

Education Strategy

Western & Central Africa -
Concept Note Summary

External Advisory Panel



I. REGIONAL AND SECTOR CONTEXT

WHAT the challenges are



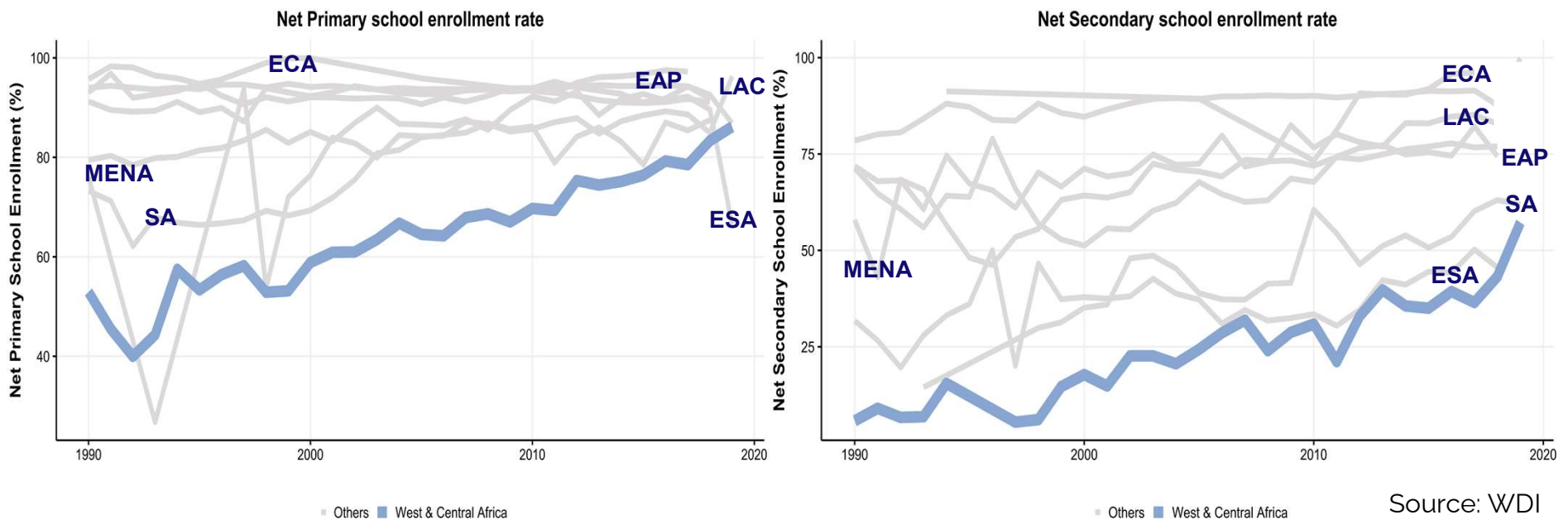
Regional Context

- AFW includes 22 countries with a population of half a billion people, which is projected to double by 2050.
- The region is very heterogeneous.
 - **Language:** English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic speaking countries, with hundreds of local languages.
 - **Geography:** Semi-arid areas in the Sahel, large coastal areas on the Atlantic Ocean and along the Gulf of Guinea and tropical forest
 - **Size:** Wide ranges of population with small states and the largest country in Africa with more than 200 million people.
 - **Income:** From low income to upper-middle income, with some countries depend on agriculture, others have economies that are dependent on oil.
 - **FCV context:** FCV is prevalent in many countries in the region (11 are classified as FCV), while others have a more stable situation.

Regional Context (cont.)

- One-size fits-all approach is not possible. However, common challenges exist:
 - **Rapid urbanization** - 48% of the population resides in **cities**.
 - Many countries are **resource-rich** and export commodities such as oil (Gabon, Nigeria, Rep. of Congo), gold (Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso), cocoa (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana) and cotton (Benin, Burkina Faso).
 - The **agriculture** sector remains central, providing employment to 82 million people.
 - The region experienced high **economic growth** from the mid-2000's, powered by high commodity prices across natural resource-rich, before slowing down over the recent period. The **combined GDP** at market price of the 22 countries is estimated close to US\$711 billion in 2019.
 - The region faces huge challenges for **human capital accumulation**, with an HCI of **0.38**, which is the lowest among the World Bank's seven regions.
 - **Conflicts, food insecurity, and the disruptive forces of climate change** threaten to curtail or even reverse the progress.
 - **COVID-19** has intensified many of these challenges.

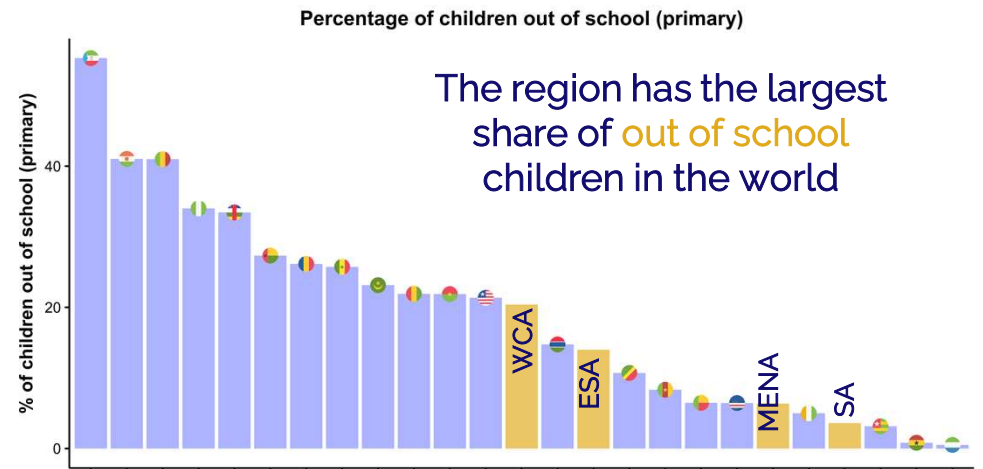
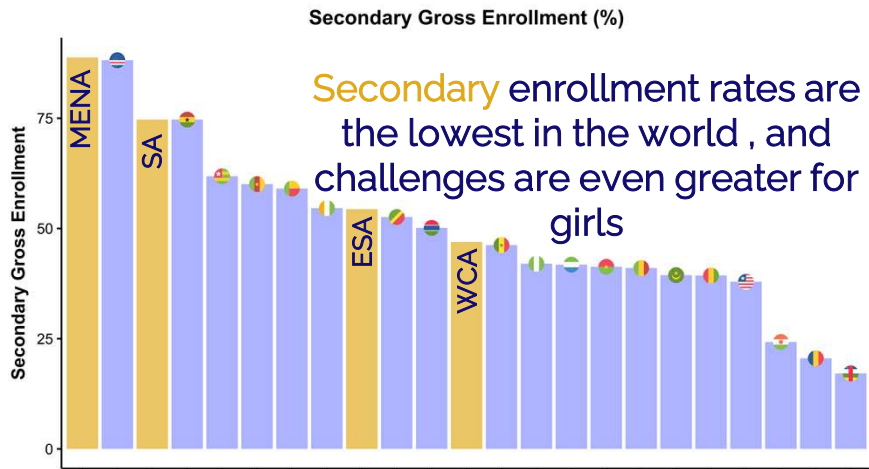
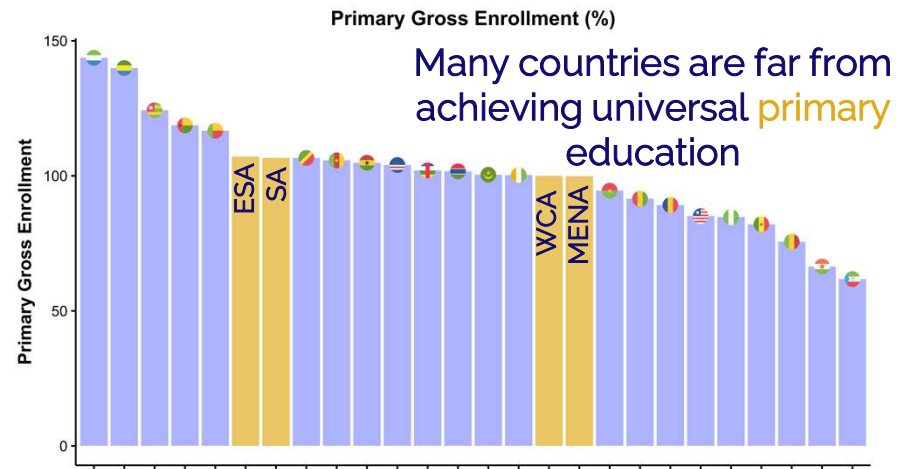
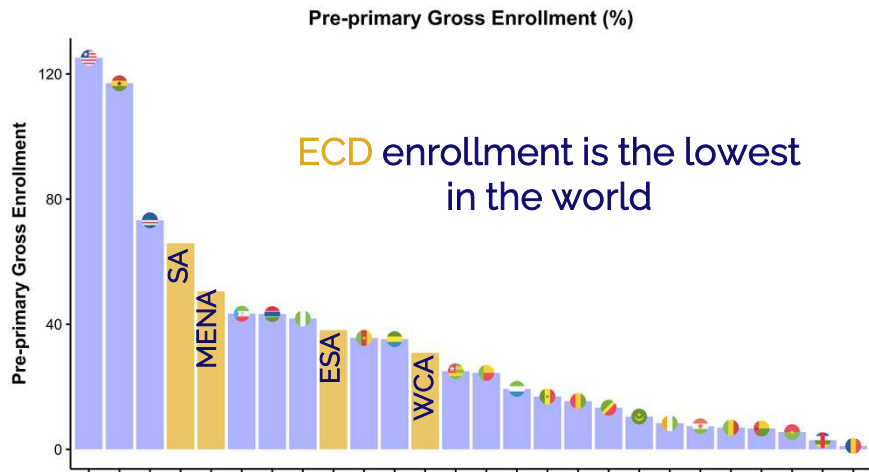
The region has made tremendous gains in expanding access to education



Source: WDI

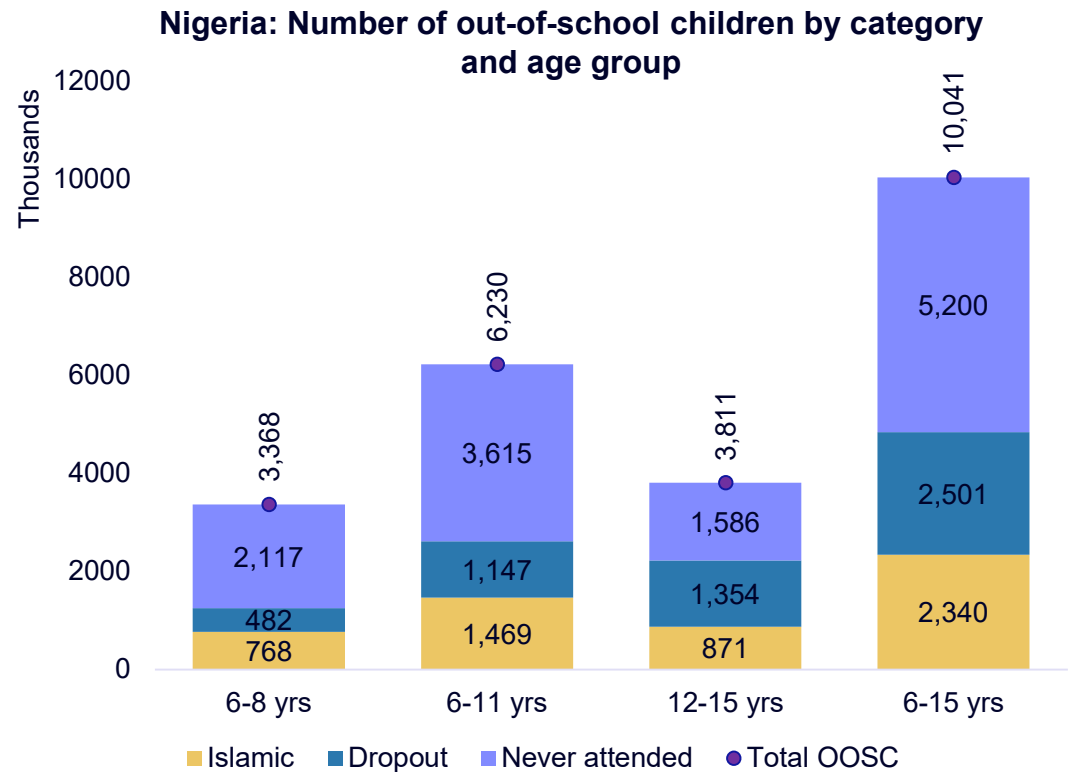
Yet, education systems are in **crisis**: **Access** is still a main challenge at all levels, and **COVID-19** puts this progress at **risk**, resulting in a **major loss of learning** and an increase in **dropout** rates especially among **girls**

Access is a challenge for ECD, primary and secondary



A large percentage of out-of-school children are in non-integrated religious schools, with no or very low numeracy and literacy outcomes

Non-integrated schools account for a large portion of out-of-school children



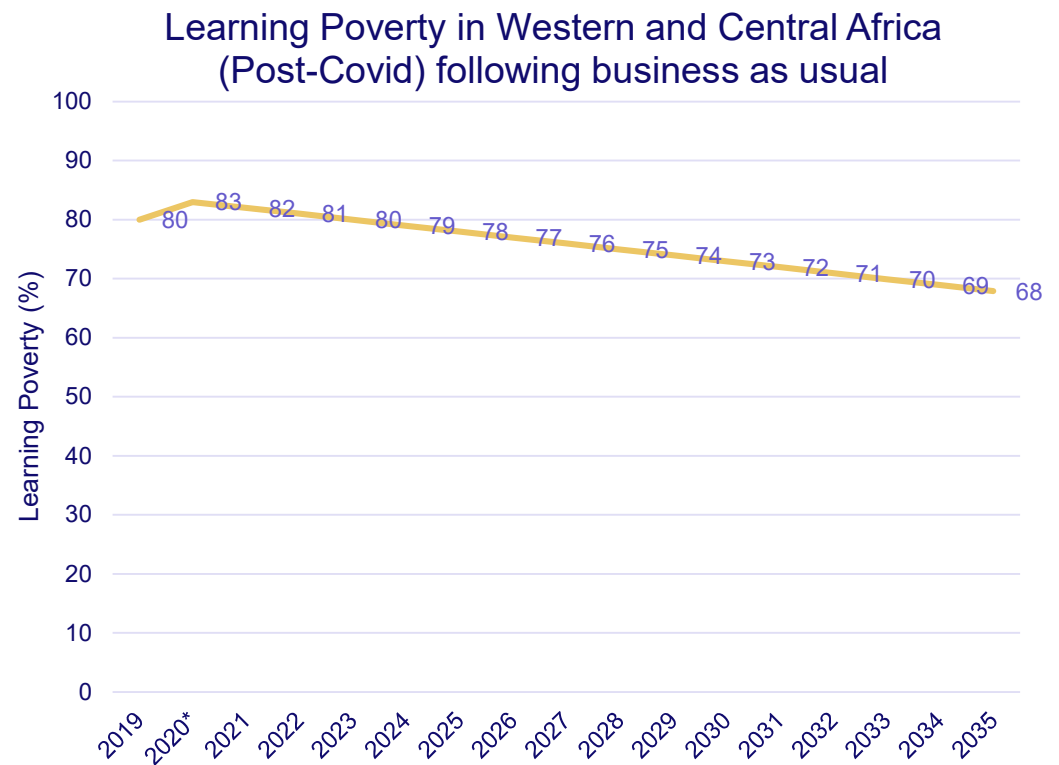
Source: WB Edu team

80% Learning Poverty

share of children who cannot read and understand a simple text by the age of 10.

Learning poverty is higher than 70% in almost all countries of the region

And learning levels are the lowest in the world ⁸



7.8

The average expected years of schooling in the region

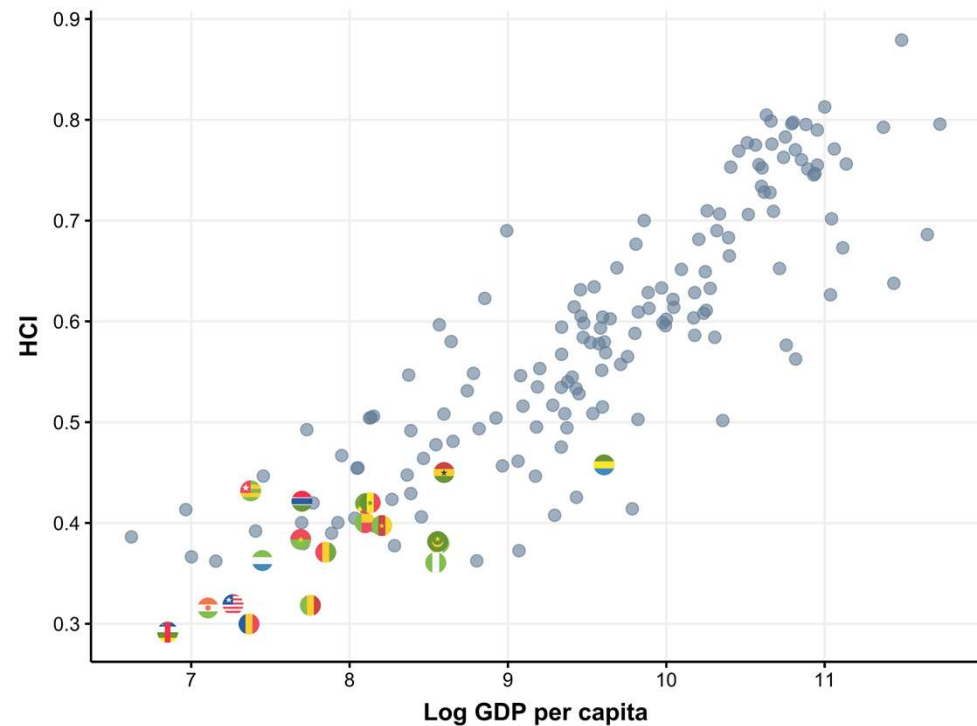
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The average learning-adjusted years of schooling

0.38

The average HCI in the region, the lowest among the World Bank's seven regions

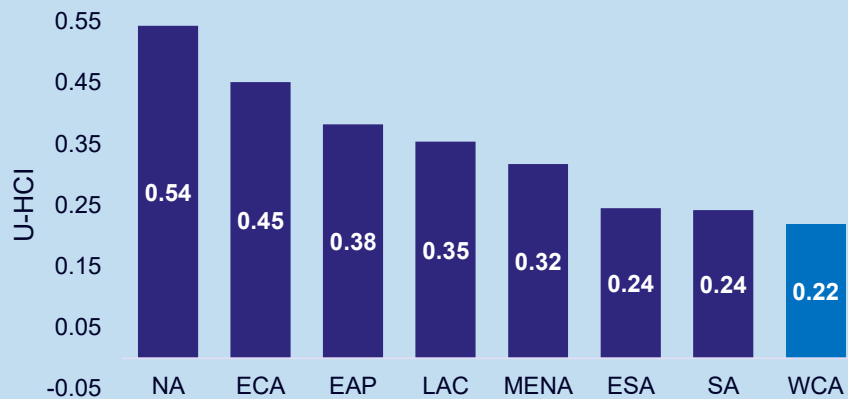
These challenges affect human capital accumulation and utilization



Source: World Bank, HCP

Only 9% gross enrollment rate in tertiary education

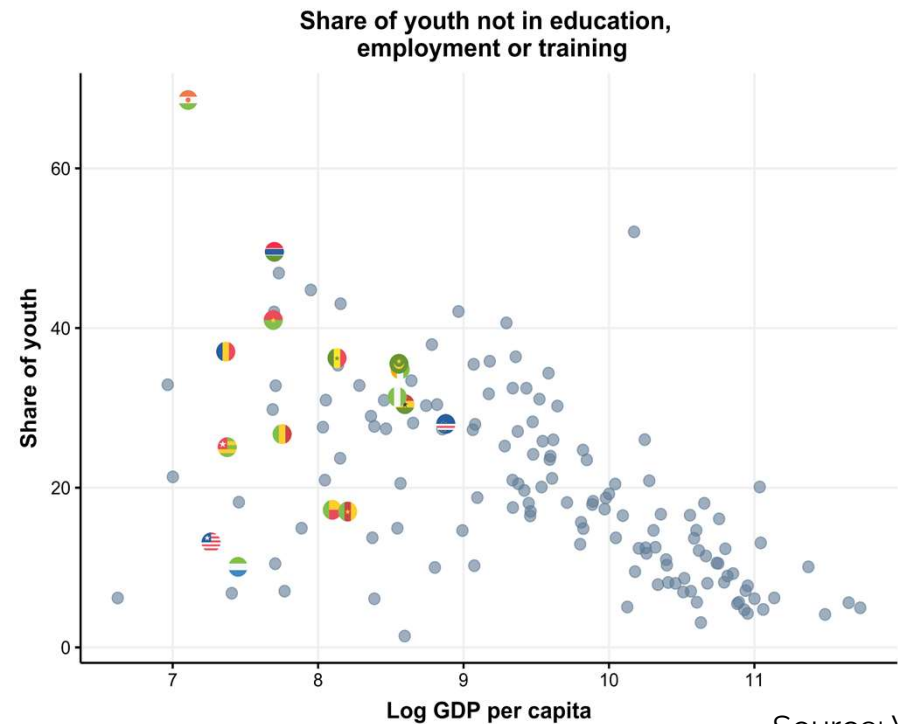
The Utilization-adjusted HCI in the region is the lowest in the world – highlighting the fact that skills produced by the education and training system do not meet labor market needs



Source: World Bank, HCP

Inadequately educated workforce is a major constraint

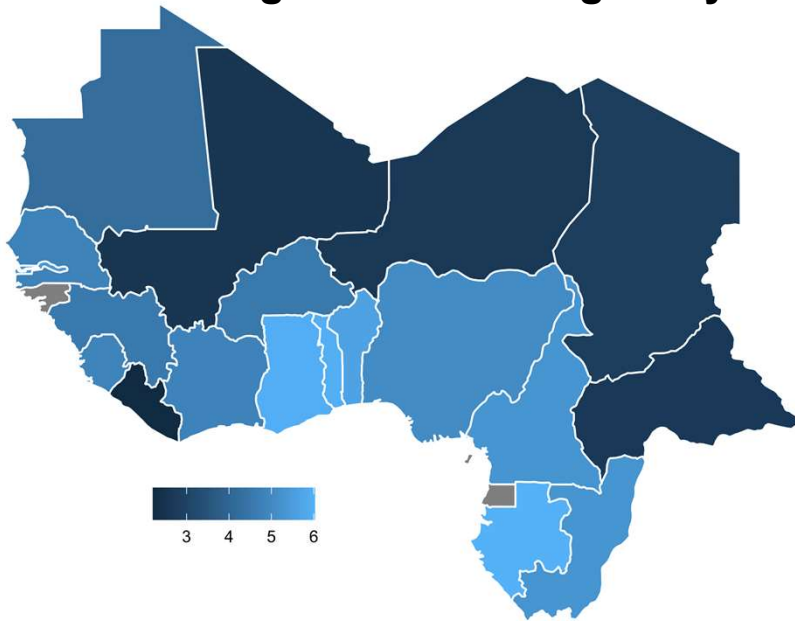
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Source: WDI

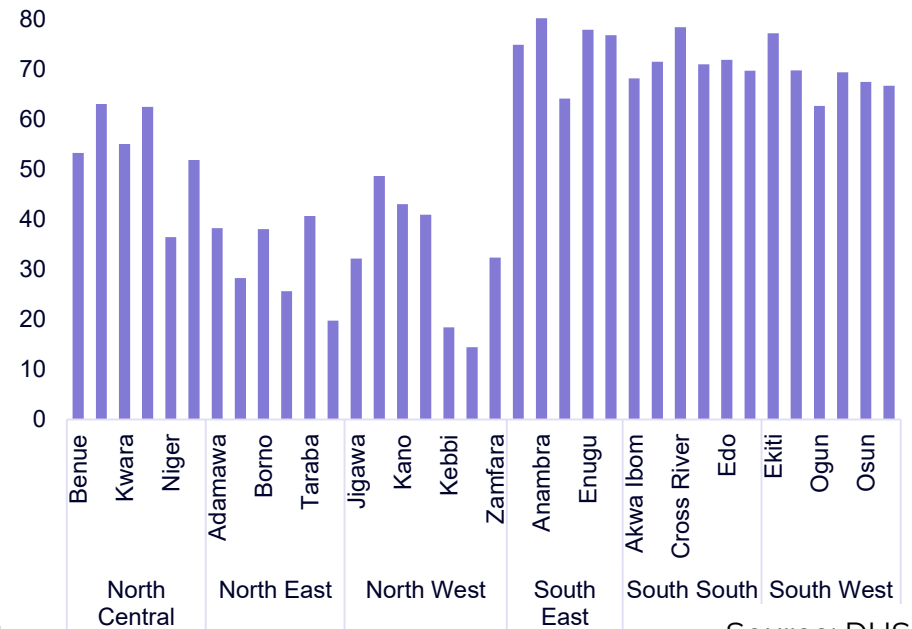
Wide inequalities across the region and within countries

Learning-adjusted years of schooling shows significant heterogeneity



Source: World Bank, HCP.

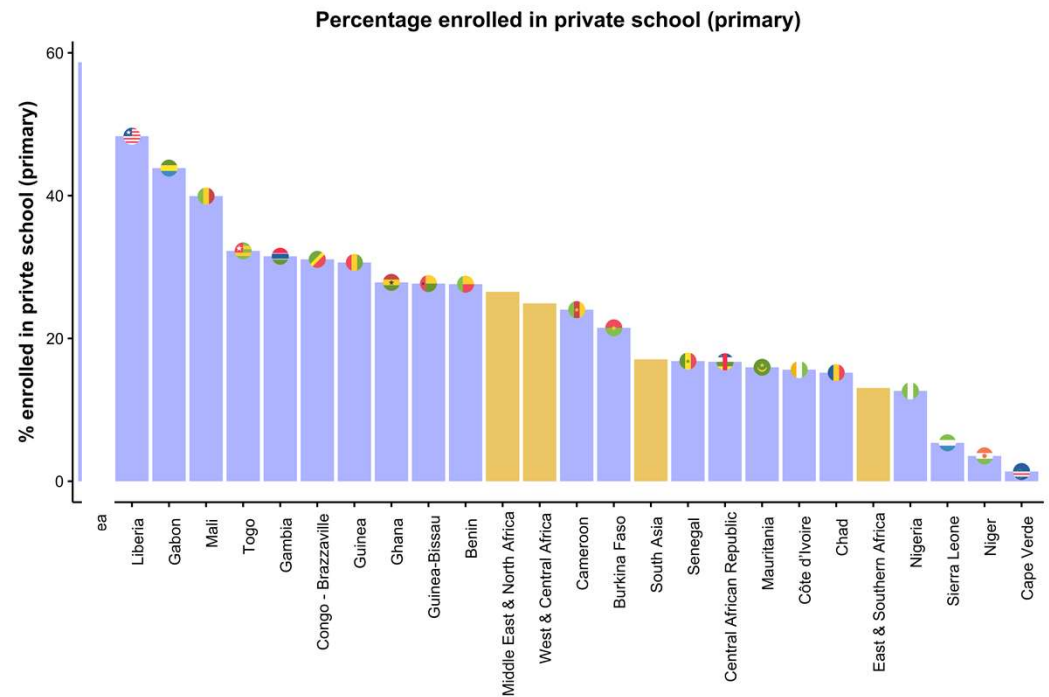
Net secondary school attendance in Nigeria varies by region



Source: DHS

The private sector and NGOs are playing a growing role in providing education

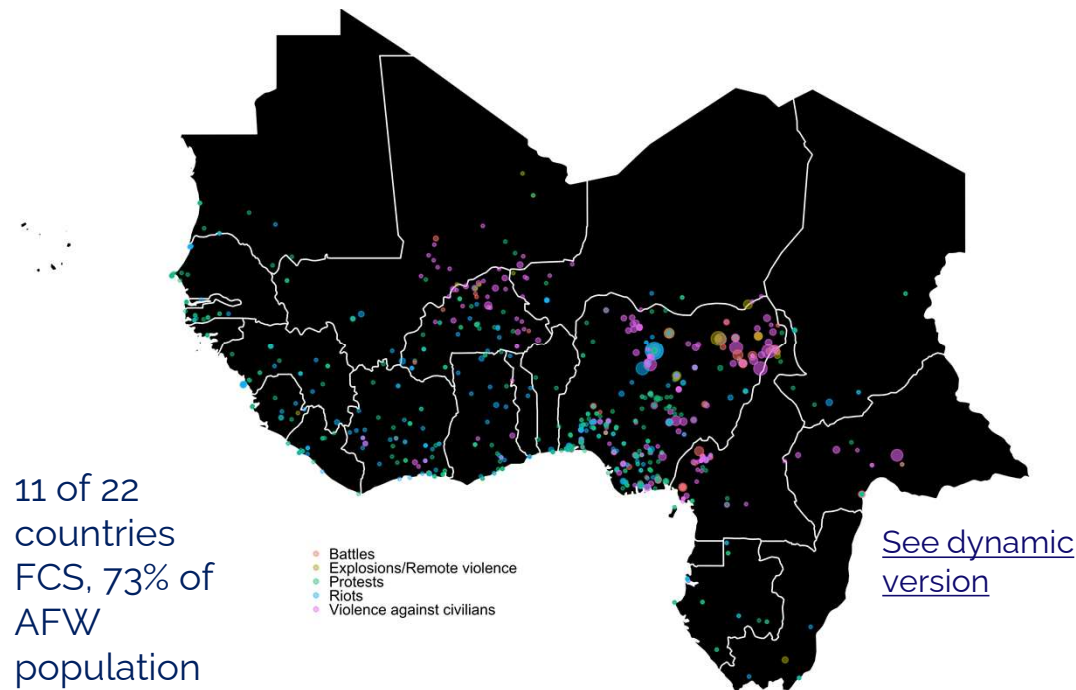
Private enrollment is growing at a higher rate than public enrollment at all levels, but the **quality tends to be low**, and **quality assurance and accreditation are weak**



Source: WDI

FCV challenges affect service delivery

Episodes of political violence in schools in West & Central Africa between 2010 and 2020



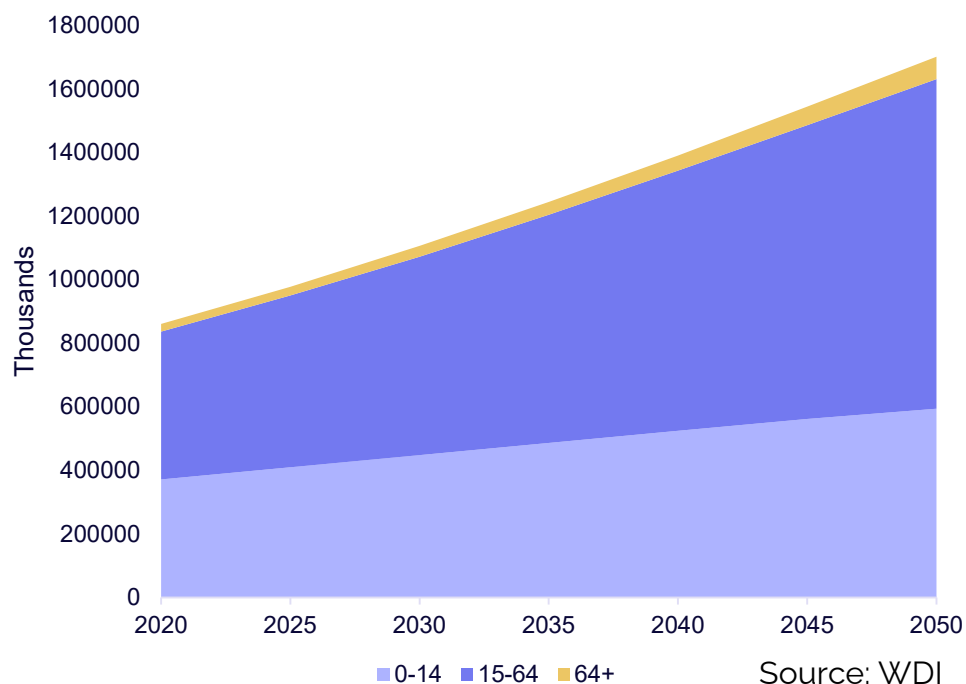
Source: World Bank Education team based on ACLED

By December 2019, schools for 2.1 million children were either closed or non-operational due to insecurity.

The region hosts 7.3 million refugees and 23 million IDPs of concern (UNHCR)

Demographic trends add more pressure on already-stressed education systems

The region has one of the youngest populations in the world



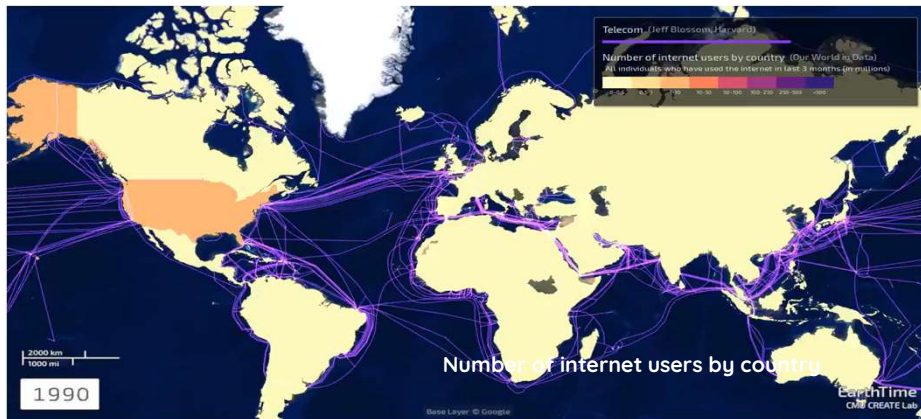
The population of Western and Central Africa will double by 2050

Education systems must adapt to new challenges and harness opportunities

The region needs to create individuals that are resilient and self-driven to respond to growing global threats, who have 21st century skills required in a competitive global marketplace. Some of the main trends include:

The digital revolution

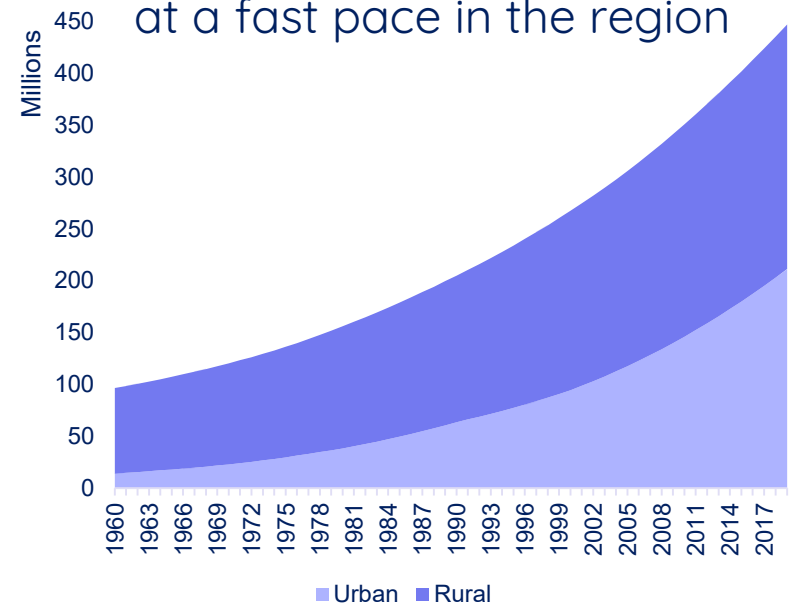
Connectivity is growing at a much slower pace in Western and Central Africa



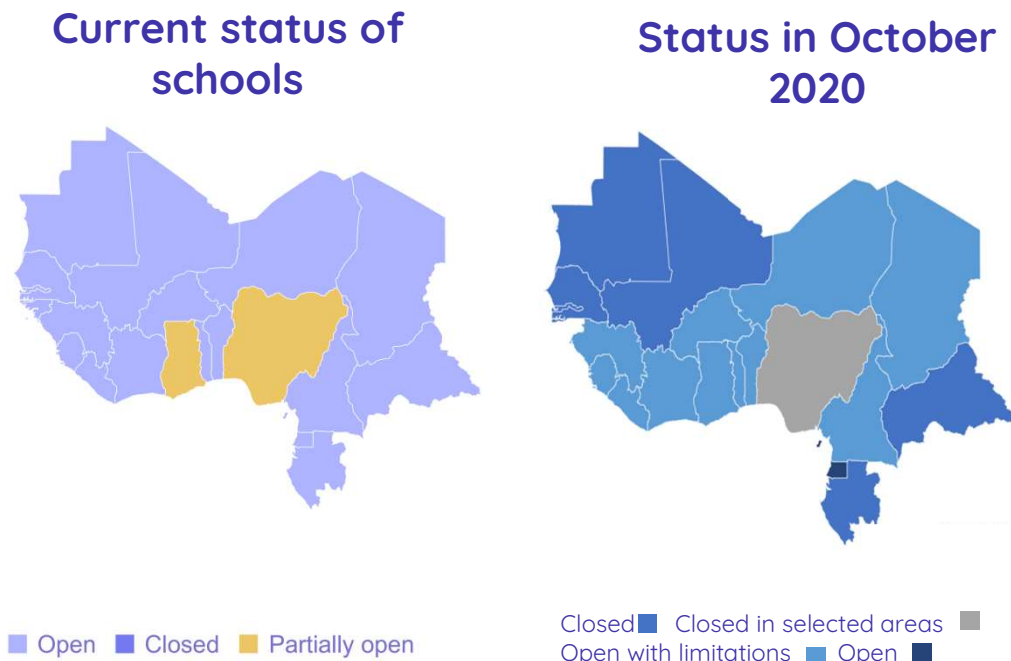
Source Map: Jeff Blossom, Harvard University
Source Chart 1: WDI

Urbanization

The urban population is growing at a fast pace in the region



COVID-19 has exacerbated existing challenges

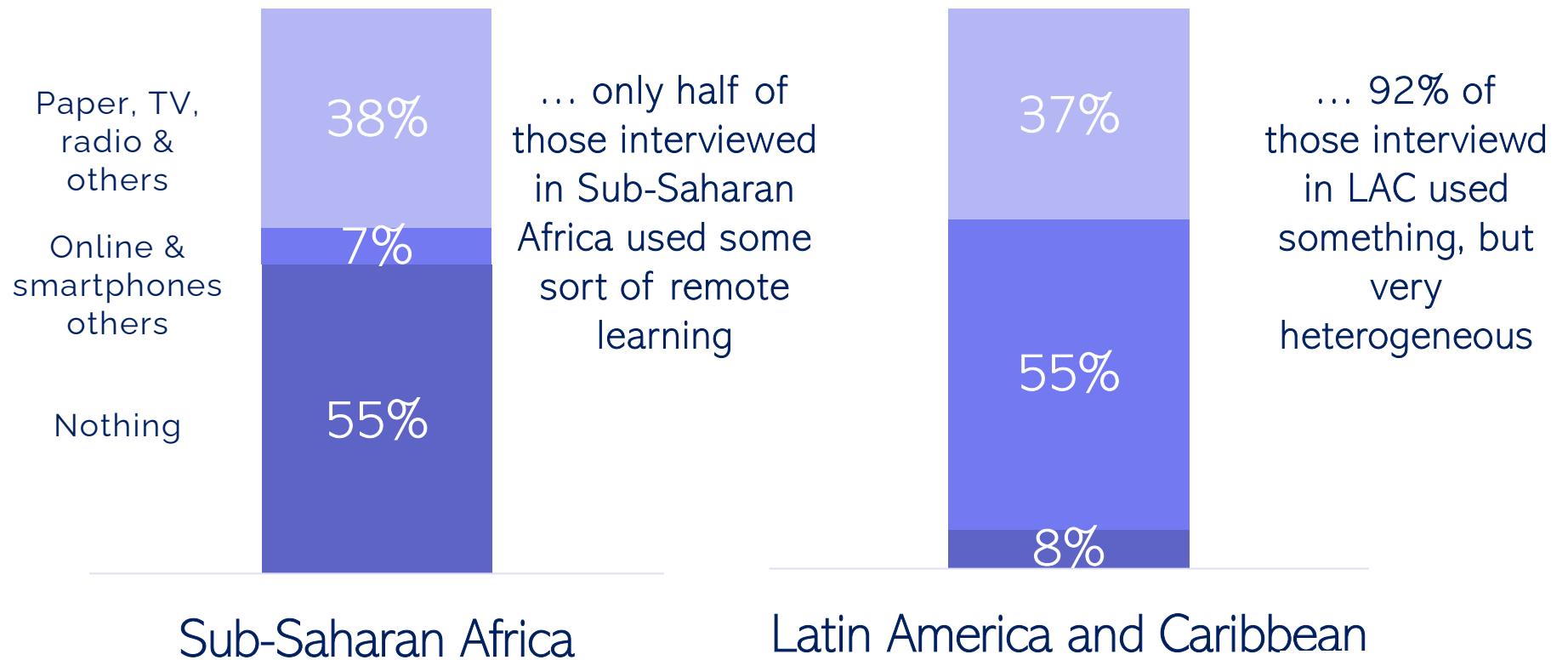


[See COVID-19 response approach](#)

Source: World Bank

101 million learners affected at the peak of school closures and the economic shock will also affect enrollment; create learning losses and employment prospects, especially for girls

Results from COVID-19 household phone surveys show low access to remote learning



Source: Education GP

Education challenges prevent the region from achieving higher economic growth, shared prosperity, and social development

- The region has one of the largest returns to education in the world: an additional year of schooling is associated with a median increase in wages of 14 percentage points for women and 11 for men (for Sub-Saharan Africa).
- Achieving universal basic education and full learning in the region would translate into an increase in HCI from 0.38 to 0.84
- This would imply a 2.2 times higher GDP per capita : the equivalent of extra 1.6 percentage points annual growth over 50 years
- Education systems do not prepare youth adequately for the labor market, contributing to unemployment and underemployment, which is reflected in the low rates of human capital utilization.



II. The Strategy

WHAT is will be and
should do

Motivation for the Strategy

- Education systems are in crisis in the region. More than ever before, we need to step up our efforts of ensuring learners have access to quality education within a system that is comprehensive, equitable, student-centered, agile, and efficient. Without rethinking the education system, and taking bold initiative, the system could collapse and countries development prospects be compromised
- Business as usual will not be good enough
- Need to have clear goals that are ambitious and realistic in the context of the pandemic and the unique regional challenges
- Need to align the education approach with the upcoming Western and Central Africa regional strategy
- Need to align with National Education Plans
- The strategy will provide an opportunity to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of education systems in the region through ambitious yet strategic technical and financial solutions using the Bank's unique experience and expertise at the global and country level.

Our vision

A region where all girls and boys arrive at school ready to learn, acquire real learning and are ready to enter the job market with the right skills to become productive and fulfilled citizens

Strategy's objective, scope, and duration

OBJECTIVE

- To outline priority areas, guiding principles, and policy options for the World Bank in its efforts to help countries to increase access to and improve the quality of education in Western and Central Africa during the next three years;
- To engage policy makers, education leaders and civil society organizations in Western and Central Africa around an action plan to improve education outcomes in the region.

AUDIENCE

The audience is both internal and external. Internally, it aims to provide guidance to World Bank education and inform CMUs on the main education priorities in the region. Externally, it aims to engage stakeholders, policymakers, civils society and development partners around clear strategic priorities.

SCOPE

The strategy will provide guidance and principles at the regional level. As such, each country team will need to adapt the strategy to the specific country context.

DURATION

Aligned with the regional strategy, the Strategy will cover FY22-24 with specific goals and targets.

What are the main deliverables?

- **Strategy:** A document highlighting main challenges, goals, guiding principles, core interventions, and a WB portfolio analysis to improve education outcomes in Western & Central Africa (both in French and English)
- **External engagement** will include policy makers, academics, civil society organizations, and DPs. An advisory panel will be created to guide the design of the strategy. The strategy is intended to further fuel regional and national discussions on the power of education.

Goals and targets

Targets will be defined for at least the following three areas, in alignment with the overall regional strategy – examples include:

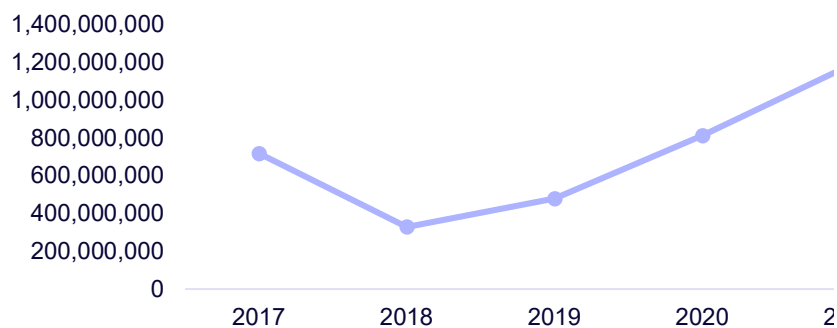
- *Reduce learning poverty from 80% to 76% by 2024.*
- *Empower girls through schooling: increase girls' secondary school gross enrollment rates from 41.9% to 46.9%.*
- *Strengthen higher education and TVET systems to produce more employable graduates for inclusive growth*

The World Bank's response to the education crisis

US\$3 b

Active portfolio (June 2020)
+ US\$2 bl pipeline

The commitments per fiscal year have tripled since 2018



- The World Bank has been responding to the region's challenges with a growing education portfolio.
- However, the magnitude of the challenges demands an ambitious and transformative response, not only in terms of how much we invest, but also in terms of how we invest and engage countries for education reforms.
- This proposed **Strategy** will aim to articulate that response.

THANKS!



1 Diagnostic: What contributes to poor outcomes in basic and secondary education?

The Strategy will identify the main drivers of the low outcomes in basic and secondary education. Among the potential drivers to explore, the following factors will be included:

- **Poor teacher quality and effectiveness:** The region shows a low percentage of teachers with minimum knowledge (2.4% in Nigeria, 0.9% in Togo)
- **Inadequate teaching and learning materials:** For instance, countries in the region tend to have between 17 and 23 students per textbook (based on SDI for Nigeria and Togo)
- **Limited use of digital technology in teaching and learning:** Partly due to limited connectivity, but also limited availability of digital content and skills.
- **Poor infrastructure and lack of WASH facilities:** For example, the proportion of schools with a basic drinking water service is among the lowest in the world (32% in Senegal, 10% in Guinea, and 41% in Liberia)
- **Weak systems to measure and monitor student learning outcomes and use of data to improve learning**

System-wide issues will also be explored, including:

- **Political economy constraints (e.g.,**
- **Inefficient and inequitable financing:** Only 2 countries spend more than 20% of their budgets on education, and results tend to be lower than what would be expected for the expenditure levels.
- **Weak management & governance**

1 Diagnostic: What contributes to low and inequitable access to girls' secondary education?

The Strategy will analyze in detail supply and demand side constraints that drive low access to education for adolescent girls. Some of the factors to be analyzed include:

SUPPLY SIDE:

Insufficient and poor infrastructure: Lack of access to secondary school is a main constraint for adolescent girls in the region. For example, in Northern Nigeria, about 23 percent of primary schools do not have a junior secondary school. Poor condition of infrastructure and a lack of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities also impede girls' attendance and retention in secondary education.

Unsafe schools: Some studies estimate that more than two thirds of dropout among girls occurs because of violence in or around the school.

DEMAND SIDE:

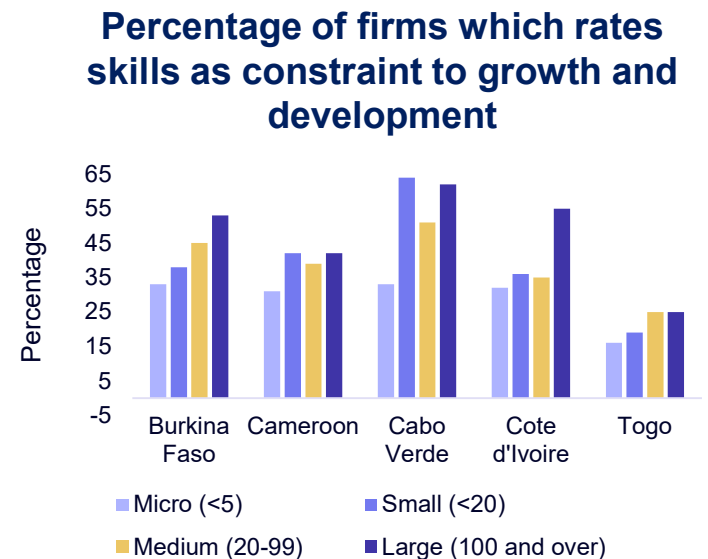
Social and cultural norms: In Ghana, 50% of parents would keep their sons in school rather than their daughters if forced to make a choice, only 10% would prioritize daughters.

Costs of schooling: The annual cost to a family of enrolling a child in public primary education varies between US\$7 in Niger and US\$70 in Cote d'Ivoire, and for lower secondary between US\$24 in Niger and US\$300 in Cameroon.

1 Diagnostic: What contributes to skills shortage for productivity and growth?

The Strategy will identify and analyze the main factors that drive the skills shortage. Some of the potential factors to be analyzed include:

- **Remediation:** Unprepared students due to poor quality basic and secondary education
- **Quality:** Shortage of quality Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)/Higher education (HE) institutions to supply market-relevant skills in priority areas, including digital skills. Of the almost 200,000 HE students from WCA studying outside their countries in 2016, fewer than 20% were studying in SSA – costing the region an estimated US\$3.6 bl per year to cover studies abroad.
- **Relevance:** Weak or non-existent partnerships with the private sector.
- **Equity and Subject Matter Gaps:** Enrollment rates of 10.5% for men compared to 7.5% for women; STEM enrollment accounts for as little as 9% in some countries;
- **Financing:** Except Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Gabon, government investments in higher education in the region are less than 1% of GDP with very little private contribution



Source: Arias et. AL., "Balancing act"

1 Diagnostic: How do political economy challenges affect education reforms?

The Strategy will identify main political economy challenges and review options to address them. the following aspects:

- The main institutional constraints to successful reforms
- Patronage-based appointment and deployment
- The roles of teachers' unions to promote and hinder accountability reforms.
- The role of political commitment and ownership to drive transformation.

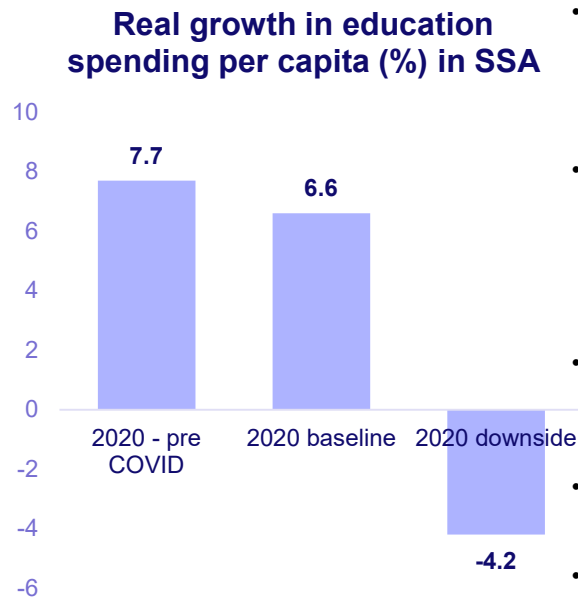
1 Diagnostic: How do governance challenges contribute to poor education outcomes?

System-wide issues, such as governance weaknesses, play an important role in explaining poor education outcomes in the region. Thus, the Strategy will analyze the following factors:

- **Civil service:** Teachers frequently are not recruited based on meritocratic basis; their deployment is inefficient; and they do not have a clear career path and lack effective incentives.
- **Institutional arrangements:** Fragmentation in decision making and intergovernmental relations often create overlapping responsibilities
- **Management systems:** Weak information management systems, available information is not used for evidence-based decision making.
- **Public financial management and procurement:** Allocation of funds for education is not always transparent and frequently is not based on school needs. Funds do not always reach schools. Accounting practices are not always regular. Procurement practices tend to be irregular, making it difficult for inputs to reach schools.

1 Diagnostic: How do fiscal constraints affect outcomes?

Past inadequate fiscal policies explained the weak education outcomes, and the current macroeconomic situation could further negatively affect them. To address this, the Strategy will analyze the following factors:



Source: Al-Samarrai (2020), see [this ref](#)

- **Low investment in education:** While there is a large heterogeneity, most countries in the region spend less on education, from 1.1% of GDP in CAR to 3.6% in the Republic of Congo in 2017, than SSA average of 4% (HCI 2020). Low spending on education inhibits countries' ability to address learning poverty.
- **Needs for investment:** There are growing pressures for increasing investments in education due to demographic pressures, increasing demand for secondary and higher education, as well as unaddressed needs of basic education. For example, in Nigeria, it will cost about US\$2.5 bl to build classrooms to accommodate all 6–15-year-old out-of-school children.
- **Fiscal space:** Many countries already had limited fiscal space prior to COVID-19. The COVID-19 shock is likely to further reduce it, which might have significant implications for education.
- **Spending efficiency:** Efficiency is a major issue in many countries with lower outcomes than expected given the expenditure patterns.
- **Outlook:** The situation may be further aggravated this year due to poor economic performance, negative external shocks, tax breaks and larger outlays in mitigation policies.

1 Diagnostic: How do other external factors affect education outcomes?

Many external factors affect education systems and outcomes. Understanding the pathways through which they influence education is vital to design a multisectoral approach. Some of the factors that the Strategy will explore in detail include:

- **FCV:** Conflict and violence are widespread in the region. The strategy will explore how this context affects the delivery of education services, including through direct attacks on schools. This section will be aligned with the Sahel paper and the Education in FCV White Paper.
- **Demographic trends:** Population growth adds pressures to an already saturated system. The strategy will describe how these trends affect education outcomes in order to identify strategies that will allow the education system to keep up with the growing demand.
- **Urbanization:** The rapid rate of urbanization poses new challenges to education. The strategy will analyze this in detail.
- **Low connectivity:** The weak digital infrastructure makes the delivery of remote learning difficult and prevents the rapid expansion of digital skills. These pathways will be analyzed in detail in the strategy.

Innovations in the World Bank financed projects

Early Childhood – Investing in Early Years for Human Development (US\$75 ml – Senegal): Improving child nutrition and early stimulation, registering more than 600K births and enrolling 210K children in pre-schools

Adolescent Girls' Learning and Empowerment - AGILE (US\$ 500 ml – Nigeria): Improving access to secondary education for adolescent girls in northern Nigeria through providing financial incentives for the poorest, changing social norms via communication campaigns and working with traditional leaders, providing of safe space, life and digital skills, and constructing and renovating of schools.

EdTech - EDOBESST (US\$75 ml) – Nigeria: Using tech and innovations to improve teaching practices and improve digital skills.

Curriculum reforms – Improving Quality Equity of Basic Education (US\$35 ml) Supports publishing, printing, and distribution of textbooks to through the private sector.

Governance – Revitalizing Education Development in Sierra Leone (US\$ 21 ml) – Sierra Leone: A digital school census enabled the mapping of 11,000 schools with details on education-access by merging poverty, transport and census data.

Niger - Laying the Foundations for Inclusive Development Policy Financing (US\$ 175 ml for DPO I and US\$125 ml for DPO II) - with a focus on keeping adolescent girls in school and reducing child marriage.

Higher Education – Regional Africa Centers of Excellence (ACE) - An initiative to support higher education institutions in specializing in STEM, Environment, Agriculture, Social Science/ Education & Health. There are centers in 11 countries in WCA.

