, against 21.7 percent for Sub-Saharan Africa. The HIV&AIDS prevalence rate is relatively low, at 1.5 percent.

Demographic and Macroeconomic Context (2012)

GDP per Capita (US\$)	529
Total Population ('000)	1,736
% of the Population of Primary School Age	15.9
% of Out-of-School Children of Primary School Age	26.3
HIV&AIDS Prevalence (15-49 years)	1.5%
HDI (Ranking)	165/187

Key EFA Indicators for 2012 or Most Recent Year

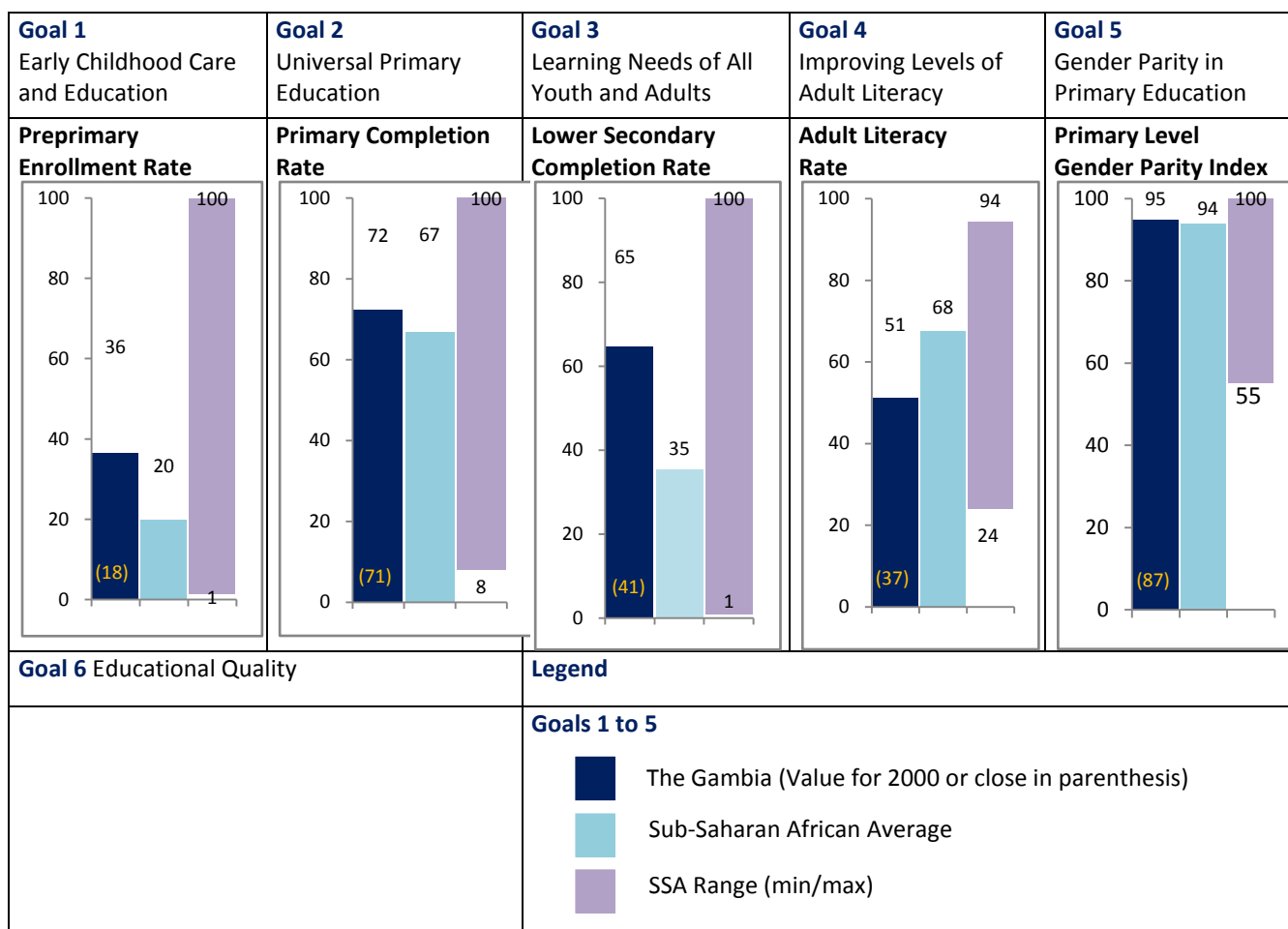
The African EFA Development Index for The Gambia was 51.4 in 2012, booming in comparison to 2000 when it was 39.8. Whereas the 2000 level was similar to that for Sub-Saharan Africa, the 2012 level was approximately six points below the regional average, indicating that the Gambia’s average performance is slightly below that of Sub-Saharan Africa.



In analyzing the three dimensions of this indicator since 2000, a persisting parity issue in terms of primary enrollment is noted (*Goal 5*). Whereas in 2000 boys were at a comparative advantage (girl/boy GER parity index of 87 percent), in 2012 girls were at a comparative advantage (boy/girl GER parity index of 95 percent). Limited progress has been noted in terms of primary completion, with a gain of barely one percentage point over the entire period, the rate reaching 72.4 percent in 2012. Even if this level is above the regional average (66.8 percent), efforts should be pursued to achieve universal primary education (*Goal 2*). The literacy level, although on the

rise since 2000 (36.8 percent), remained low in 2012 with 51.5 percent of the adult population aged 15 years and above knowing how to read and write (*Goal 4*), a level well below the Sub-Saharan African average (67.6 percent).

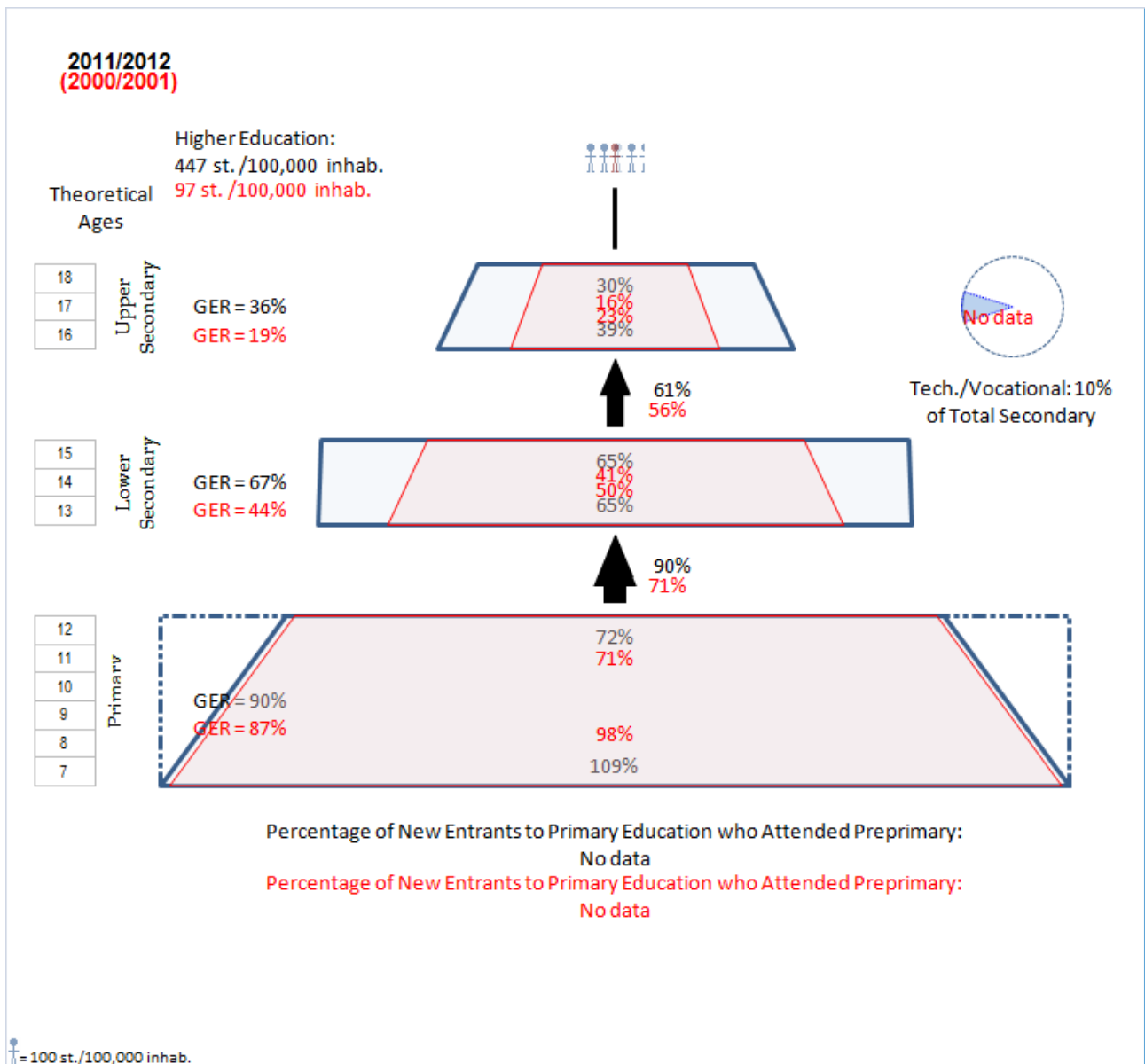
Reviewing the other dimensions of EFA, preprimary enrollment (*Goal 1*), with a current rate of 36.4 percent, is well above the African average (20 percent). Progress in this area is remarkable when considering the low level noted in 2003 (16.8 percent). The lower secondary completion rate, relating to *Goal 3*, has improved remarkably, to 65 percent, well above the regional average of 35 percent.



Enrollment: Education Pyramids 2012 or Most Recent Year

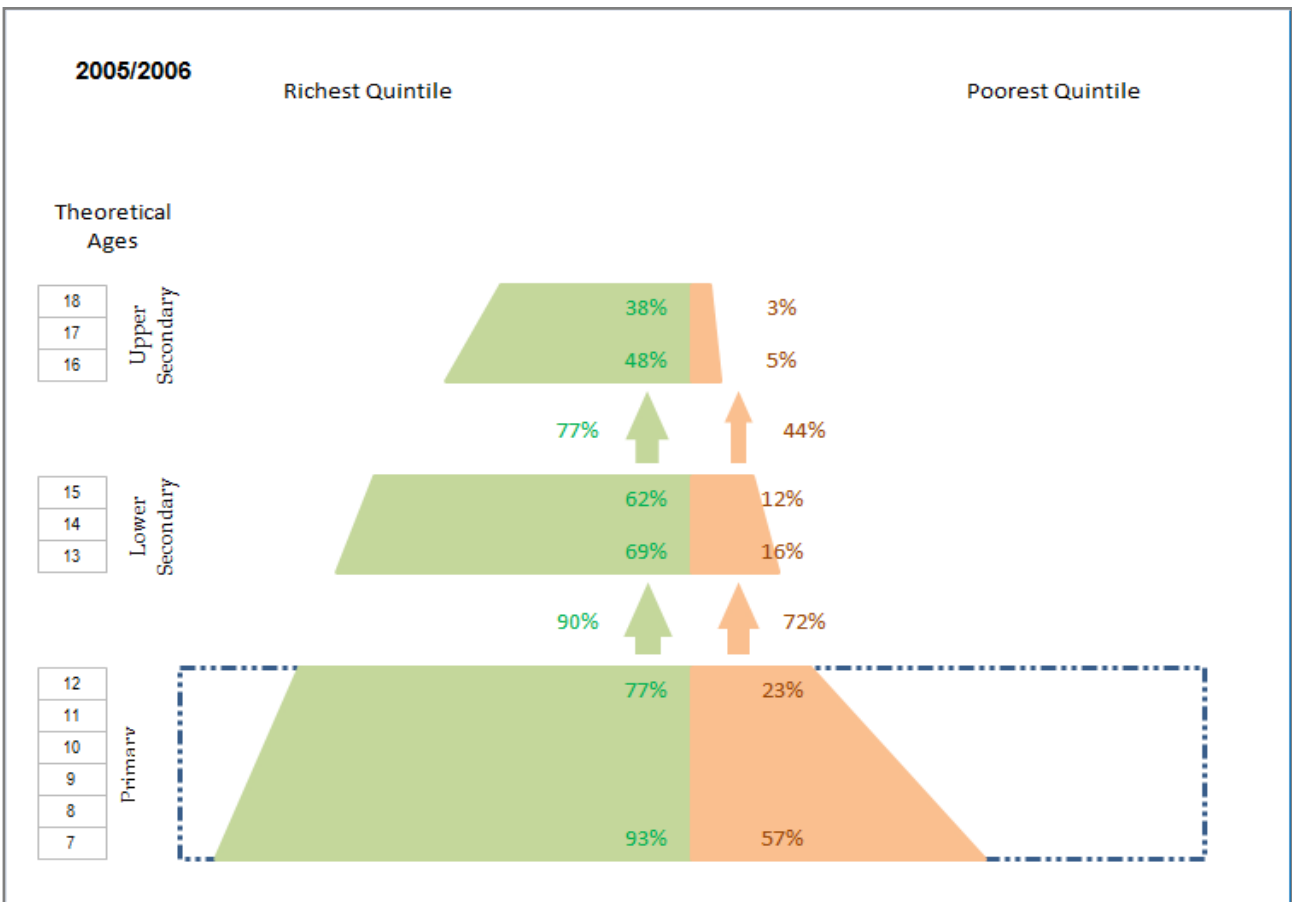
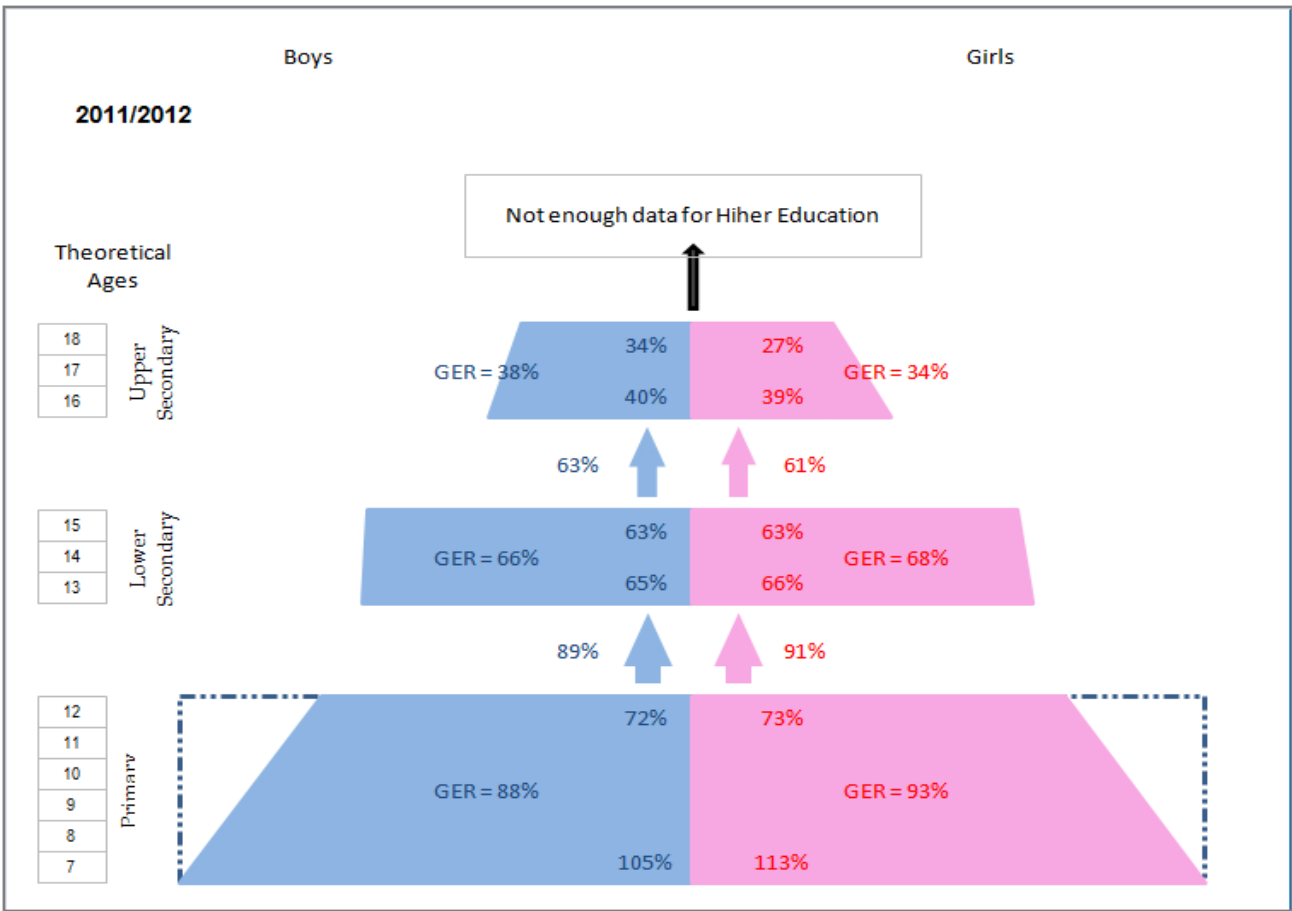
The analysis of enrollment profiles and education pyramids shows a slight rise in enrollment levels, in particular at post primary levels, given the rise in transition rates, in particular between primary and lower secondary (that increased from 71 percent to 90 percent between 2000 and 2012), and due to the improvement of retention at lower secondary, where dropout was virtually nil in 2012. These evolutions have led to a remarkable improvement in secondary level coverage, where the GERs gained 23 and 17 percentage points respectively for lower and upper secondary, to reach 67 percent and 36 percent in 2012. These levels nevertheless remain below Sub-Saharan Africa. At the higher education level, coverage has almost quintupled, from 97 students per 100,000 inhabitants to 447 students, although the country is still slightly behind its African peers who enroll 632 students per 100,000 inhabitants on average. Primary coverage has only slightly improved over the period,

by 3 percentage points, to reach 90 percent in 2012, a level 11 percentage points below that of SSA (101 percent). The subsector is characterized by high dropout levels, which weigh on the internal efficiency of the system. Thus a quarter of a generation of children do not complete the primary cycle, despite the fact that almost all today have access to it. Technical education's share of secondary enrollment was 10 percent in 2012, equivalent to the regional average.



Equity in School Access and Schooling Careers 2012 or Most Recent Year

In terms of equity, slight disparities in favor of girls are perceived in terms of basic education, given that 105 girls are enrolled at primary and 103 at lower secondary for every 100 boys, but develop in favor of boys at upper secondary (89 girls for 100 boys). However, beyond gender, the socioeconomic status of children is all the more discriminating: the gaps between children from the wealthiest and poorest households are manifest as of primary access (61 against 100) and broaden until the completion of secondary (8 against 100).



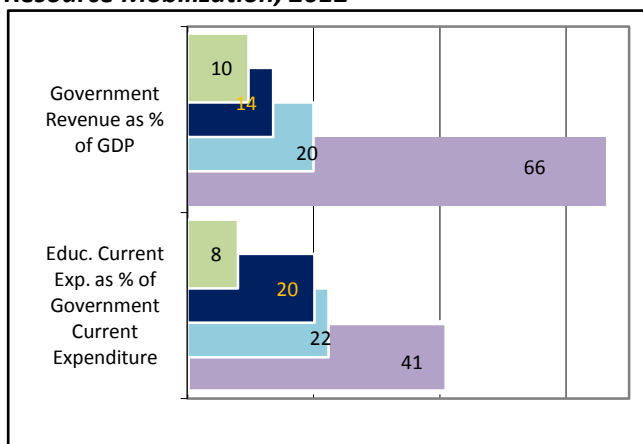
Learning Quality 2012 or Most Recent Year

In terms of the quality of learning outcomes (*Goal 6*), the results obtained in national assessments and exams show severe shortcomings in terms of learning, apparent as of primary. Thus in 2009, at the EGRA test, 54 percent of Grade 2 primary pupils were incapable of reading a single word and 27 percent were still in this situation in primary Grade 3. Many children are therefore not equipped to pursue their schooling in appropriate conditions. However, significant improvements have been noted between 2007 and 2009 following the introduction of pedagogical innovations at the classroom level (CSR, 2011). Children's results at the regional exam validating the secondary cycle (WASSCE) equally point to Gambian pupils having particularly low school competences.

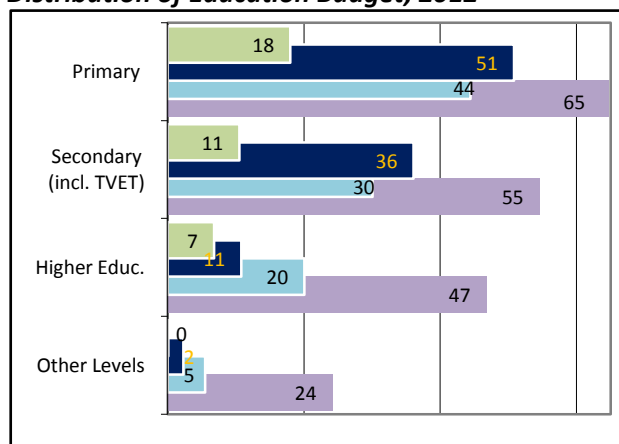
Education Financing 2012 or Most Recent Year



Resource Mobilization, 2012



Distribution of Education Budget, 2012



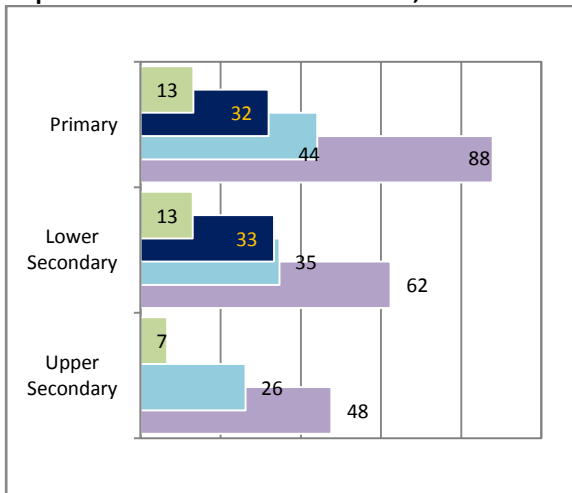
In addition to moderate economic growth over the decade, the government is facing increasing difficulty in collecting a satisfactory share of national wealth (14 percent of GDP in 2012, well below the regional average of 20 percent). However, the share of total public recurrent expenditure devoted to education has witnessed a positive trend, reaching 20 percent in 2012, only barely below that of Sub-Saharan Africa (22 percent). Overall, much as the macroeconomic context remains difficult, the country has successfully stepped-up its budgetary effort in favor of education, reflecting the priority the government places on the sector.

Primary education absorbed 51 percent of the recurrent education budget in 2012, against 47 percent in 2000, showing the government's commitment to this cycle. Over the same period, the share allocated to secondary has slightly waned, from 43 percent to 36 percent, although it remains above the Sub-Saharan African average (30 percent). The share of the budget allocated to higher education has witnessed a significant rise over the period, from 3 percent to 11 percent, although the initial level was particularly low and that attained in 2012 falls short of the 20 percent SSA countries' average.

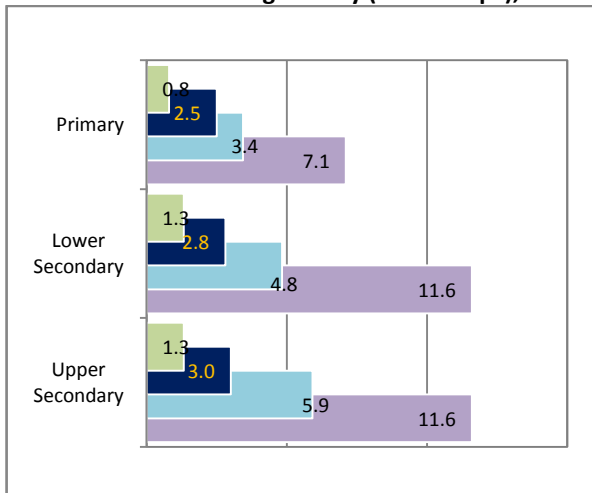
Education Policy Parameters 2012 or Most Recent Year



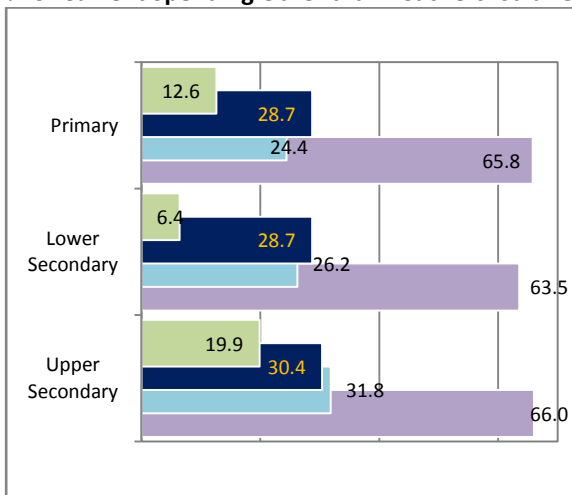
Pupil-Teacher Ratio in Public Schools, 2012



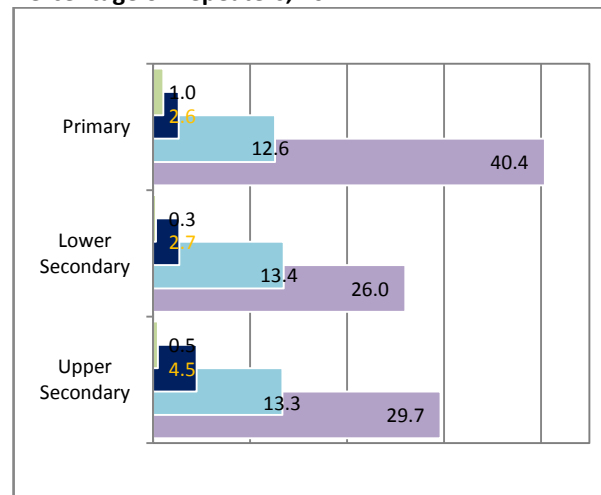
Public Teachers' Average Salary (% of GDPpc), 2009



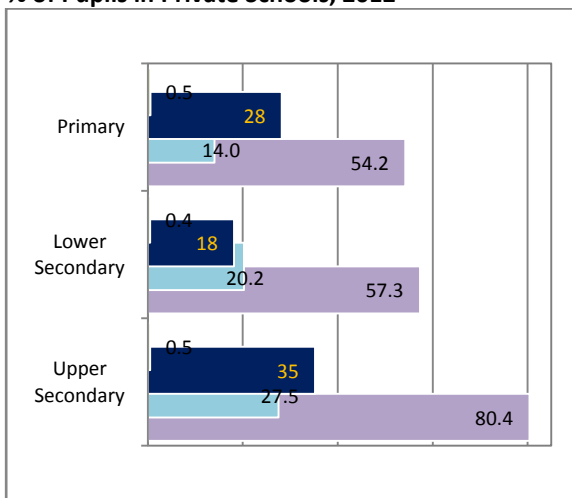
% of Current Spending Other than Teachers' Salaries, 2009



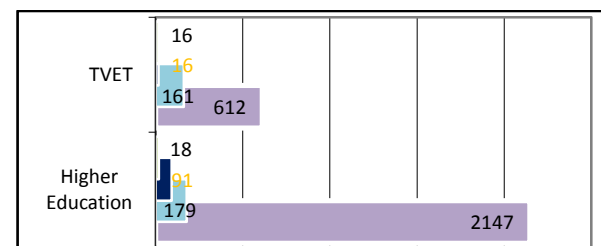
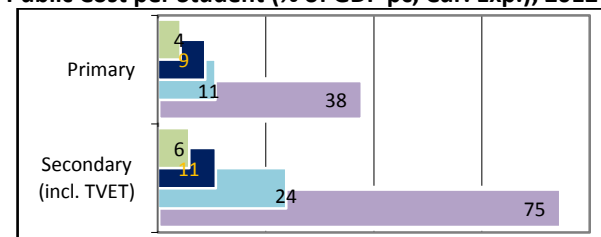
Percentage of Repeaters, 2012



% of Pupils in Private Schools, 2012



Public Cost per Student (% of GDP pc, Cur. Exp.), 2012



With respect to the various components of education policy over the period, public unit costs for the primary level were 9 percent of GDP per capita in 2012, slightly below the level for Sub-Saharan Africa (11 percent of GDP per capita). At the secondary level, public unit costs represent 11 percent of GDP per capita (against 24 percent in SSA). These relatively low levels of public unit costs for primary and secondary are in part explained by the relatively low teacher salaries in the Gambia in comparison to their African peers. Thus, Gambian teachers cost 2.5, 2.8 and 3.0 units of GDP per capita at the primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels respectively, against 3.4, 4.8 and 5.9 units of GDP per capita for Sub-Saharan Africa. Non-salary spending absorbed 29 percent (primary and lower secondary) and 30 percent (upper secondary) of recurrent expenditure, providing scope to adjust the financing of education inputs, and pedagogical inputs in particular. Furthermore, the country has an asset in its pupil-teacher ratios, among the lowest of the region at the primary level, with 32 pupils per teacher on average. For lower secondary the ratio is of 33 pupils per teacher, close to the Sub-Saharan African average of 35:1. A further positive aspect is the low repetition level, ranging from 2.6 percent for primary to 4.5 percent for upper secondary (against 12.6 percent and 13.3 percent respectively for the region). Higher education unit costs were 91 percent of GDP per capita, vastly below those for Sub-Saharan Africa (179 percent of GDP per capita).

A final aspect of education policy relates to the contribution of the private sector to the provision of education. In 2012, the sector represented a significant share of enrollment, equivalent to 28.2 percent of primary numbers,¹ 18.2 percent of lower secondary and 35.2 percent of upper secondary. These levels are well above those noted for primary in Sub-Saharan Africa, where 14.0 percent of supply is covered by the private sector, but more in line with what is observed elsewhere on the continent for secondary (20.2 percent and 27.5 percent for the lower and upper cycles, respectively).

¹ This number includes the *madrassas* that constitute the main share of private education at the primary level.