SPOTLIGHT ON BASIC EDUCATION COMPLETION AND FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING

Senegal

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Sustainable Development Goals

Global Education Monitoring Report

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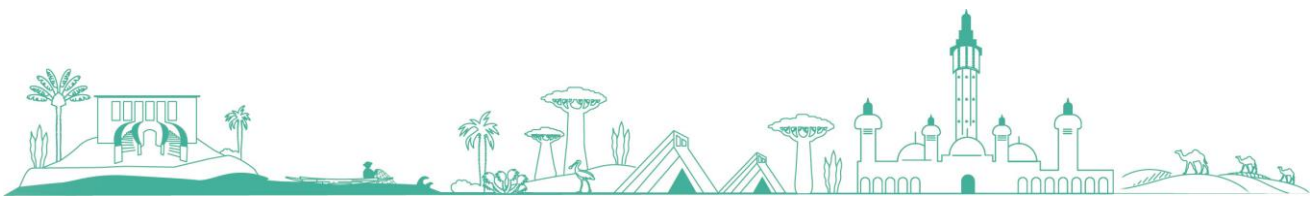


Foreword

After the significant progress made in universal education, Senegal has decided to focus on improving the quality of its basic education. This is the ambition articulated through the Quality, Equity and Transparency Improvement Program (PAQUET 2018–2030), the main objective of which is to promote equitable access to quality education. It is therefore unsurprising that policies relating to teachers, learners, school management and school inputs have occupied such an important place in the oversight of the education system since the adoption of this program.

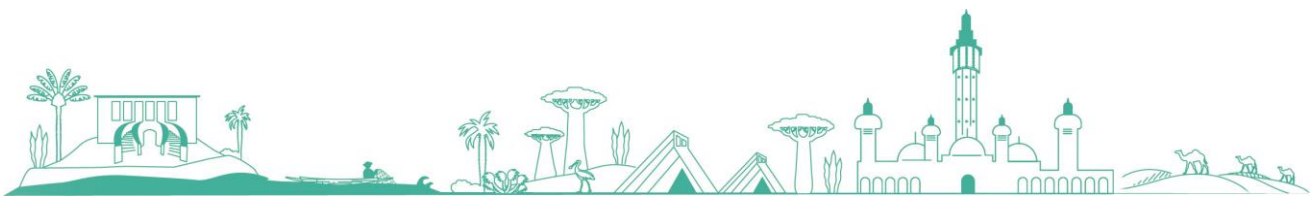
Anticipating the benefits derived from an analysis of learning quality and its potential to improve school performance, I fully supported the development of a Spotlight report on basic education in Senegal. To this end, the Ministry of National Education has set up a participatory process punctuated by individual and group consultations to facilitate the identification of the current challenges of elementary education in Senegal, build a consensus on priority issues and agree on possible solutions and areas of intervention. Let us acknowledge the inclusive process that was adopted to create the report, and which included the participation of officials from the Ministry of National Education, trade union, parent-teacher organizations, civil society organizations and resource persons active in the promotion of basic education. The internal evaluations recently carried out underline the needs for reinforcement for pupils in the two fundamental disciplines, which are reading and mathematics. In this respect, the Spotlight initiative comes at the right time because, at the national level, it will contribute to discussions and exchanges on how to improve basic learning, in particular by analysing strategies on the use of local languages and the implementation of policies aimed at improving system performance, especially in the current context of COVID.

At the regional and continental level, initiatives such as Spotlight are useful in helping to develop common resources that build on the similarities between countries in the region to build fruitful partnerships, share experiences and pool best practices in education.

The support offered by the research and data collection carried out as part of the preparation for the Spotlight will also be very useful as availability of data is a major challenge. Furthermore, "on site" research that captures contextual information allows for quality complementary data to be considered.

Owing to the strong dissemination of the research results, the Spotlight will help Senegal to better target its objectives as defined in its sectoral program, PAQUET 2018-2030.

The Minister of National Education



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1. Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to review progress and challenges related to basic education in Senegal. The report provides a solid argument for the application of measures that are likely to accelerate the achievement of targets 4.1 and 4.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a framework to which Senegal has committed. Using evidence on the education system, the report is also an advocacy tool for public decision makers, national and local actors, and technical and financial partners.

The report is part of the Spotlight series, which seeks to highlight education progress in terms of access to, and quality of, basic and middle school education in African countries. Progress is measured across two main indicators: the completion rate and the percentage of children reaching the minimum proficiency threshold in reading and mathematics.

The primary school and middle school gross enrolment rates are 85.9% and 50.7% respectively and are now respectively 9 and 5 percentage points away from the 2022 targets. These rates have both dropped since 2010 and then stagnated over the last five years highlighting some challenges with access. Furthermore, the completion rate of 62.8% in the primary cycle is just 10 percentage points below the 72.7% target. There is a commitment from the government to prioritize public expenditure on education, with Senegal among the sub-Saharan countries dedicating the highest percentages of national budget and gross domestic product to education. There is an upward trend in the transition rate from primary to middle school and an increase in the grade 9 survival rate, which stands at around 80%.

While there have been Improvements in students' average mathematics and French test scores between 2012 and 2021, a challenge of the education system is improving competency in these two fundamental disciplines. According to the World Bank's Service Delivery Indicators study (IPS, 2021), only 53.8% of students in CE2 reached the proficiency threshold in French, mathematics and non-verbal reasoning. Under the PASEC assessment, the percentage of students who reached the global MPL in mathematics (PASEC level 2 for CP students and level 3 for CM2 students) and reading (PASEC level 3 for CP students and level 4 for CM2 students) improved from 2014 to 2019, particularly in grade 2 (GPE, 2021): in reading from 29% in 2014 to 48% in 2019 and in mathematics from 62% in 2014 to 79% in 2019. The percentage of grade 6 students who reached the global MPL in reading increased from 35% in 2014 to 41% in 2019. In 2019, grade 6 students in Senegal were ranked first in mathematics and third in reading across countries participating in PASEC.

Despite these challenges, considerable progress has been made since 2013 within the framework of the 2013–25 sector plan, the Programme d'amélioration de la qualité, de l'equité et de la transparence (PAQUET, Quality, Fairness and Transparency Improvement Programme). Many improvements in the school environment should also be noted. Evaluation of the programme's first phase (2013–15) made it possible to identify major constraints limiting progress in the system and fuelled a revision of the sector plan, which thus became PAQUET-EF [Education/Formation – Education/Training] 2018–2030.

The Spotlight field survey was conducted to gather the opinions of 315 basic education stakeholders on each of seven factors determining students' learning level. Considerable differences were noted between the responses from the various inspections de l'éducation et de la formation (IEFs, education and training inspectorates). The most successful schools have significantly smaller class sizes, are better equipped with teaching materials, do not run double-shift classes or hold classes in temporary shelters, and have teachers who demonstrate stronger teaching skills in class.

Lesson observations conducted during the survey also highlighted the variance in teaching skills between teachers in well performing and poorly performing IEFs. These results underlined an urgent need to upgrade teachers' skills to significantly improve the level of student learning.

Five major recommendations were drawn from the diagnosis and discussions with basic education stakeholders:

- Increase the skills of teachers to improve their mastery of the basic education curriculum which has an impact on students' cognitive acquisition.
- Change the allocation of public education sector spending in favour of basic education.
- Reduce the deficit in school infrastructure to reduce the number of pupils per class and eliminate temporary shelters, which are a source of demotivation for pupils, parents and teachers.
- Develop a national policy for assessment of learning in basic education and establish a national system to conduct regular standardized assessments: for example, every three years.
- Take all necessary actions to allow widespread use of national languages in the early years of primary education.

2. Introduction

2.1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The Spotlight series has two goals:

- Synthesize, analyse and clearly present comparative knowledge on challenges and solutions to achieving universal basic education (UBE) completion and foundational learning as a basis for support to regional peer learning mechanisms and national, regional and global accountability mechanisms.
- Support national and regional coalitions in the use of this comparative knowledge to move national education systems, plans, policies and budgets – but also international support mechanisms – in the direction of achieving UBE completion and foundational learning.

2.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

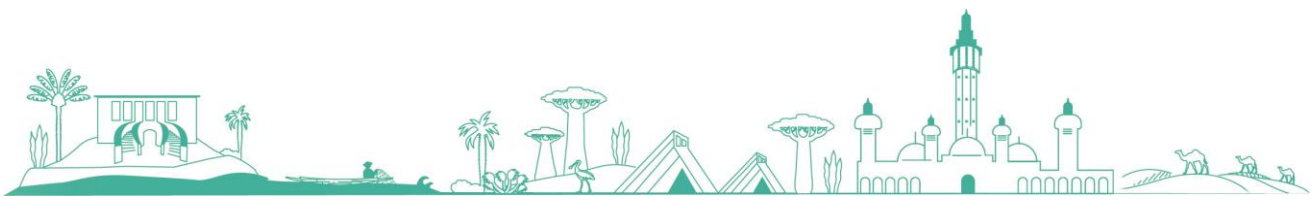
The study aimed to stimulate an informed and strategic country-led policy dialogue with stakeholders and development partners which would, in turn, lead to tangible actions to address identified issues. It also assessed progress towards reaching targets. This Spotlight report will be a key input into the annual continental Spotlight report that will serve as a basis for continental peer dialogue on issues related to UBE completion and foundational learning. Four research questions guided the Spotlight study:

- What is the current state of Senegal's education system in terms of the seven factors (see Figure 27) identified for the report's analytical framework?
- What progress has the country made in achieving UBE completion and foundational learning skills?
- What challenges does the country face in achieving UBE completion? What solutions are the country pursuing to overcome them?
- What are potential ways forward to foster foundational learning outcomes given the structural characteristics of the country's education system and the country's current commitments to other goals?

2.3. MAIN ACTIVITIES

The Spotlight study in Senegal comprised a set of activities, each generating evidence and findings related to the study's four research questions.

- Literature review and stakeholder mapping (August to September 2021).
- Initial stakeholder workshop (November 2021).
- Fieldwork (29 November to 10 December 2021).
- Validation workshop (February 2022).



3. Situation analysis

Table 1 outlines the structure of the Senegalese education system and key national examinations.

TABLE 1
Structure of primary and secondary education

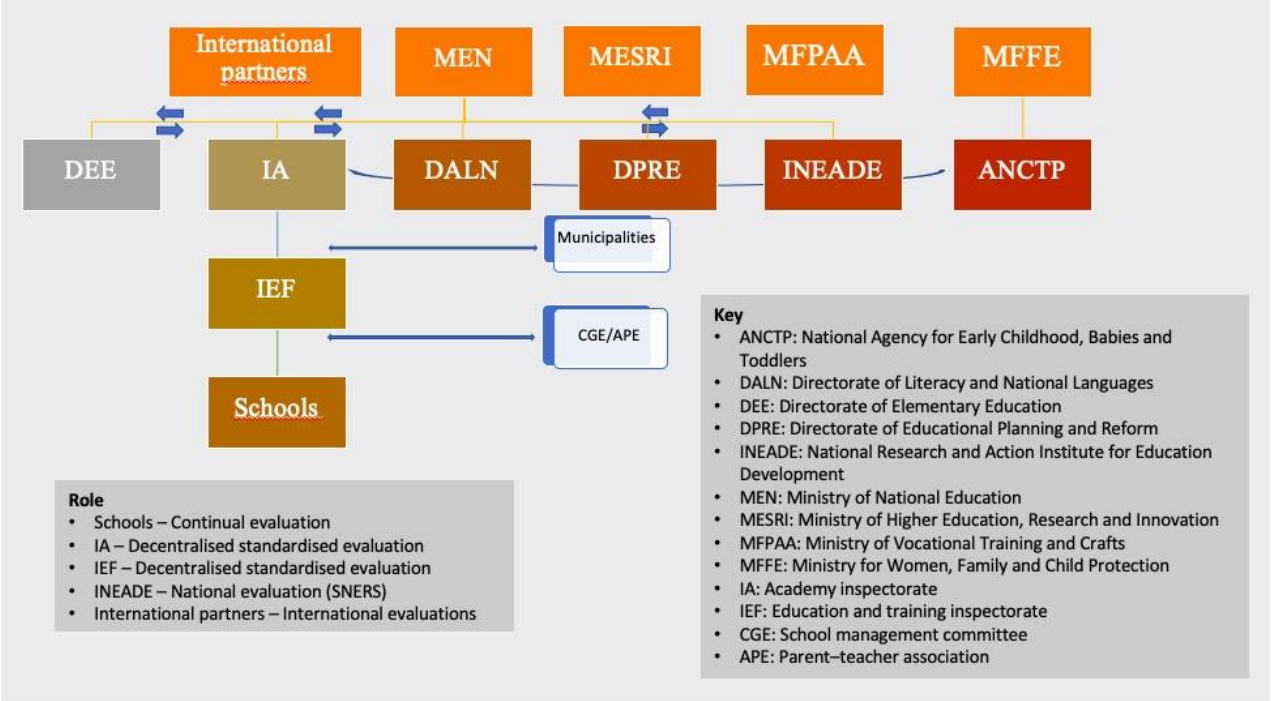
Age	Learning cycle	Level	National examination and/or external evaluation
3	Pre-primary	Petite section	
4		Moyenne section	
5		Grande section	
6-7*	Primary	Cours d'initiation (CI, introductory grade)	
8		Cours préparatoire (CP, preparatory grade)	Système national d'évaluation des rendements scolaires (SNERS, National School Performance Assessment System)
9		Cours élémentaire (CE1, first elementary grade)	
10		Cours élémentaire (CE2, second elementary grade)	SNERS
11		Cours moyen (CM1, first intermediate grade)	
12		Cours moyen (CM2, second intermediate grade)	Certificat de fin d'études élémentaires (CFEE, primary school leaving certificate)
13	Middle school	Sixième (grade 6)	
14		Cinquième (grade 7)	
15		Quatrième (grade 8)	
16		Troisième (grade 9)	Brevet de fin d'études moyennes (BFEM, middle school leaving certificate)
17	General secondary education	Deuxième (grade 10)	
18		Première (grade 11)	
19		Terminale (grade 12)	General secondary school leaving certificate

The usual primary starting age is 7, but children who have completed pre-primary education can start at age 6.
Source: UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2010.

3.1. GOVERNANCE OF PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Senegal's education and training sector is managed by several institutions. At the top are three ministries and a national agency. At the bottom, there are inspections d'académie (IAs, academy inspectorates), IEFs, schools, and parent and community organizations: comités de gestion des écoles (CGEs, school management committees) and associations de parents d'élèves (APEs, parent–teacher associations) (**Figure 1**).

FIGURE 1
Key actors



Source: Authors

The 16 IAs are directly supervised by the Ministère de l'éducation nationale (MEN, Ministry of National Education). Attached to the IAs are 59 IEFs, each corresponding to a certain number of schools. The Senegalese education system has 3,660 preschools (1,463 public, 1,641 private and 556 community), 10,511 primary schools (8,700 public, 1,775 private and 36 community) (MEN, 2020), 1,016 middle schools and 134 high schools (MEN, 2019a). In addition, CGEs and APEs interact with the system by collaborating directly with schools. Overall, 86% of schools have a functional CGE and 66% a functional APE (MEN, 2020; IPS, 2021).

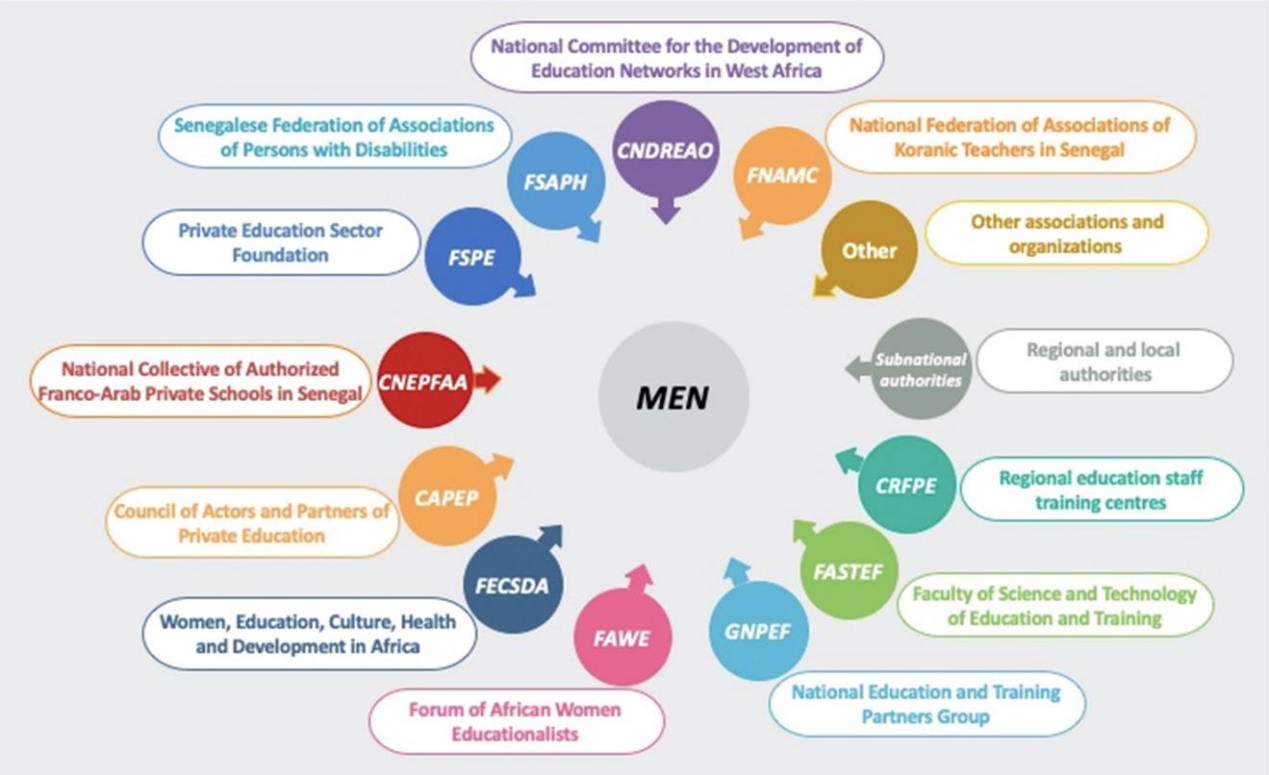
Table 2 and **Figure 2** outline the key actors at the central level.

TABLE 2
Roles and responsibilities of key actors at the central level

Actor	Role and responsibilities
MEN	The education ministry prepares and implements education and training policy defined by the head of state. It is also responsible for public education management and the preparation and application of private education policy from preschool to general secondary, with the exception of responsibilities that are devolved to local authorities. **Figure 1** shows key directorates and services attached to the MEN General Secretariat.
Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur, de la recherche et de l'innovation (MESRI)	The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, oversees those areas.
Ministère de l'emploi, de la formation professionnelle, de l'apprentissage et de l'insertion	The Ministry of Employment, Vocational Training, Apprenticeship and Integration is responsible for technical education and vocational training.
Agence nationale de la petite enfance et de la case des tout-petits	The National Agency for Early Childhood and Young Children Care Centres is hosted by the Ministry of Women, Family, Gender and Child Protection.
Faculté des sciences et technologies de l'éducation et de la formation	The Faculty of Science and Technology of Education and Training is attached to Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar. It is responsible for training secondary school teachers in all disciplines. Its main mission is to teach and research the fundamental disciplines of education and didactics, ensure initial and continuous training of teachers and trainers, and provide initial and continuous training to supervisors and managers in education and in the design, production and evaluation of teaching materials.
Groupe national des partenaires de l'éducation et de formation	The National Education and Training Partners Group is a platform for dialogue and coordination that brings together stakeholder representatives working to support, in a concerted manner, the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education sector programmes. The body serves as a mechanism for mutual accountability between different stakeholders.
Forum of African Women Educationalists	The forum is a pan-African non-governmental organization with 34 national chapters in sub-Saharan Africa, including in Senegal. Its mission is to promote the education of girls and women with a view to promoting gender equity and equality in education in Africa.
Femmes, éducation, culture, santé et développement en Afrique	The mission of Women, Education, Culture, Health and Development in Africa is to work for gender equality and increase access to political, economic, social and cultural rights. The organization supports the development of children, young people and women.
Fédération nationale des associations des maîtres coraniques au Sénégal	The National Federation of Associations of Koranic Teachers in Senegal, founded in 2010, aims to represent all Koranic teachers to the government and international partners.
Conseil des acteurs et partenaires de l'enseignement privé	There is a Council of Actors and Partners of Private Education in each IEF. They bring together private education actors, in particular the heads and head teachers of private schools in the district.
Collectif national des écoles privées franco-arabe autorisées au Sénégal	The National Collective of Authorized Franco-Arab Private Schools in Senegal brings together employers from the Franco-Arab private sector to improve the education at such schools, defend their interests, improve staff living and working conditions, and support non-functional Franco-Arab schools. They offer expertise and advice on regularizing non-formal schools.

Fondation du secteur privé de l'éducation	The Private Education Sector Foundation mobilizes companies and business leaders to invest in education of children and young people in Senegal. It also supports innovative programmes to help improve education quality.
Fédération sénégalaise des associations de personnes handicapées	The Senegalese Federation of Associations of Persons with Disabilities is an umbrella organization for partnership, consultation and support for collective action of associations for people with disabilities.
Comité national pour le développement des réseaux de l'éducation en Afrique de l'Ouest	The National Committee for Education Network Development in West Africa is an influential network of actors working for quality education for all. It seeks to be a space to create innovative education alternatives rooted in Senegalese social values. It contributes to public policy implementation, particularly promotion of a quality educational environment and expansion of access.

FIGURE 2
Basic education stakeholders in Senegal



Source: Authors.

Other associations and workers' organizations include:

- Coalition des organisations pour la défense de l'éducation publique (Coalition of Organizations for the Defence of Public Education)
- Public school teacher unions
- Private and religious school teacher unions
- Fédération nationale des associations des parents d'élèves et d'étudiants au Sénégal (National Federation of Associations of Parents of Pupils and Students in Senegal)
- Union nationale des associations des parents d'élèves de l'enseignement catholique du Sénégal (National Union of Parents' Associations in Catholic Education in Senegal)

- Union nationale des parents d'élèves et d'étudiants du Sénégal (National Union of Parents of Pupils and Students of Senegal)
- Fédération des associations des parents d'élèves de l'enseignement prive du Sénégal (Federation of Parents' Associations in Private Education in Senegal)
- Fédération nationale des associations de parents d'élèves de l'enseignement privé laïc (National Federation of Parents' Associations in Secular Private Education)
- Fédération nationale des associations de parents d'élèves du franco-arabe (National Federation of Franco-Arab Parents' Associations).

Table 3 shows the key actors at **decentralized** levels.

TABLE 3
Roles and responsibilities of key actors at decentralized levels

Actor	Role and responsibilities
Centres régionaux de formation des personnels de l'éducation (CRFPEs)	Regional education staff training centres are responsible for initial and continued training of preschool, primary and middle school teachers, non-formal education staff and administrative and technical staff. Trainee teachers follow a nine-month programme after completing secondary or higher education and sit an entrance examination. There is a CRFPE in each region. The MEN's Direction de la Formation et de la Communication (Training and Communication Department) ensures coordination of the centres.
Local and regional authorities	Act III on decentralization was implemented in 2013 with the aim of eliminating territorial inequality. Senegal's local administrative divisions comprise 14 regions divided into 45 departments and 550 municipalities.

Source: Authors.

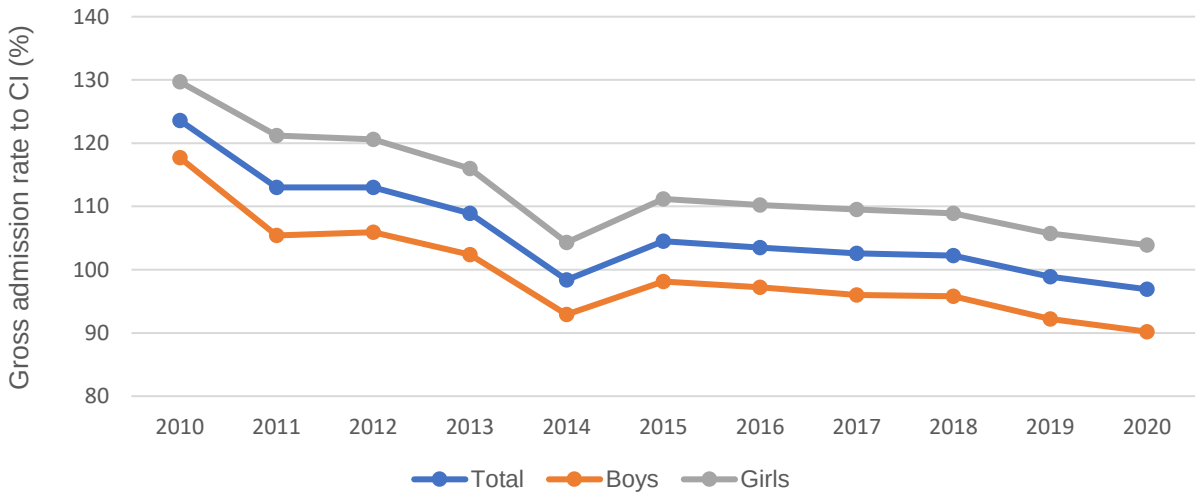
3.2. ENROLMENT AND COMPLETION

While significant progress has been made in preschool education, only a small proportion of 3- to 5-year-olds have access to preschool, with preschool GERs of 16.1% for boys and 18.5% for girls. These shares do not take into account Koranic schools, to which many parents send their children before primary school, particularly in regions with low preschool rates. Private provision covers 44.8% of enrolled children, the public sector 40% and community education 15.2%. In the Dakar region IAs, private preschools enrol more than 80% of students (MEN, 2020).

In the definition of its primary education policy, Senegal outlines its commitment to providing quality UBE to all children aged 5 to 16 years. An assessment of progress can be made by examining the admission, enrolment and completion rates in basic education.

The gross admission rate (GAR) to CI has decreased over the past 10 years. The GAR of the first primary cycle year, CI, has seen a steady decrease since 2010: a decline of 27 percentage points in 10 years. This is concerning, as the GAR to CI will need to increase to 115% by 2030 to reach targets. Throughout the decade, the GAR was higher among girls, with values exceeding 100% (**Figure 3**). This result may be attributable to schooling policies that support girls. While girls' enrolment has historically lagged behind that of boys, the situation changed radically in the 2000s. The GAR for boys steadily dropped, falling below 100% in 2013 despite early (before the legal age) and late (after the legal age) enrolment; this phenomenon was also observed among girls (MEN, 2020).

FIGURE 3
Evolution of the admission rate to the primary cycle (CI) between 2010 and 2020



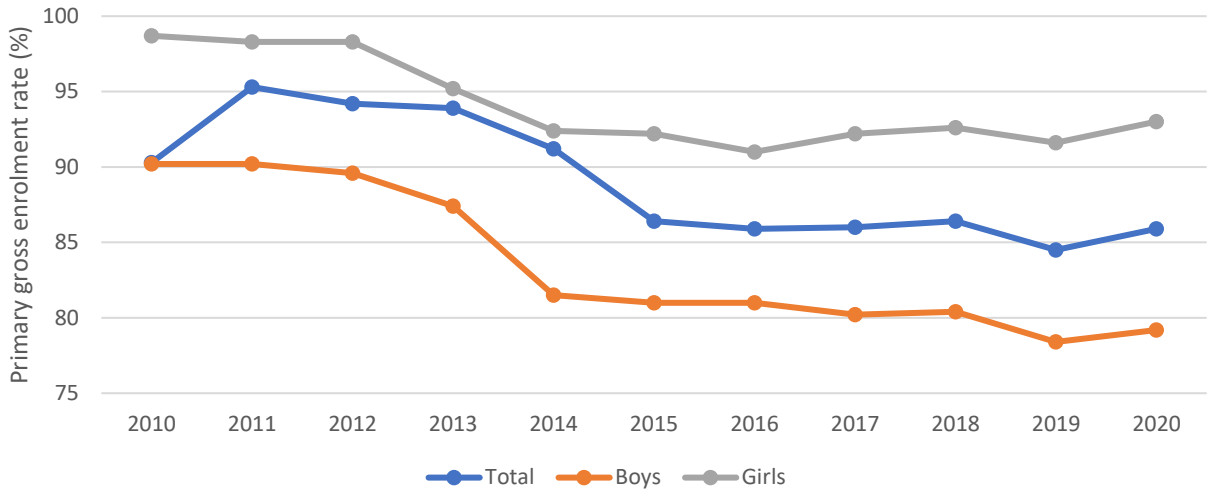
Source: MEN (2010, 2020).

The fall in the GAR reflects slower progress in school enrolment (2.9% increase in new enrolment) than in the growth of the school-age population (3.6% between 2010 and 2020) (**Table 4**), which is due to shortages of classrooms and teachers for new CI classes. These shortages have hindered schooling in regions including Matam, Louga and Diourbel, where the GAR ranged from 62.8% to 84.7% in 2020 (MEN, 2020).
The gross enrolment rate in primary education has stagnated since 2015. The downward trend in the GAR had an impact on the GER in primary education, which dropped from 94.4% in 2010 to 85.9% in 2015, after which it stagnated through to 2020 (**Figure 4**). The decline in schooling was accompanied by strong regional inequality. The regions of Kaffrine (47.4%), Diourbel (52.9%), Matam (68.7%), Louga (71.2%) and Tambacounda (80.5%) were the most behind in schooling (MEN, 2020).

TABLE 4
Evolution of school-age population and enrolment in primary, 2010, 2013, 2020

Population	2010	2013	2020	Average annual growth rate
School-age population	1,837,566	2,175,688	2,629,851	3.6%
Number in primary cycle	1,695,007	2,175,688	2,259,988	2.9%

FIGURE 4
Evolution of the primary school gross enrolment rate, 2010–20



Source: MEN (2013, 2020).

Particular attention should be paid to why the GER has fallen since 2012. Along with the sharp increase in the school-age population over the period, education policies are part of the reason, including stagnation of the MEN budget allocated to investment, an inability to build enough planned classrooms to accommodate projected student numbers and an insufficient pace of teaching staff recruitment and replacement of departing teachers.

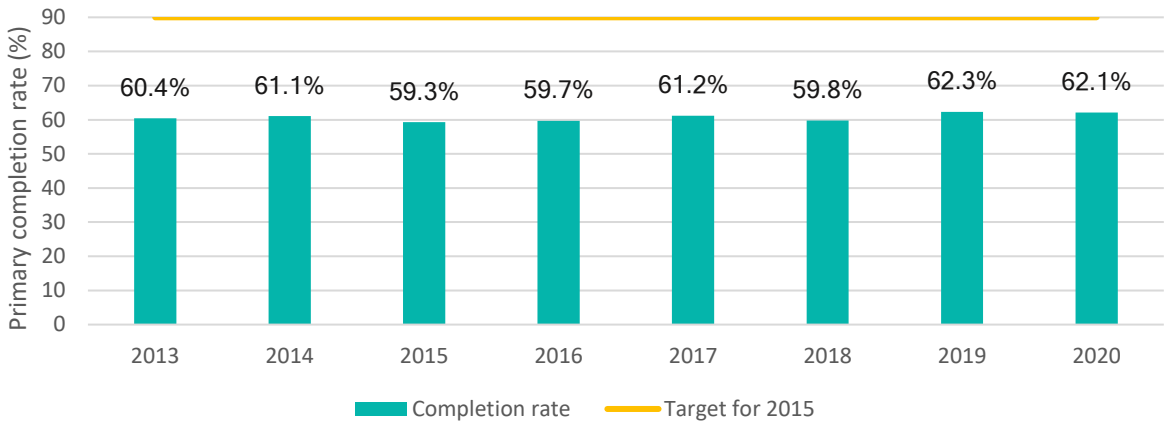
Several studies have shown the importance of school infrastructure, equipment and educational resources on student performance, most notably when they exist in sufficient quantity and are of good quality (CONFEMEN, 2014; CONFEMEN, 2020). However, currently only technical and financial partners and local authorities are building classrooms and not at a sufficient pace to accommodate the projected number of students. In 2018, there was a shortage of over 8,300 classrooms (MEN, 2019a). Moreover, classrooms that have become unusable are not repaired.

The primary completion rate was little changed from 2010 to 2020. Over the 2010s, there was no substantial improvement in the completion rate. In 2013, out of every 100 children of CM2 class age, 60 reached the end of the primary cycle; in 2020, 62 did. The government had set a completion rate target of 90% to be achieved by 2015 (**Figure 5**) but the progress rate of the past decade is too slow to reach the 2030 target of 97.4%. The slight improvement was partly attributable to progress by girls, whose completion rate moved from 65% to 69.5% while that of boys declined, hampering overall progress. As girls' completion rate exceeds that of boys, the parity index is in favour of girls.

The stagnation in the completion rate is the result of several factors, including sections of the population resisting the current school model by refusing to enrol their children, some students repeating grades rather than being automatically promoted as per the latest policy, and high dropout rates.

The national completion rate of 62.1% hides significant regional disparity. As **Figure 6** shows, the highest completion rates are in the regions of Kédougou (96%), Ziguinchor (93%) and Dakar (78%), while the lowest are in Kaffrine (32%), Diourbel (34%), Matam (43%) and Louga (47%), mainly due to lack of education access.

FIGURE 5
Evolution of the completion rate, 2013–20



Source: MEN (2013, 2020).

Critically, regarding out-of-school rates, Diourbel (21.8%), Louga (9.7%), Thiès (10.3%), Tambacounda (9.5%), Kaffrine (7.3%) and Matam (7.7%) are collectively home to more than two thirds of children who are outside the country's education system. Diourbel alone accounts for more than a fifth of all school-age children out of school. Religious and cultural beliefs, along with poverty, were found to be the main reasons for children and young people not attending school in these regions (USAID, 2017, p. 39).

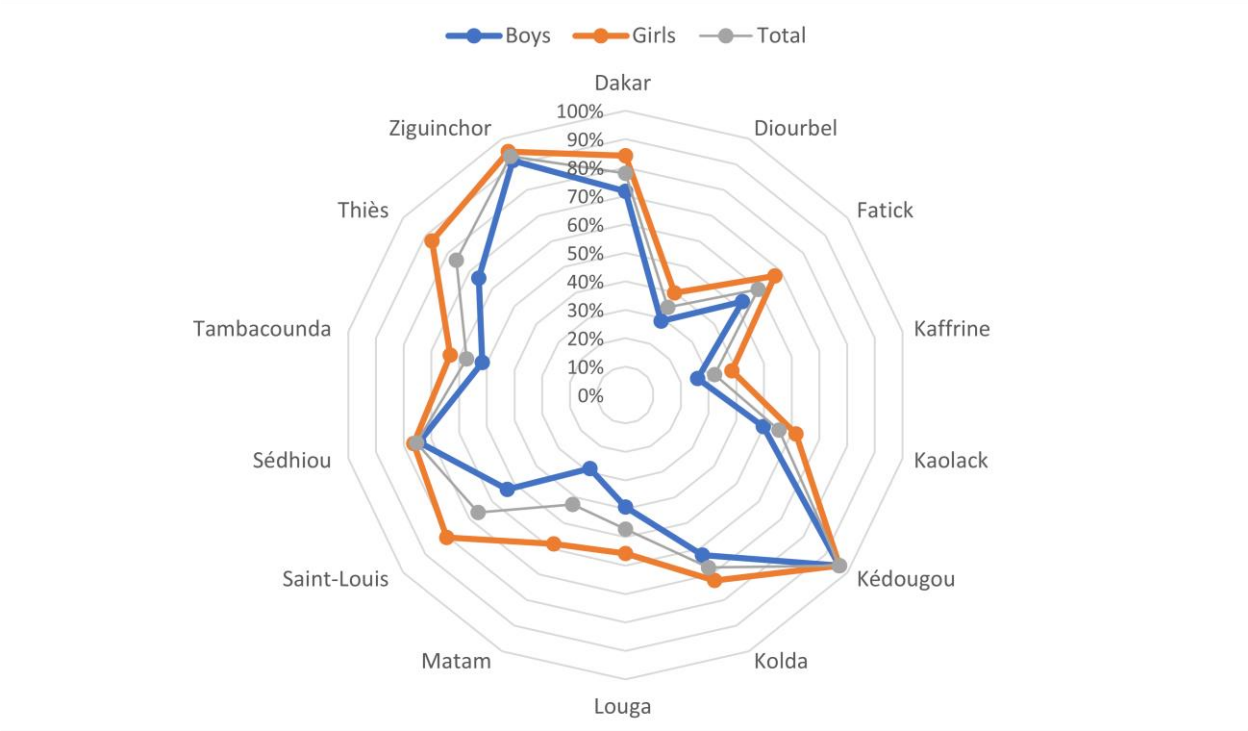
In 2016, 37% of children and young people aged 6 to 16 were out of school: 8% had dropped out and 29.3% had never been in school; 57% were boys and 43% girls. In the regions of Diourbel and Kaffrine, 68% and 64% of school-age children, respectively, were out of school (USAID, 2017, p. 12).

The government has made efforts to diversify school choices since 2003. The MEN has supported the opening of public Franco-Arab schools as a way to meet education expectations of populations in the regions of Diourbel, Kaffrine, Louga and Matam, which are characterized by strong religious traditions.

In some areas, the opening of Franco-Arab schools is prohibited. Some populations prefer the traditional Koranic schools, or daaras, over Franco-Arab schools (ORLECOL, 2016). Mistrust of Franco-Arab schools is an indication that a single or dominant official school model cannot be adapted to the diversity of demand for education from various parts of the population. Yet it should be ensured that all school models, including that of daaras, guarantee that children acquire common knowledge and basic skills.

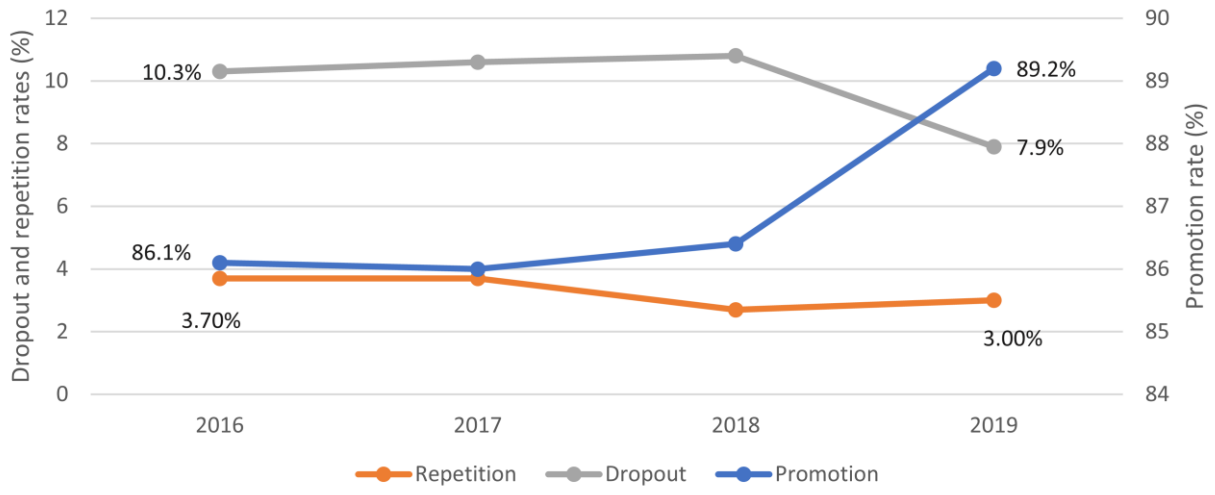
The repetition and dropout rates in primary education dropped slightly while the promotion rate rose. The repetition rate fell slightly between 2016 and 2019, from 4% to 3%. The dropout rate also fell, from 10.3% in 2016 to 7.9% in 2019. The decline in repetition and dropout was accompanied by an increase in the promotion rate from 86.1% in 2016 to 89.2% in 2019 (**Figure 7**). The decrease in the dropout rate translates into improved school retention through the progression of students in the primary cycle.

FIGURE 6
Completion rate in primary education in 2020, by region



Source: MEN (2020).

FIGURE 7
Evolution of the flow rate at the primary level, 2016–19

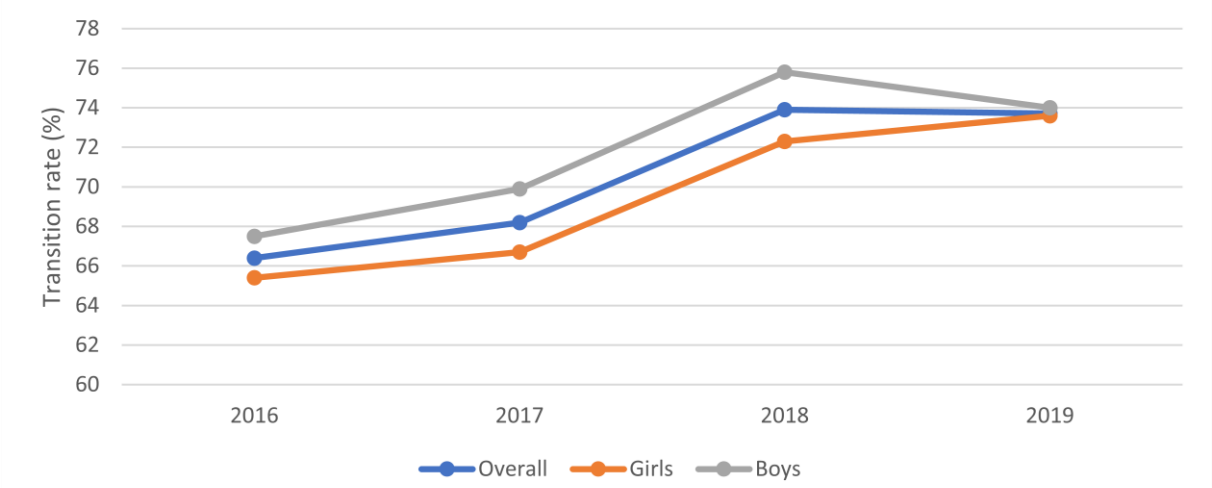


Source: MEN (2020).

The primary school leaving certificate pass rate increased significantly in 2020. The CFEE pass rate rose from 51.9% in 2016 to 72% in 2020. This strong increase is largely attributable to 2020, which saw a rise of more than 10 percentage points from 2019. However, the disruption of the 2019/20 school year by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a significant loss in actual learning time. Thus it is questionable whether the 2020 CFEE success rate is attributable to maintenance of learning from previous years. If this were the case, the repetition and dropout rates in the final grade of primary (CM2) would have also decreased for the 2020/21 school year.

There has been an upward trend in the transition rate from the primary cycle to middle school. The transition rate increased from 68.2% in 2016 to 74% in 2019, with the rate for girls slightly higher than for boys (**Figure 8**). The proportion of pupils in CM2 who do not reach middle school is still high: One in four pupils repeat or drop out of school. For example, in 2018 the transition rate was 73.9%, while in CM2 the repetition rate was 6.9% and the dropout rate was 19.4%.

FIGURE 8
Transition rate from the primary cycle to middle school, 2016–19



Source: MEN (2020).

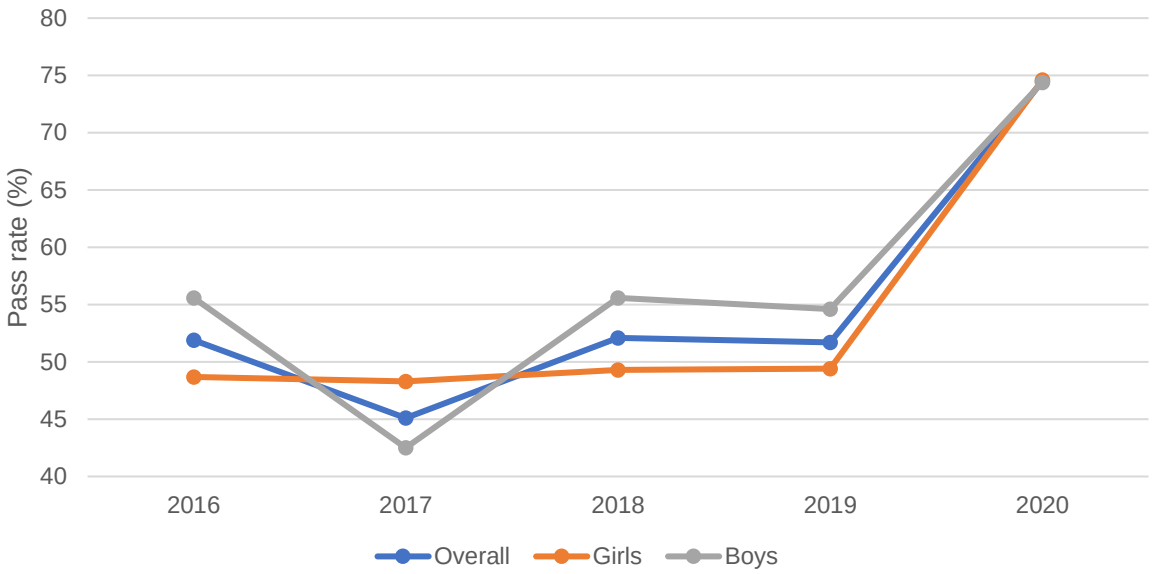
The GER in middle school decreased over 2016–20. The GER in middle school fell from 53.9% to 50.7% between 2016 and 2020. Despite the creation of local colleges, current progress will not support achievement of the 95.5% target set for 2030. Another striking trend over 2016–20 in middle school is the higher enrolment of girls over boys. The gap between the two groups widened over time and the parity index shifted from 1.12 in 2016 to 1.2 in 2020 (MEN, 2020).

The completion rate in middle school has stagnated. The completion rate in this cycle stagnated between 2016 and 2020 at around 37% (MEN, 2020). The rate's low level can be explained, in part, by dropout, the orientation of pupils into vocational streams, and marriages and early pregnancies among girls.

The survival rate to the last year of middle school rose by nearly 20% between 2016 and 2019. There has been an upward trend in the survival rate, with more than 80% of students managing to stay in school until the last year of middle school (troisième, equivalent to grade 9) in 2019. Among the 20% of students who did not reach this level, the causes, as above, were repetition, dropout and orientation towards vocational streams, as well as early marriage and pregnancy (MEN, 2020).

There was a sharp increase in the pass rate of the middle school leaving certificate in 2020. The pass rate for the BFEM was around 52% between 2016 and 2019, except for a lower rate of 45.1% for 2017. Despite constraints linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular the reduction in learning time and the use of less effective distance education tools, the pass rate of the 2020 BFEM was more than 20 percentage points higher than in the previous four years (**Figure 9**). This dramatic increase requires further investigation.

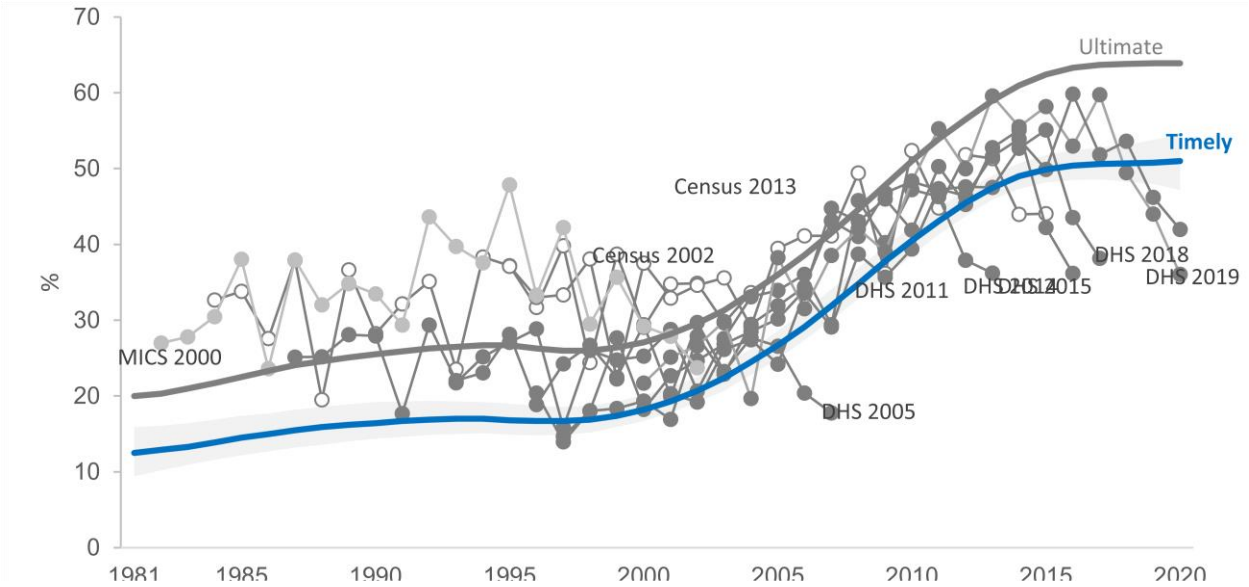
FIGURE 9
BFEM pass rate, 2016–20



Source: MEN (2020).

Analysis of multiple survey sources by the GEM Report team indicates that the primary education completion rate in Senegal increased from 17% in 2000 to 33% in 2010 and 50% in 2020. When late completers are taken into account, the respective primary completion rates are around 12 percentage points more (**Figure 10**).

FIGURE 10
Primary timely and ultimate completion rates, 1981–2020



Note: DHS = Demographic and Health Survey; MICS = Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey.
Source: UNESCO country completion rate estimates, https://education-estimates.org/completion/country.

3.3. LEARNING

There are five main types of student learning assessments in Senegal (**Table 5**): (i) continual evaluations carried out by schools (classwork); (ii) standardized evaluations initiated by IEFs and AIs; (iii) the CFEE and BFEM; (iv) The SNERS, administered by the Institut National d'étude et d'action pour le développement de l'éducation (INEADE, National Research and Action Institute for Education Development); and (v) international evaluations such as the CONFEMEN Programme for Education System Analysis (PASEC), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the World Bank Service Delivery Indicators (SDIs).

The student learning assessments make it possible to assess progress recorded in pupils' acquisition of knowledge in the primary education cycle. The 2015 SNERS showed that 71.4% of CP students and 78.8% of CE2 students did not reach minimum proficiency in reading; in mathematics, the respective figures were 49% and 78.4% (INEADE, 2016). The 2017 assessment provided better results and revealed that the percentage of students below the reading proficiency threshold fell to 58.4% in CP and 68% in CE2, with respective shares of 50.7% and 66.6% in mathematics (**Table 6**).

TABLE 5
Types of learning assessments in Senegal

	Actors	Learning assessment coverage	Date of last assessment	Availability of data	Role of the government	Role of donors
Continual evaluation (homework)	Head teachers/ teachers	School	Daily in class	Available locally to teachers	Lead actor	**Continual evaluation (homework)**
Deconcentrated standardized assessments	IA and IEF	Regional/ Municipal	2020	MEN school census	Lead actor	**Deconcentrated standardized assessments**
Examinations at the end of primary and intermediate cycle	Department of Examinations and Competitions (MEN Department)	National (CM2)	2020	MEN school census	Lead actor	**Examinations at the end of primary and intermediate cycle**
SNERS	INEADE	National (CP and CE2)	2017	SNERS report	Lead actor	Technical and financial support
PASEC	INEADE/ CONFEMEN	Regional (start (CP) and end (CM2) of primary cycle)	2019	CONFEMEN report	Implementation, technical and financial contribution	Technical and financial support
PISA	INEADE/ OECD	International (15-year-olds in and out of school)	2018	PISA report	Lead actor	Technical and financial support

	Actors	Learning assessment coverage	Date of last assessment	Availability of data	Role of the government	Role of donors
SDIs	World Bank/ Consortium pour la recherche économique et sociale (CRES), Economic and Social Research Consortium	International	2021	SDI report	Technical and financial support	Technical and financial support
Monitoring Impacts on Learning Outcomes (MILO)	UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the Australian Council for Educational Research	Schools	2021	MILO database	Implementation	Technical and financial support

Source: Authors.

The availability of two sets of evaluations carried out the same way in 2014 and 2019 in PASEC makes it possible to measure education system progress in terms of learning at the start (CP) and end of primary schooling (CM2). Between 2014 and 2019, student levels in French and mathematics in CP and CM2 improved significantly. In 2019, 52.4% of CP students and 25.3% of CM2 students were below the French proficiency threshold established by PASEC, compared with 71.1% and 34.8%, respectively, in 2014. In mathematics, 20.9% of CP students and 34.9% of CM2 students did not reach the skills threshold, compared to 37.7% and 41.2% in 2014 (CONFEMEN, 2014; CONFEMEN, 2020).

TABLE 6
Proportion of students reaching SNERS minimum skills mastery thresholds

SNERS	Indicators	Sex	CP		CE2	
			Reading	Mathematics	Reading	Mathematics
2012	**% of students above the threshold**	Girls	22.6%	33.9%	13.2%	14.3%
		Boys	17.3%	30%	12.9%	14%
		Total	**20.0%**	**32.0%**	**13.1%**	**14.3%**
2015	**% of students above the threshold**	Girls	29.3%	52.2%	21.8%	21.2%
		Boys	28%	49.8%	20.4%	22.1%
		Total	**28.6%**	**51.0%**	**21.2%**	**21.6%**
2017	**% of students above the threshold**	Girls	43.6%	49.2%	34.2%	35%
		Boys	39.6%	49.5%	29.7%	31.7%
		Total	**41.6%**	**49.3%**	**32.0%**	**33.4%**

Source: SNERS (2012, 2015, 2017).

While the PASEC assessments focus on CP and CM2 students, those carried out for the World Bank's SDI study only concern CE2. This type of survey was conducted in Senegal in 2010 and 2021. Between the two dates, the average score of CE2 students in French and mathematics increased significantly. The scores in French and mathematics in 2010 were, respectively, 54 and 45 out of 100 while the corresponding scores in 2021 were 68 and 58.5. In 2010 and 2021, students living in urban areas had a higher level in French and mathematics than those living in rural areas (**Table 7**).

TABLE 7
Average score of students in French and mathematics by place of residence, 2010 and 2021

Year		French	Mathematics
2021	Overall	68.0%	58.5%
	Urban	73.4%	60.7%
	Rural	62.7%	56.2%
2010	Overall	54%	45%
	Urban	62%	48%
	Rural	53%	44%

Source: World Bank (2013); IPS (2021).

The desired threshold for learning is 75% of the total available points. Only 44.7% of pupils reached that level in 2021 and the rate was higher in urban than rural areas.

More than half (53.8%) of the pupils reached the minimum level of acquired knowledge, with more girls (60.1%) achieving the minimum than boys (47.8%). Among children aged 10, less than 1 student in 10 reached the minimum level: 9.6% of girls and 6.6% of boys. Nearly 45% of students did not reach the desired level of learning (IPS, 2021).

The low level of student learning can be explained by a series of factors, including those identified by the 2021 SDI survey in Senegal (IPS, 2021) and comparison with the 2010 survey (World Bank, 2013).

- Most schools lack minimum school infrastructure. In 2021, only 20% of schools had the minimum needed infrastructure for their students, only a little higher than 17% in 2010.
- The pupil/teacher ratio increased from 28 in 2010 to 42 in 2021.
- Schools do not have enough textbooks for students. Observations revealed students had to share French and mathematics books in 2021, while in 2010 every student had both books.
- Most schools lack minimum educational equipment; in CE2, just over 1 in 10 classes has only minimum equipment.
- Nearly a quarter of classrooms do not meet the number of pupils planned per table-bench, meaning they are overloaded.
- Double-shift classes have still not been abolished and multigrade classes are common in public schools.
- Teachers have low capacity. They struggle to achieve 50% of the total points in pedagogy assessments, with an average score of around 40 points out of 100.
- Teacher absenteeism in schools is relatively high, at 8.4%, during unannounced visits.
- On average, students lose more than 38 school days per year due to events such as parties, strikes and floods.

These factors reduce the quality of learning and must be placed in a broader context to understand their interrelationship.

Evaluation of data use to inform decision making on completion rates and learning skills. To establish a 2022 objective, the principle approach adopted was to measure and establish a reference value and a target value with an achievement due date, using data to measure trends in learning (**Table 8**). Repetition and dropout indicators and skill threshold achievement are also measured in the same way to inform decision making.

TABLE 8
Use of evaluation results in determining policy objectives

Proportion of students who have reached the minimum proficiency threshold	Reference 2017	Expected 2018	Achieved 2018	Gap	Targets 2022
Reading in CP	28.6%	61.0%	41.6%	-19.4	63.4%
Reading in CE2	21.2%	61.2%	32%	-29.2	63.5%
Maths in CP	51%	60.2%	49.3%	-10.9	62.1%
Maths in CE2	21.6%	58.2%	33.4%	-24.8	61.1%

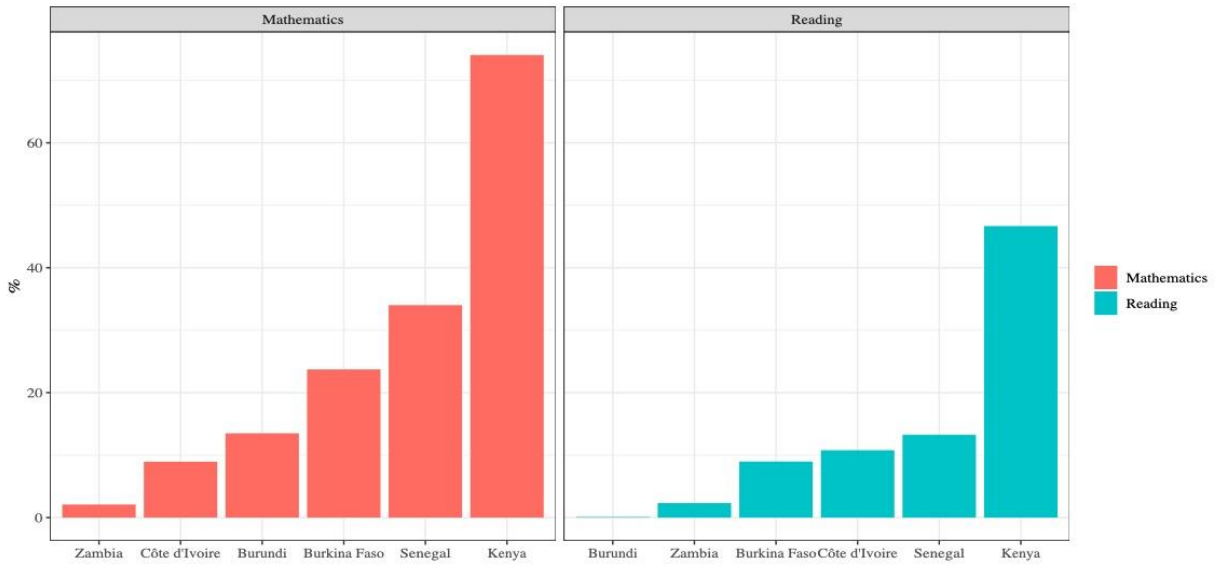
Source: MEN (2019b).

3.4. ANALYSIS OF SENEGAL'S LEARNING ASSESSMENT DATA EDUCATION FINANCING FROM PASEC[1]

This section draws on data from the 2014–19 PASEC; the 2021 UNESCO Institute for Statistics project on COVID-19, Monitoring Impacts on Learning Outcomes (MILO); and successive rounds of the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS).

According to the 2021 MILO results, the percentage of students who meet the global minimum proficiency level (MPL) at the end of primary education in Senegal is low: 34% in mathematics and 13% in reading (**Figure 11**). Proficiency levels are higher than in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire and Zambia, but lower than in Kenya.

FIGURE 11
Percentage of students at the end of primary education who meet the MPL in reading and mathematics, Senegal and other MILO countries, 2021



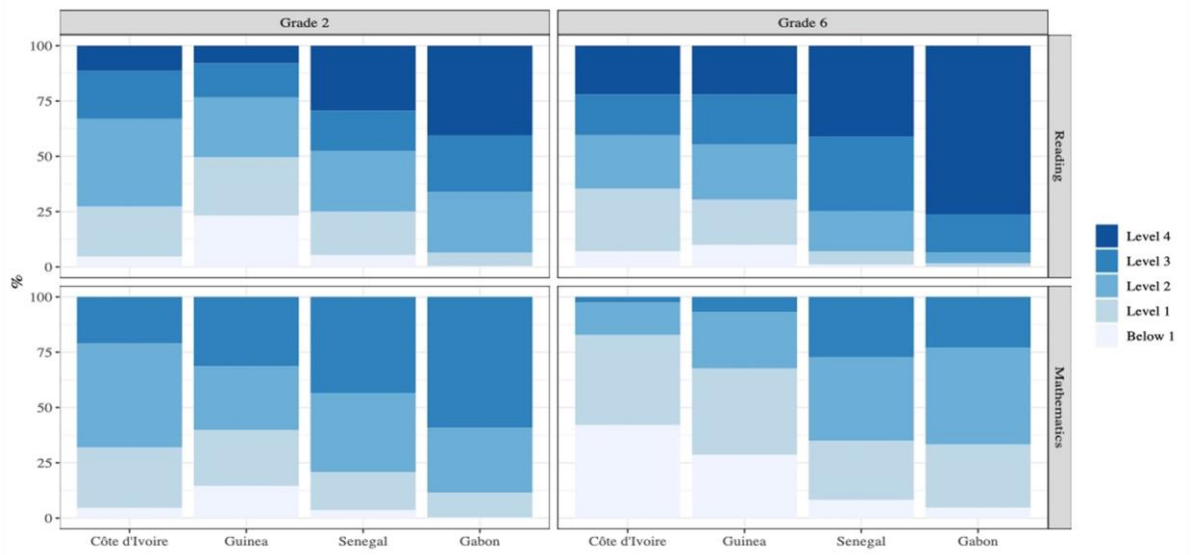
Source: UNESCO GEM Report team analysis based on MILO 2021 data.

[1] A more detailed analysis can be found in the Spotlight technical report on learning outcomes: Senegal: Key Policy Questions on Learning and Equity.

Students perform at different PASEC proficiency levels for reading and mathematics in grade 2 (CP) and the last year of primary (grade 6, CM2) (CONFEMEN, 2020) (**Figure 12**).[2]

FIGURE 12

Percentage of grade 2 and grade 5 or 6 students reaching various proficiency levels in reading and mathematics, Senegal and selected countries, 2019



Source: UNESCO GEM Report team analysis based on PASEC 2019 data.

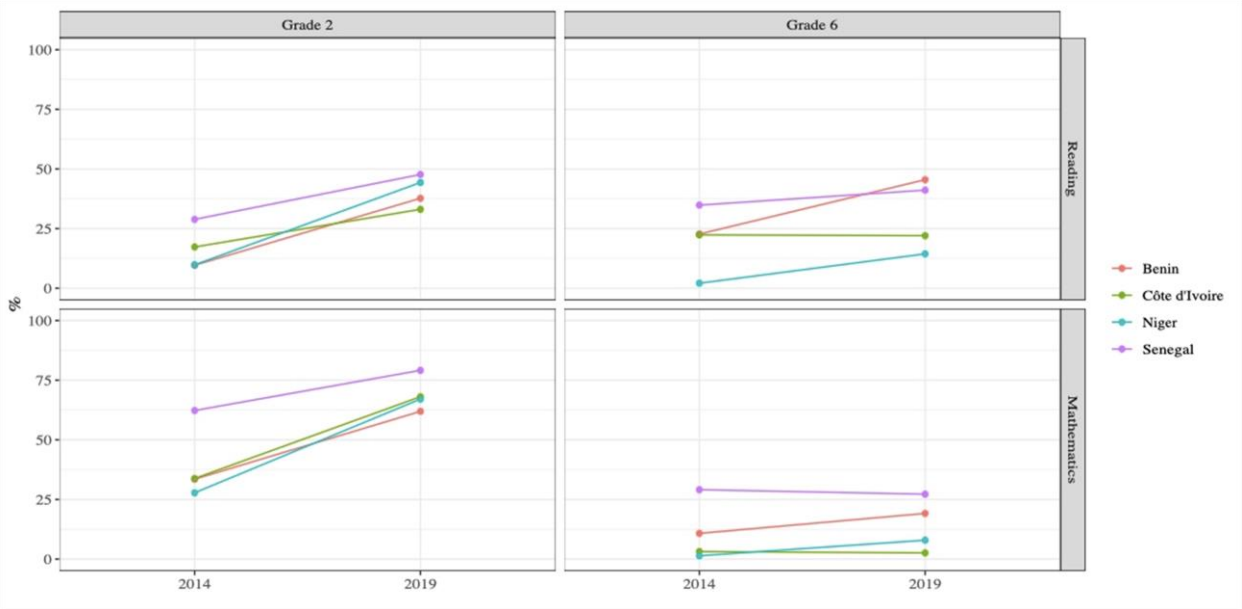
The percentage of students who reached the global MPL in mathematics (PASEC level 2 for CP students and level 3 for CM2 students) and reading (PASEC level 3 for CP students and level 4 for CM2 students) improved from 2014 to 2019, particularly in grade 2 (GPE, 2021): in reading from 29% in 2014 to 48% in 2019 and in mathematics from 62% in 2014 to 79% in 2019 (**Figure 13**). The percentage of grade 6 students who reached the global MPL in reading increased from 35% in 2014 to 41% in 2019. In 2019, grade 6 students in Senegal were ranked first in mathematics and third in reading across countries participating in PASEC.

These results, however, neglect the out-of-school population, which can be estimated with DHS data. Under the plausible assumption that children who have not reached grade 2 or the last year of primary (grade 5 or 6) have not reached the MPL for those grades, the percentage of children in the population who have reached the MPL by the time they reach the end of primary school age falls from 41% to 21% in reading and from 27% to 14% in mathematics (**Figure 14**). The decline is higher than in Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon. These results were also highlighted in recent analysis on Senegal and Burkina Faso (Spaull and Lillenstein, 2019).

[2] Benchmarks in grades 2 and the final year of primary are established separately and are therefore not comparable. Note that the end of primary school in some countries is grade 5, while in others it is grade 6.

FIGURE 13

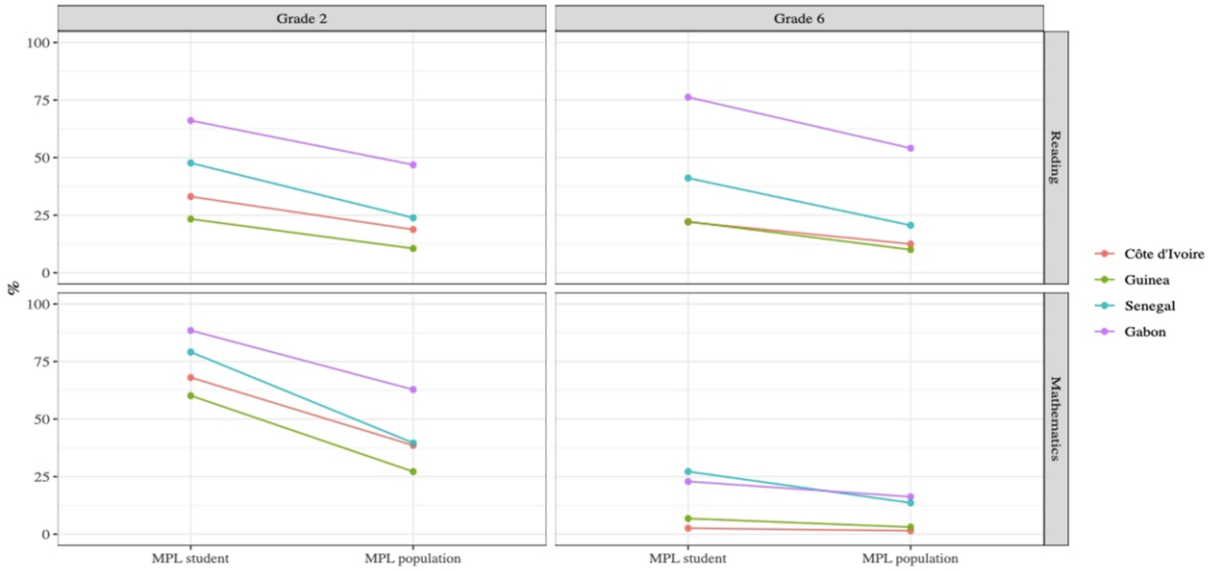
Percentage of grade 2 and grade 5 or 6 students reaching the PASEC MPL in reading and mathematics, Senegal and selected countries, 2014 and 2019



Source: UNESCO GEM Report team analysis based on PASEC 2019 data.

FIGURE 14

Percentage of grade 2 and grade 5 or 6 students and children of equivalent age reaching the PASEC MPL in reading and mathematics, Senegal and selected countries, 2019



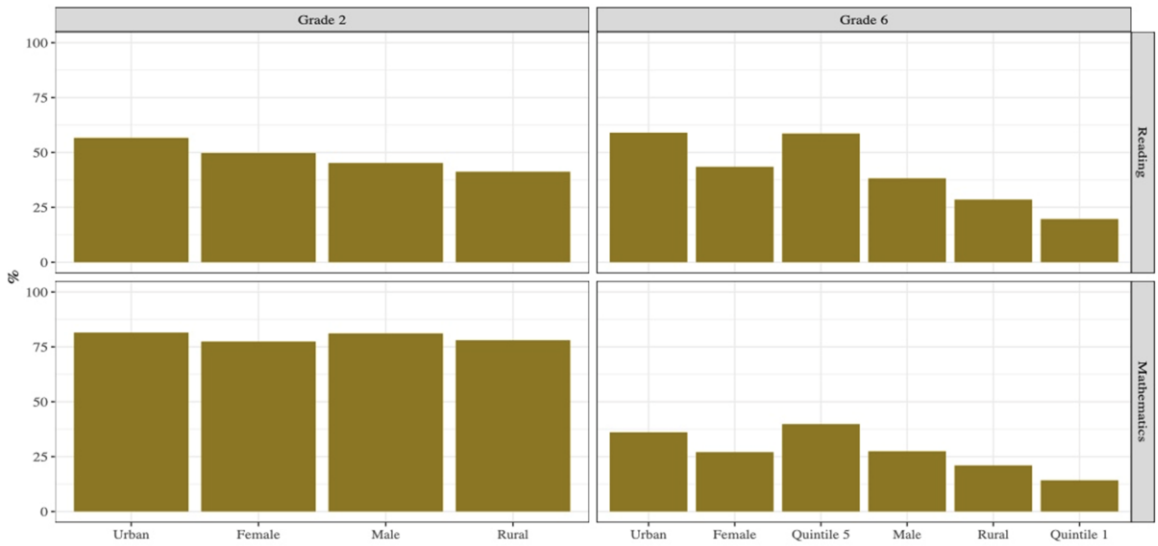
Note: 'MPL student' refers to students enrolled in school and 'MPL population' refers to the overall population of children of school age.

Source: UNESCO GEM Report team analysis based on PASEC 2019 data.

PASEC data describe considerable inequality across schools and students in Senegal (**Figure 15**). For instance, the percentage of grade 6 students who have reached minimum proficiency in mathematics is 36% in urban areas but 21% in rural areas. In reading, it is 59% for grade 6 students in the highest wealth quintile, according to the socioeconomic status indicator,[3] compared with 20% in the lowest wealth quintile.

FIGURE 15

Percentage of grade 2 and 6 students reaching the PASEC MPL in reading and mathematics, by sex, location and socioeconomic status, Senegal, 2019



UNESCO GEM Report team analysis based on PASEC 2019 data.

The rural–urban gap was relatively stable between 2014 and 2019. Two thirds of the rural–urban gap in student outcomes is explained by the socioeconomic characteristics of students in rural and urban areas.

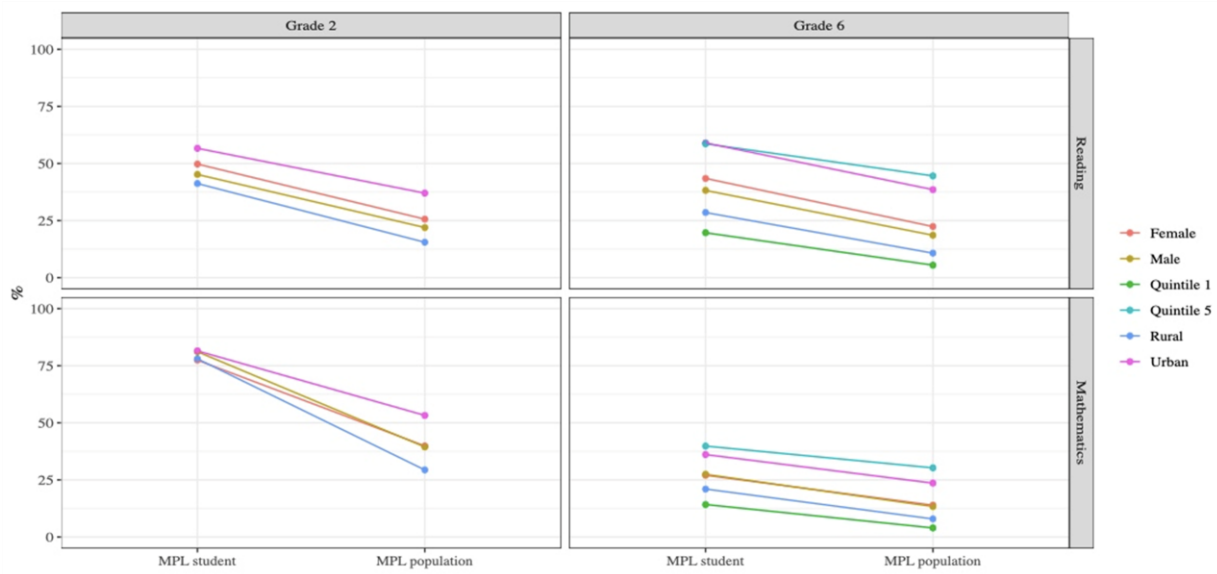
Proficiency levels across key subgroups decline when the out-of-school population is taken into account (**Figure 16**). The decline is steepest among children in rural areas and from the lowest wealth quintiles. The percentage with minimum proficiency in mathematics falls from 78% at the student level to 29% at the population level in grade 2. In grade 6, the percentage with minimum reading proficiency declines from 20% to 5% for children in the lowest wealth quintile.

It is also worth noting that children with preschool education performed better in primary school than children who did not attend preschool. Participation in preschool education varied markedly by socioeconomic status. Children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were less likely to benefit from preschool education than those from more affluent families. Policies targeted at increasing access to preschool for children of lower socioeconomic status will likely help reduce inequality in student performance related to socioeconomic status in later years of schooling.

[3] The socioeconomic status indicator, from which wealth quintiles are derived, is based on responses of students on the availability at home of services and goods, including electricity, television, computers, radios, telephones, refrigerators, air conditioners, cars, tractors, tap water and latrines with water. These data are not available for grade 2 students.

FIGURE 16

Percentage of grade 2 and 6 students and children of equivalent age reaching PASEC MPL in reading and mathematics, Senegal, selected subgroups, 2019



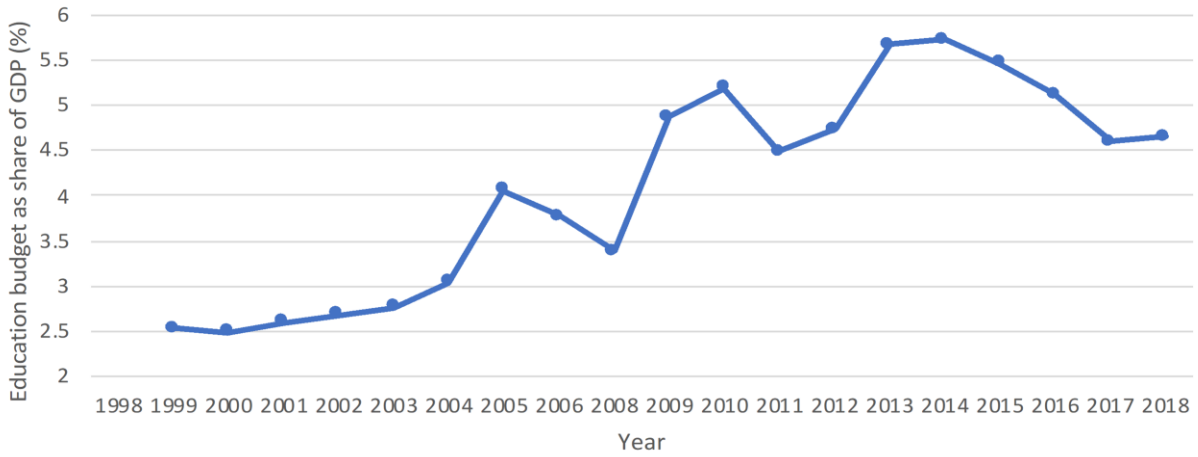
Note: 'MPL student' refers to students enrolled in school and 'MPL population' refers to the overall population of children of school age.
Source: UNESCO GEM Report team analysis based on PASEC 2019 data.

3.5. EDUCATION FINANCING

Between 1998 and 2018, the share of gross domestic product (GDP) allocated to education averaged around 4.1% but with significant fluctuation. A continuous increase was observed between 2001 and 2014; from 2.49% to 5.72%, but in 2015, a downward trend began. Over the same period, the share of GDP spent on education oscillated between 2.5% and 4.7% (**Figure 17**). Similarly, between 2015 and 2019, the share of education in total government expenditure increased from 23% to 25.9%.

FIGURE 17

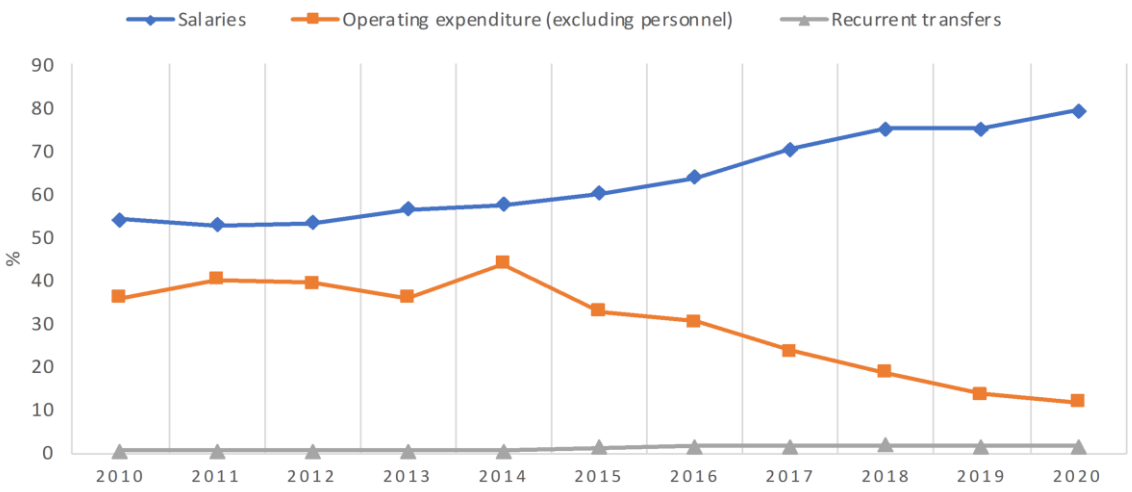
Share of GDP on education, Senegal, 1998–2018



Source: World Bank, Dépenses publiques en éducation (% du PIB) – Senegal [Public education expenditure (% of GDP)], https://donnees.banquemondiale.org/indicateur/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS?locations=SN.

Between 2010 and 2018, nearly 70% of the budget allocated to education and training was attributed to the MEN, with MESRI receiving 26% and the Ministère de l'emploi, de la formation professionnelle, de l'apprentissage et de l'insertion (Ministry of Employment, Vocational Training, Apprenticeship and Integration, formerly the Ministère de la formation professionnelle, de l'apprentissage et de l'artisanat or Ministry of Vocational Training, Apprenticeship and Crafts) receiving less than 4%. Overall, the MEN share fell by four percentage points, on average, in favour of MESRI, dropping from 70.7% in 2015 to 66.2% in 2018 (**Figure 18**).

FIGURE 18
Evolution of the budget share between ministries

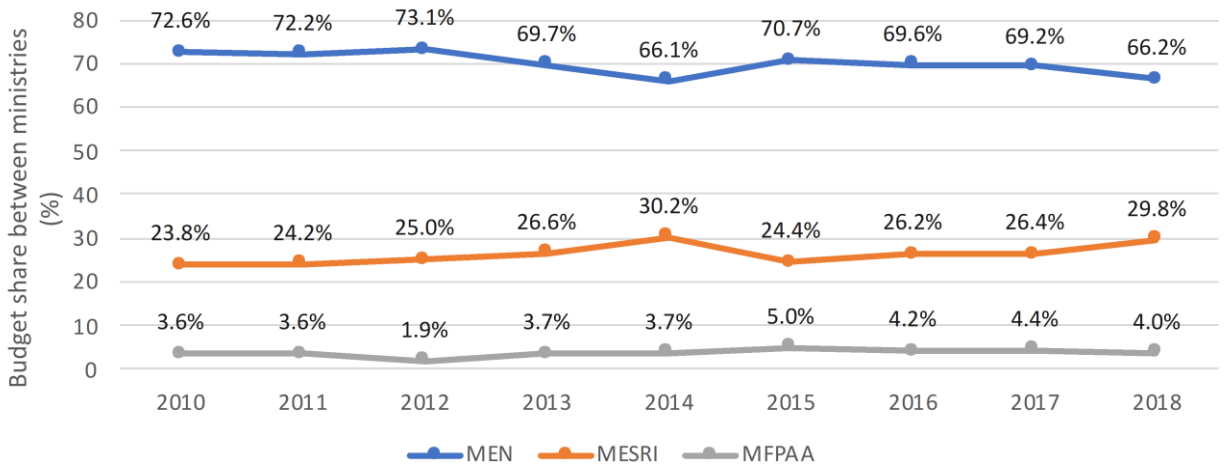


Source: BOOST data, Government of Senegal: http://isdatabank.info/senegal.

There is a significant imbalance in the distribution of MEN resources. In 2019, the share of spending on investment in the MEN budget was tiny at just 0.8%, with almost all resources allocated to recurrent expenditure. The share of staff costs accounted for 83% of the budget, leaving little margin for items such as operation of services, continued teacher training, and purchase and distribution of teaching manuals.

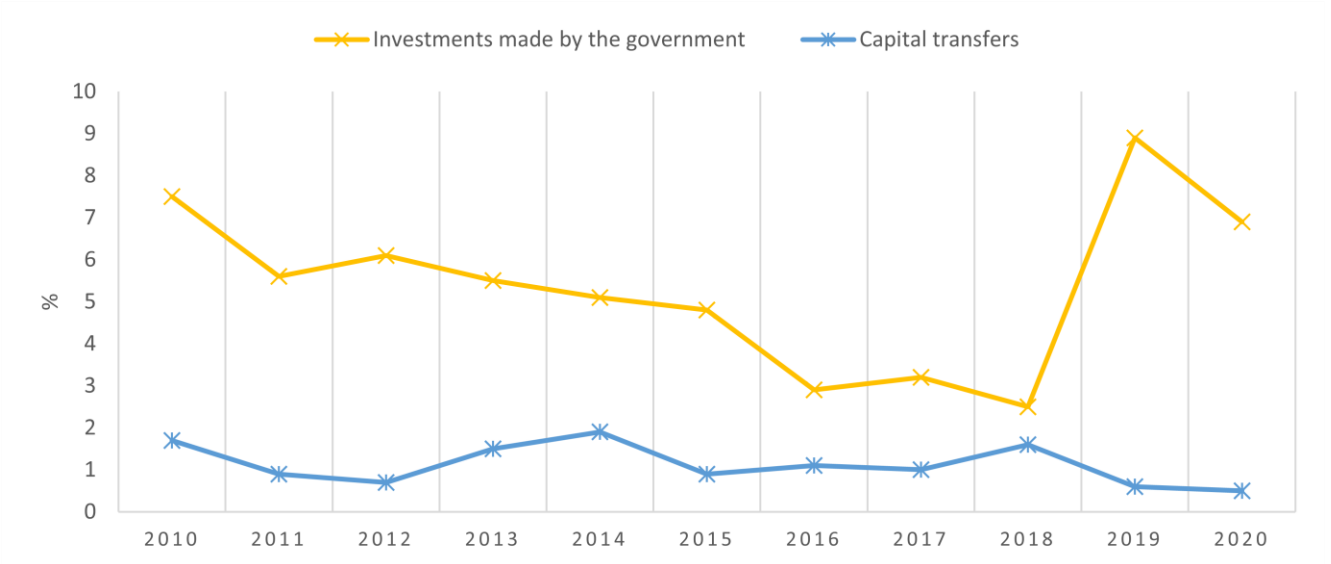
Over time, the share of current expenditure in the total budget continued to increase at the expense of capital expenditure in the form of transfers and investment. Staff costs account for, on average, more than 50% of the MEN's budget and have steadily increased (**Figure 19**) while investment has decreased, resulting in many schools lacking minimum infrastructure (**Figure 20**).

FIGURE 19
Evolution of recurrent expenditure in the MEN budget, 2010–20



Note: MFPAA = Ministère de la formation professionnelle, de l'apprentissage et de l'artisanat.
Source: BOOST data, Government of Senegal: http://isdatabank.info/senegal.

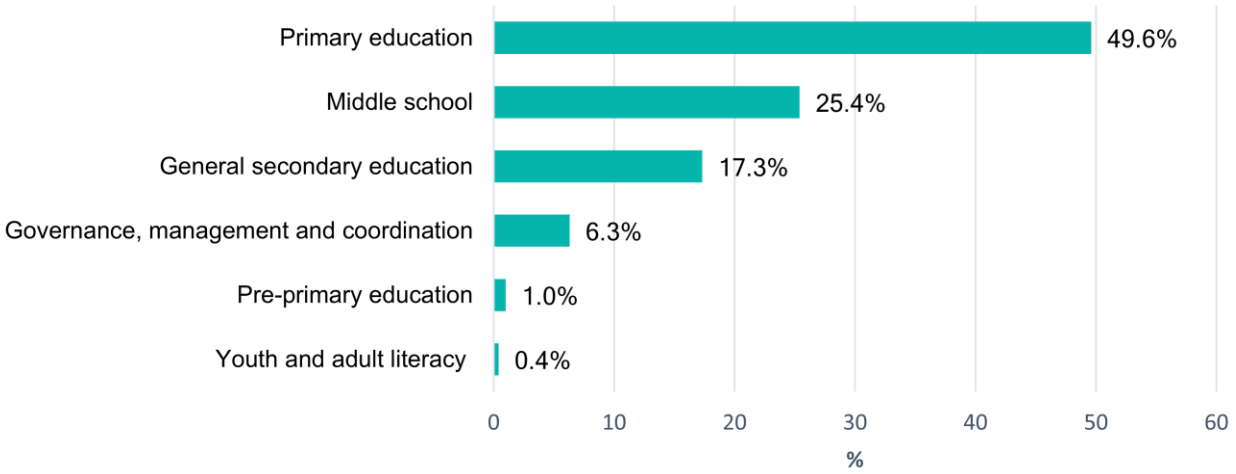
FIGURE 20
Evolution of capital expenditure in the MEN budget, 2010–20



Source: BOOST data, Government of Senegal: http://isdatabank.info/senegal.

Intrasector analysis reveals an imbalance in the allocation of MEN resources among various teaching programmes. Primary and middle school education together take 75% of the MEN's budget, while preschool and basic education programmes for youth and adult literacy receive only 1.4% (**Figure 21**). The data available on education sector funding do not allow for monitoring of the budget shares allocated to primary education over time. This issue has been noted in the PAQUET-EF endorsement letter and by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in the approval of the Programme d'appui au développement de l'éducation au Sénégal (PADES, Senegal Education Development Support Programme).

FIGURE 21
Programmes' share of the MEN budget, 2020



Source: BOOST data, Government of Senegal: http://isdatabank.info/senegal.

The significant gap between the cost of a 10-year schooling cycle and the current amount of public resources mobilized is the challenge of financing basic education. How can funds be mobilized to meet ever-increasing needs due to strong population growth? Here are three possibilities:

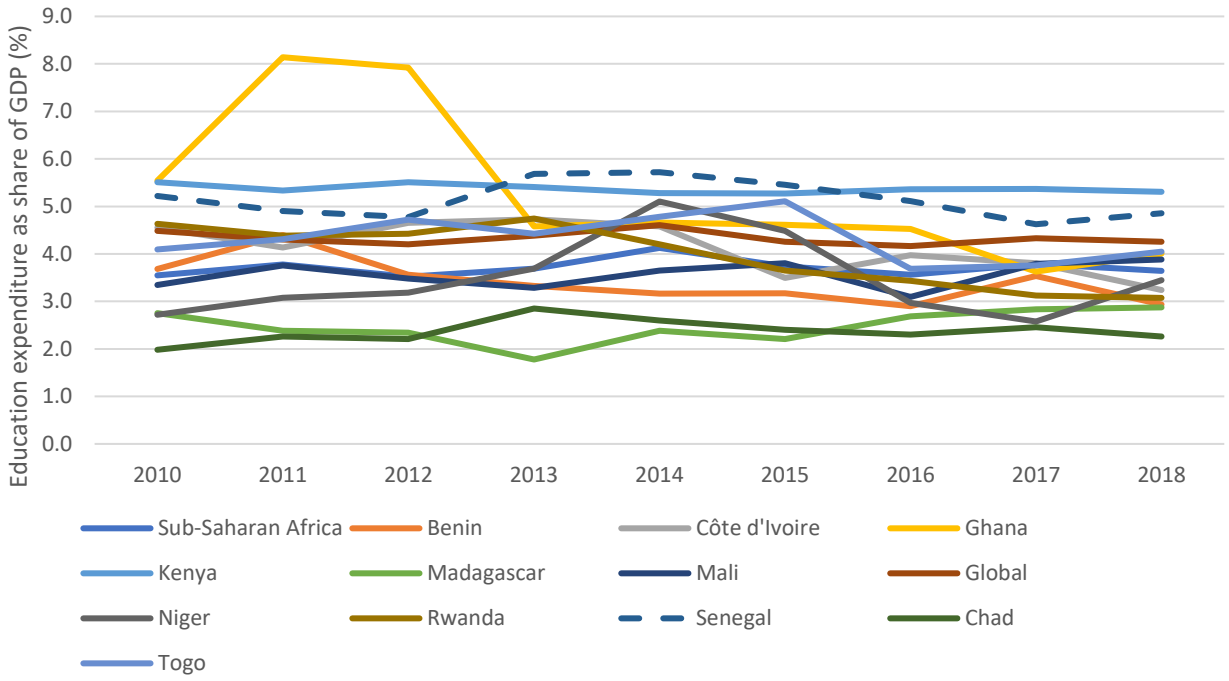
- In the long term, major developments are needed, including strong and sustainable economic growth, a sharp increase in tax administration productivity, demographic transition and a digital revolution in education.
- In the short term, public funding priorities should be significantly shifted in favour of education (intersectional allocation) and basic education (intrasector allocation).
- Unit costs (e.g. cost per student as a percentage of per capita GDP) need to be reduced to levels more suited to available resources, although this will have an impact on the quality of learning in the school environment.

Between 2010 and 2018, Senegal made one of the highest financing commitments to education among sub-Saharan African countries, consistently devoting over 5% of GDP to public expenditure on education, above the average of 3.7% for sub-Saharan Africa and the global average of 4.3%. Between 2013 and 2018, Senegal dedicated more of its GDP (5.2%) to education than any other country in the sub-Saharan Africa region except Kenya (5.3%) (**Figure 22**).

A second important indicator of financing efforts is the share of public education expenditure relative to total public expenditure. Senegal also performs well on a regional basis with the share of public expenditure on education consistently exceeding 20%; in recent years, it has been second only to Ghana as the top African performer (**Figure 23**).

FIGURE 22

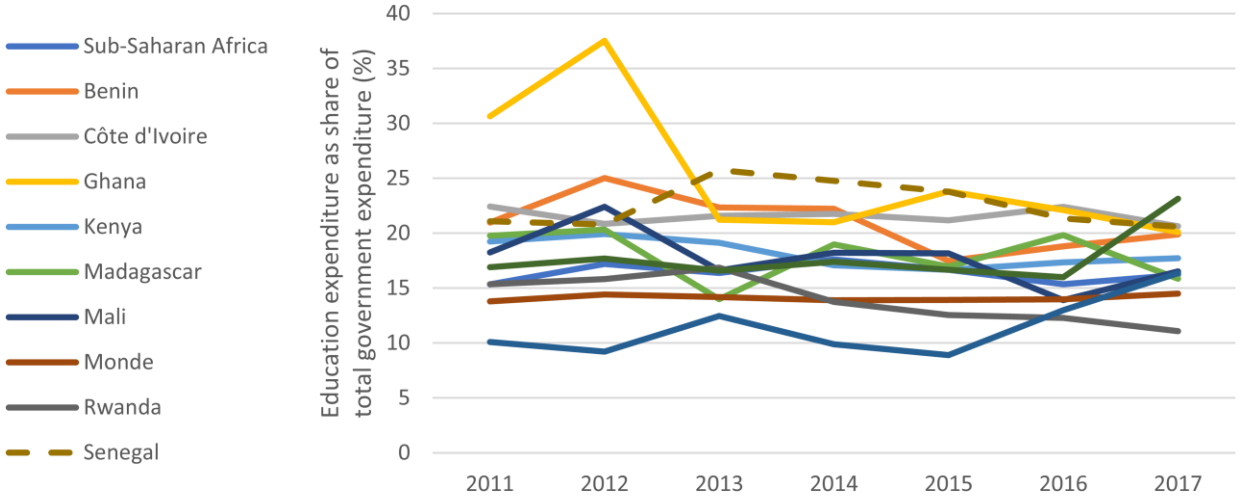
Education expenditure as share of GDP, Senegal and other countries and groupings



Source: BOOST data, Government of Senegal: http://isdatabank.info/senegal.

FIGURE 23

Education expenditure as share of total government expenditure, Senegal and other countries in sub-Saharan Africa



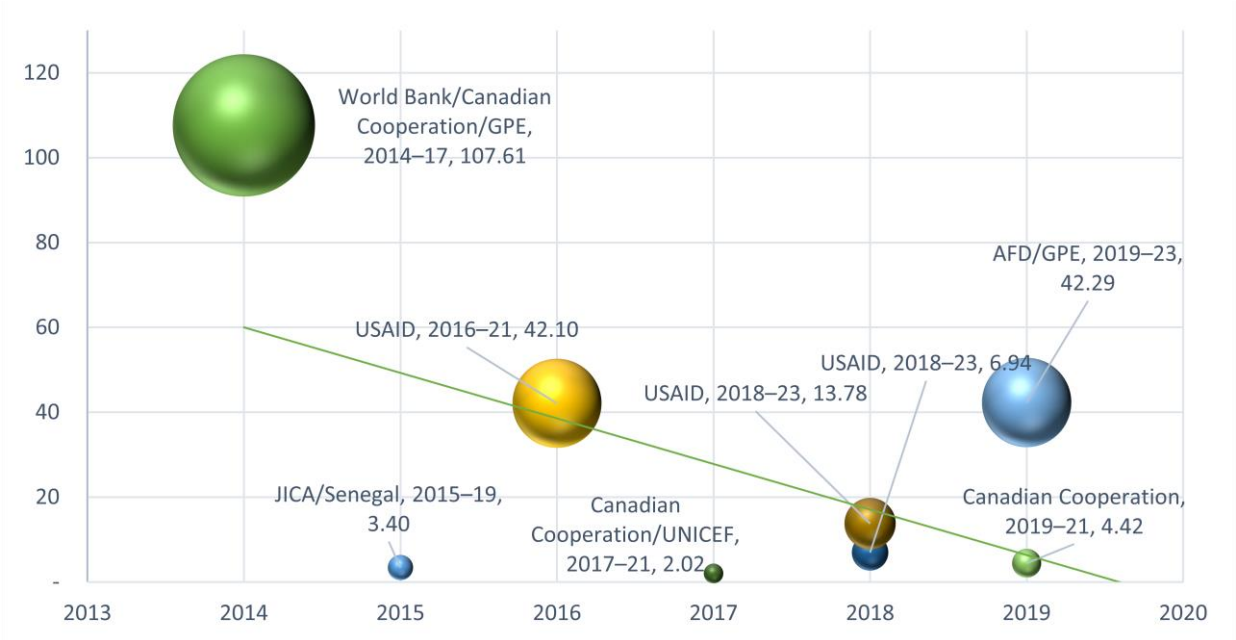
Source: BOOST data, Government of Senegal: http://isdatabank.info/senegal.

3.6. DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Senegal's partners in the development of the education sector are numerous. The main ones include the World Bank, the Agence française de développement (AFD, French Development Agency), USAID, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the GPE, UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Food Programme and the Canadian Cooperation. They support the education sector, particularly in the definition and implementation of policies aimed at achieving SDG 4 in the primary education subsector.

In 2018, around 10% of the budget allocated to education was financed by donors (Direction du Budget/Ministry of Finance, 2018). **Figure 24** gives an overview of the amount of funding per donor. The World Bank, the Canadian Cooperation and the GPE provided funding amounting to 107.61 billion West African francs (XOF) over 2014–17, i.e. 7.5% of the cumulative MEN annual budgets in that period (**Figure 25**). This funding is part of implementation of the Projet d'amélioration de la qualité et de l'équité dans l'éducation base (PAQEEB, Basic Education Quality and Equity Improvement Project), in particular for infrastructure-equipment and learning improvement components.

FIGURE 24
Education expenditure as share of total government expenditure, Senegal and other countries in sub-Saharan Africa



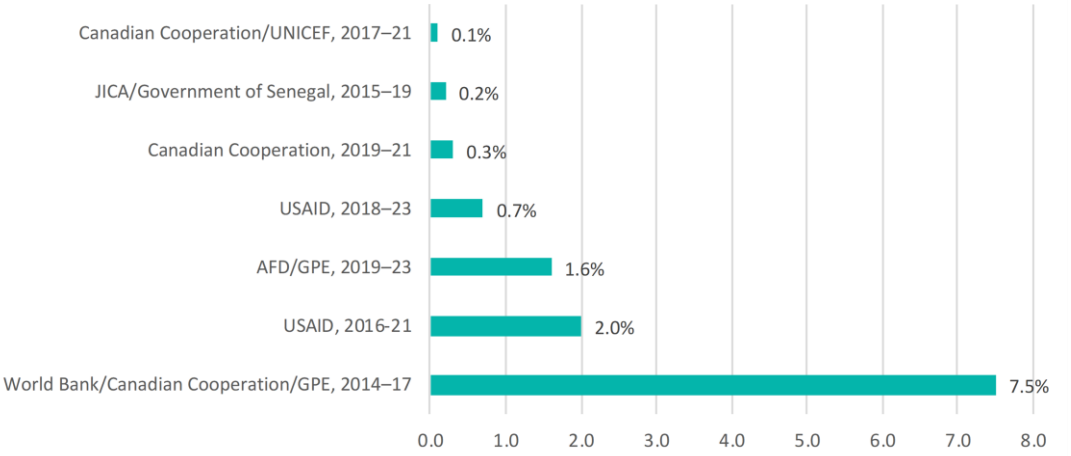
Source: BOOST data, Government of Senegal: http://isdatabank.info/senegal.

USAID has provided funding of XOF 63.8 billion over 2016–23, covering three interventions. The first, over 2016–21 for XOF 42.1 billion (2% of the cumulative MEN annual budgets) was for the Lecture pour tous (Reading for All) programme oriented towards curricula. The other two both relate to 2018–23 for XOF 13.78 billion and XOF 6.9 billion (0.7% of the cumulative MEN annual budget). This funding supports the creation of bridging classes, basic community schools and community daaras, and vocational training centres (infrastructure-equipment).

The AFD and GPE contributed XOF 42.29 billion (1.6% of the cumulative budget) over 2019–23. This funding was dedicated to the infrastructure-equipment and learning improvement components of PADES. Between 2019 and 2021, the Canadian Cooperation offered funding of XOF 4.42 billion (0.3% of the cumulative education budget) for improving learning through a support project aimed at adolescent girls for leadership, maintenance and academic success.

JICA and Senegal's government contributed XOF 3.4 billion (0.2% of the cumulative education budget) to finance improvement of curricula and the learning evaluation system as part of the Projet d'amélioration des apprentissages en mathématiques à l'élémentaire (PAAME, Primary Mathematics Improvement Project). The Canadian Cooperation and UNICEF provided XOF 2.02 billion (0.1% of the cumulative education budget) over 2017–21 to strengthen support for protection of children in education.

FIGURE 25
Share of external financial aid as percentage of cumulative MEN budgets



Source: BOOST data, Government of Senegal: http://isdatabank.info/senegal.

3.7. GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES IN EDUCATION

Since independence, the education sector has undergone many reforms, all of which aim to improve the system in terms of access, equity and quality. The most recent reforms are through the 2013 sectoral plan, PAQUET 2013–2025. PAQUET was evaluated at the end of the first phase of implementation (2013–15), which identified obstacles and led to revision and the eventual creation of PAQUET-EF 2018–2030. The revision aimed to take stock of developments in the national education system and the public finance reform agenda in line with the West African Economic and Monetary Union's regional directive. In addition to the PAQUET revision, parallel measures included updating of the general policy for the education and training sector, recruitment of 5,000 teachers and the education sector response to the COVID-19 crisis.

PAQUET 2013–2025

The reform set out in PAQUET 2013–2025 aimed to secure a 10-year basic education commitment (primary and middle cycles) and achieve the following objectives:

- Create a network of basic education establishments to ensure 10 years of educational continuity for all children aged 7 to 16 through a holistic, diversified, inclusive and integrated approach to basic education.
- Implement a curriculum oriented towards the promotion of scientific disciplines and technology with three pathways: working life, vocational and technical training, and general secondary education.
- Align the institutional organization, operations and staff of the subsector and schools with the new basic education cycle.
- Mobilize all education stakeholders, including local authorities, communities and partners, to support this paradigm shift.
- Develop innovative resource mobilization strategies to support the reform.

The implementation of the reform quickly met a series of constraints. The three major ones were:

- *An insufficient and non-targeted supply of education and training*, as shown by the stagnant GER. The constraint was a result of insufficient investment in school infrastructure and equipment, combined with growth in the school population. Non-diversification of the education offer and insufficient targeting of rural and disadvantaged populations, which remain the main victims of school exclusion, formed a further challenge.
- *The low quality of education provided*, reflected in poor mastery of basic skills and the absence of a culture of teaching for success based on education and training practices and the performance of all learners. A series of factors combined to produce low levels of learning: (i) insufficient real learning time; (ii) discontinuity of learning due to the language of instruction at the beginning of schooling; (iii) lack of efficiency of initial and continuing training for teachers; (iv) weak pedagogical and administrative supervision at all levels, linked to the small number of inspectors; (iv) the inadequate learning assessment system; and (vi) inefficient support systems for learners in difficulty.
- *An insufficient focus on strengthening equity and improving quality and governance*. This constraint was further characterized by the ineffectiveness of the education monitoring and supervision system, including insufficient training of administrative and technical staff, weak involvement of communities and local authorities, and poor financial resource allocation to schools.

The MEN evaluated the first phase of PAQUET through assessments of the subsector commissions and findings from data on performance measurement frameworks. This review highlighted conditions and factors that may have helped, accelerated, slowed or even prevented achievement of objectives. The evaluation led to the revision of the sector plan that resulted in PAQUET-EF 2018–2030, which has three main objectives, each subdivided into specific objectives (**Table 9**).

TABLE 9
Objectives of PAQUET-EF 2018–2030

Objective	Sub-objective
Objective 1: Improve the quality of education and training in all its dimensions	• Structure education system management around improving the relevance and quality of training and identifying vulnerabilities and remediation strategies at all levels • Strengthen staff professionalization and commitment for the success of learning for all • Develop education and training spaces sufficiently endowed with resources and support to ensure inclusive reception and successful teaching and learning, in particular for the most vulnerable populations and territories • Establish a national quality management system for monitoring, periodic evaluation and continuous improvement of learning and integration for young people • Support the development of research and innovation to improve education, training policies and services for the sustainable and inclusive development of the national economy
Objective 2: Strengthen, at all levels, the coverage, diversification and equity of the education and training offer	• Give new impetus to equitable education coverage and meet training needs by reducing disparity • Adapt the education and training offer to the requirements of equality • Strengthen inclusion in education and training • Mobilize the potential of grassroots communities and the private sector to diversify and expand the offer
Objective 3: Promote sector governance that is integrated, inclusive, based on partnership, decentralized, transparent and effective	• Strengthen the framework and functioning of sector governance • Fully apply the West African Economic and Monetary Union's public finance framework through the use of results-based management and performance contracts • Reposition the central level of governance and strengthen the decentralization process for the piloting and management of education and training • Promote a multidimensional communication system and a constructive and lasting dialogue with various stakeholders to

Source: Authors based on PAQUET-EF 2018–2030.

The priorities assigned to primary education in PAQUET-EF 2018–2030 are:

- Targeting those excluded from primary education by mapping vulnerability and disparity, improving internal efficiency and reducing disparity.
- Gradually establishing the 10-year basic cycle.
- Improving schooling intensity by strengthening and diversifying the school offer, securing stronger commitment from local authorities and strengthening community involvement.

In middle school, the priorities are:

- Improving harmony between the middle school curriculum and primary school to ensure continuity and quality of learning.
- Strengthening the professionalization of teaching and supervisory staff.
- Developing a network of establishments to ensuring education continuity over the 10-year cycle.
- Establishing a national system to provide guidance on quality.
- Strengthening governance at all levels towards participatory, inclusive and results-based management

3.8. OTHER MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT

In addition to revising the sector plan in PAQUET-EF 2018–2030, Senegal has adopted other measures to improve access and equity and the quality of the education and training sector.

Update of the policy for the education and training sector. The Lettre de politique générale pour le secteur de l'éducation et de la formation (Education and Training Sector Policy) was developed in 2013 as a reference for decision making, planning, and monitoring and evaluation of development actions in the education and training sector. It aims to (i) foster ownership of education and training development objectives and strategies throughout the Senegalese population, (ii) strengthen mutual responsibility between stakeholders and establish space for constructive and lasting dialogue, and (iii) facilitate participation and partnerships for the successful planning and implementation of both the national programme and the decentralized education and training plans.

Recruitment of 5,000 teachers in 2021. The education system has long experienced a critical shortage of teaching staff. To address this deficit, the government recruited 5,000 civil servant teachers for the 2020/21 school year.

Implementation of the sector response plan to address the COVID-19 crisis (PADES-RR 2020–2021), adopted on 7 July 2020. As part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, under PADES the government adopted an economic and social resilience programme with strategic measures specific to the education sector that were led by the MEN and supported by UNICEF.

3.9. POLITICAL ECONOMY

Senegal was one of the first African countries to introduce a multiparty political system. The country moved from a system limited to three public parties in the 1970s to a full multiparty system in the early 1980s. Two changes of political regime occurred, in 2000 and 2012, following transparent presidential elections. The Senegalese electoral system is characterized by strong competition and makes voters the main political actor. Among diverse political platforms, education and training are primary concerns of voters, who consider access to education and training a priority. Political parties and coalitions try to convince the electorate of their commitment to education by promising ambitious programmes whose implementation would require significant resources. However, achievements rarely live up to the promises and voters have few means of making themselves heard in between presidential elections. As a result, the education sector finds it increasingly difficult to receive priority in the allocation of public finance and, in particular, public investment.

In the second Programme d'action prioritaire (Priority Action Programme) 2019–2023, which operationalizes phase 2 of the government's Plan Sénégal émergent (Emerging Senegal Plan), priority is given to agriculture, extractive activities, industry, energy, roads and highways, ports and airports, railways and other construction,

tourism and the digital economy. In the 2021 fiscal year, out of an approved budget of XOF 4.5 trillion, XOF 1.6 trillion was devoted to investment. Yet only three projects, with budgets totalling XOF 13.59 billion, concerned the MEN. Major advocacy is needed to encourage policymakers to place education among the priority sectors.

The development of the private sector in education, especially basic education, is connected to the sector's neglect in the 2010s. Private education now caters for a majority of middle- and upper-class children. Few households in these social strata send their children to public primary and secondary schools. Of students enrolled in private schools, 47.9% come from the wealthiest 20% of households. And 67.8% of private students live in the wealthiest 40% of households (ANSD, 2018). Public schools' sharp reduction in effective learning time, overcrowding in classes and strikes have turned away households that are able to send their children to private schools, particularly in the Dakar region. The social groups with the most capital to influence public decisions are therefore less concerned by the situation of public schools.

Teacher unions are an important group of actors in the Senegalese education system. No fewer than 40 organizations from the basic education subsector are grouped together in union organizations. There is strong competition between unions and groups of unions, and each has a platform of demands, the most important of which are increased wages and fulfilment of agreements signed with the government following negotiations. Even with so many unions, basic education in Senegal has seen few teacher strikes over the past 10 years. But the low level of pay, absence of incentives to obtain good learning results, and lack of respect for agreements signed between the unions and the government provide fertile ground for teacher demotivation and absenteeism.

Under decentralization, the government has assigned major responsibilities to local authorities. However, this transfer of responsibilities has not been accompanied by a significant transfer of resources to municipalities and departmental councils, which struggle to fulfil their role in the basic education system.

Public decision makers have always emphasized that investing in human capital, particularly education, is their main priority, but their ambition has been hampered by the country's significant budgetary constraints. The recent discovery of offshore oil and gas, and the start of resource exploitation in 2023, will alleviate this constraint. Indeed, 0.8% of GDP is expected from natural resources over 2023–25, equivalent to nearly 39% of the government's revenue in 2021 (Davis and Mihalyi, 2021). What proportion of this revenue will be allocated to the education sector and what trade-offs will be made? Senegalese decision makers will need to discuss and answer these key questions in coming years.

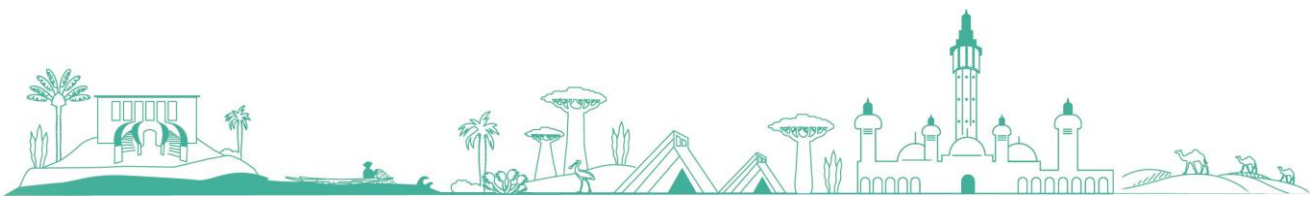
3.10. SUMMARY

This overview of Senegal's education system has identified several areas where significant progress has been made:

- Near universal access to primary education, with reductions in repetition and dropout rates in recent years.
- A government commitment to prioritize public expenditure on education, with Senegal among the sub-Saharan countries dedicating the highest percentages of national budget and GDP to education.
- An upward trend in the transition rate from primary to middle school.
- An increase in the grade 9 survival rate, which stands at around 80%.
- Improvement in students' average mathematics and French test scores between 2012 and 2021.

The overview has also highlighted key challenges that need to be addressed through the three objectives of PAQUET-EF:

- Shortages of primary school classrooms and teachers that have resulted in declining admission to primary education and stagnation of the primary GER and completion rate.
- A decrease in the GER in middle school and stagnation of the completion rate.
- Low quality of education due to limited learning time in the classroom, a mismatch between language of instruction and home language, lack of effectiveness of initial teacher training, weak pedagogical support for teachers in the classroom and an inadequate learning assessment system.
- A large proportion of students not reaching the minimum skills threshold at key points in their learning journey.
- Regional disparity in all main indicators of access and learning.

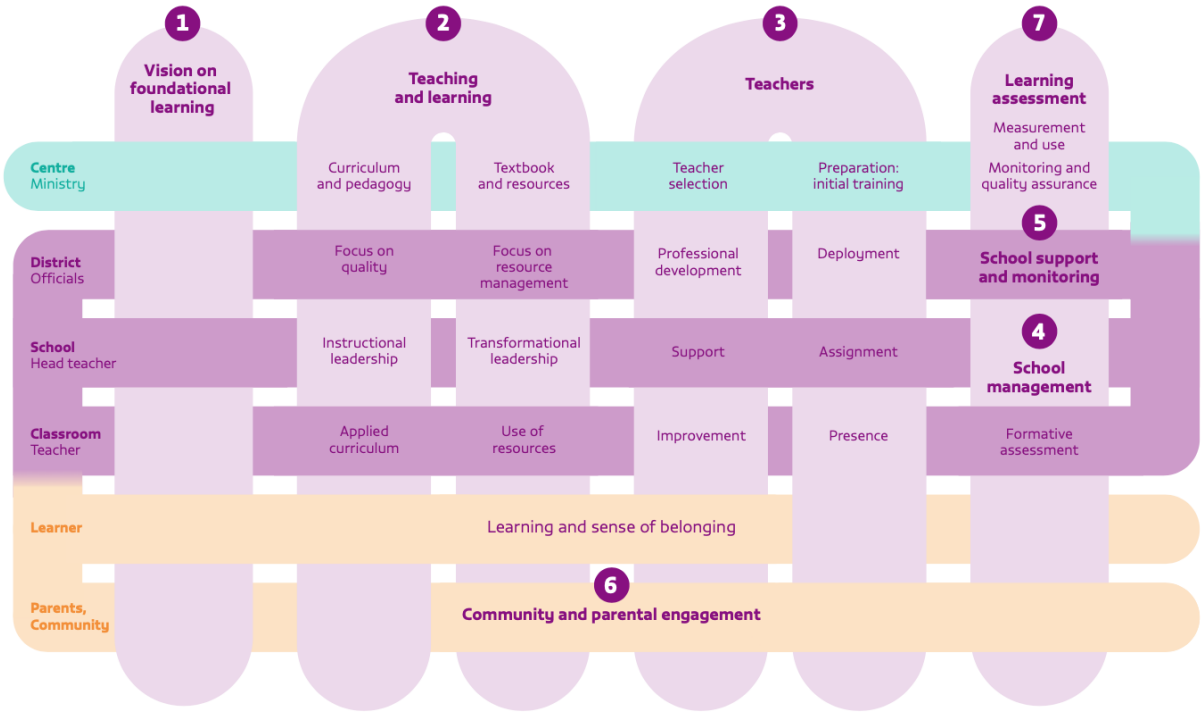


4. Analytical framework and fieldwork results[4]

4.1. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK OF CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

This review follows the Spotlight series conceptual framework, which outlines seven key factors that affect UBE and foundational learning (**Figure 26**).

FIGURE 26
Spotlight analytical framework



Source: Spotlight series analytical framework and research guide

4.2. FIELD APPROACH AND AREAS VISITED

A workshop was organized to identify challenges to primary education in Senegal, help build consensus around the priority issues of the education system and identify possible solutions. Following this workshop, a qualitative survey was launched. The survey was conducted individually and in groups with 315 basic education stakeholders to gather their opinions on each of the seven factors that determine the level of student learning.

[4] Tables in this section are compiled by the authors from field notes, except where otherwise noted.

Their answers show a strong convergence between their observations, explanations of the facts and the results drawn from the literature review.

The first stage of the field mission took place between 29 November and 5 December 2021 in the IEFs of Almadies in Dakar, Podor in the Saint-Louis region in the north, and Goudomp and Médina Yoro Foula in southern Senegal. The second stage, between 6 and 10 December 2021, covered the IEFs of Pikine, Rufisque Commune, Thiès Commune, Kébémer, Diourbel, Kaolack-Département and Kaffrine. The choice of IEFs was based on test scores in French and mathematics from the SDI survey conducted by CRES in 2021, which targeted pupils in the fourth year of primary studies (CE2). The IEFs of Almadies and Podor had the highest average scores and those of Goudomp and Médina Yoro Foula the lowest. The other IEFs, located in central Senegal, were selected to provide more complete coverage. The general objective of the qualitative survey was to collect information from local school authorities, teachers, students and school partners at decentralized levels. Collection involved individual interviews with teachers and community members through focus group discussions (**Table 10**), and with teachers and students through lesson observations.

TABLE 10
Breakdown of interviewees

Target		Expected	Actual	Type of interview	Completed
First phase					
Central level		4	4	Individual	100%
Decentralized levels	IA	4	4	Individual	100%
	Director CRFPE	4	4	Individual	100%
	IEF	4	4	Individual	100%
	Mayor	4	4	Individual	100%
	Head teacher	8	8	Individual	100%
	Teacher	128	126	Focus group	98%
	Community	128	120	Focus group	94%
	Classes and students	24	20	Lesson observation	83%
Subtotal 1		308	294		95%
Additional phase					
Decentralized levels	IEF	7	7	Individual	100%
	Head teacher	14	14	Individual	100%
Subtotal 2		21	21		100%
Total					96%

During the first collection phase, four central level directorates, four IAs, four IEFs and eight schools were visited. The interviewers carried out individual interviews with school authorities (academy inspectors, CRFPE directors, IEF staff and school head teachers) as well as with mayors. Focus groups with teachers and the community were organized, and supplemented with class observations in mathematics and reading at CI, CP and CE1 in the schools visited.

In total, 95% of the interviews were achieved. Two factors explain the remaining 5%: a focus group organized with six teachers instead of the eight planned, and failure to carry out a focus group with the community in the Almadies IEF. In Médina Yoro Foula, lesson observation could not be carried out due to the absence of the teacher with a multigrade class (CI/CP).

For the additional phase, individual interviews were conducted with all 7 IEFs and 14 targeted school principals, i.e. a 100% completion rate. Of the schools visited, 82% were public schools and 18% private; 64% were in urban areas and 36% in rural areas. All the private schools were in urban areas (**Table 11**).

TABLE 11
Breakdown of schools visited by area and status

	Private		Public		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Rural			8	100%	8	36%
Urban	4	29%	10	71%	14	64%
TOTAL	4	18%	18	82%	22	100%

4.3. RESULTS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS ON CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

4.3.1. Vision and focus on performance

***Hypothesis**: The goals and objectives of the education system are clearly stated and focus on improving fundamental learning outcomes. The actors of the education system understand how their role contributes to the realization of this vision.*

The vision of basic education is considered a key tool for operationalizing the sector's policies. The vision is formulated in PAQUET-EF as 'a peaceful and stable education and training system, diversified and integrated to include everyone on an equal footing, motivating and of quality to support success for all, relevant and effective as a tool for developing the necessary skills for the emergence of a prosperous and united Senegal' (République du Sénégal, 2018, p. 18). Most actors hold this view. Interviewees raised PAQUET-EF's various axes in interviews and strongly related to the themes of access, inclusion, quality and governance. At decentralized levels, the vision is shared by various entities, in particular in the inspectorates and CRFPEs, which are responsible for its operationalization, especially during sector reviews.

However, not all actors fully share an understanding of the vision PAQUET-EF describes. School head teachers, in charge of operationalizing education policy, have a relatively targeted vision of basic education; their approach is more oriented towards the centrality of the student. For example, according to some, the vision is global and is a lever that should make it possible to 'train the child and participate in her/his education and socialization'.

Some teachers understand the vision as meaning that education's purpose is to socialize and empower the individual, equivalent to the development of mental, physical and intellectual faculties, with the aim of forming a model citizen capable of contributing to the development of their local community and country.

4.3.2. Teaching and learning

***Hypothesis**: Teachers understand what to teach and are effectively trained and sufficiently motivated to implement the curriculum and assessment as planned.*

The lessons observed adopted various teaching strategies depending on the subject. For basic education and training for youth and adults who were illiterate, the strategy was to introduce pupils to the alphabet and use methods that allow them to understand vocabulary. The purpose was to 'teach them to read, to transcribe words, to write words, to calculate'. For primary education, students are at the centre of the learning process.

At the central level, teaching encompasses a range of concepts through projects such as PAAME and PADES, as well as through provision of manuals and tools. The objectives are clear and the supervision of teachers aims to encourage professionalization during initial and continued training sessions.

The desire to meet teacher training requirements for management of the basic education curriculum is considerable. However, it has become problematic, according to interviewees in the CRFPEs, who blame insufficient time devoted to teaching of reading and mathematics, and a shortage of resources: 'The lack of means is a reality and yet the CRFPEs are of critical importance for the training of teachers of lower grades.' This shortage is most noticeable at the CRFPE in Sédhiou, which lacks functional premises: 'We are in temporary shelter and sometimes hosted by the school.' However, the introduction of the basic education curriculum upset habits and required a remodelling of teaching. According to the interviewees, the programme is rightly focused on learning reading and mathematics, especially in the first years of primary school.

Teaching guides are available but in digital versions. One IEF official confirmed that 'a good portion of the teachers have not adopted the teaching guide'. The use of guides is mentioned as a source of difficulty, and some believe the guides must be adapted to local contexts.

Similarly, recommended teaching and learning materials are not always available. Those found in classrooms are adapted to learners' age and needs but are not always in their languages. The time allotted to teaching reading and mathematics is considered insufficient given the complexity of the skills-based approach, which remains a major innovation for many teachers.

In addition, lack of teaching staff and furniture, non-availability of learning spaces in certain areas – resulting in double-shift or multigrade classes – and the limited material and pedagogical resources allocated to school structures are considered challenges for the system.

4.3.3. Teachers

***Hypothesis**: Teachers understand what to teach and are effectively trained and sufficiently motivated to implement the curriculum and assessment as planned.*

When detailing IAs' vision of teachers, a common concept recurs in all discourse: training (initial and continuing). Teacher quality appears to be strongly connected to the supervision the teacher has received and puts into practice. However, inspectors are careful not to give opinions on the quality, behaviour or difficulties of the teachers they oversee.

Beyond initial training on teaching skills, the CRFPEs run modules on professional ethics. These modules make it possible to equip teachers and can enable them to better administer their classes and students in accordance with the programme: 'Personal development and everyday life programmes are included in the training modules and are intended for all trainees.' One IEF stated that 'the best teachers are often working in the latter stage of the education cycle'. The assignment criteria are left to the discretion of the IEF head and may be focused on aspects of commitment or academic profile. This policy must be challenged so modules are focused on teachers in the early years of schooling, which are the most decisive.

The IEFs highlight the continuing training provided to teachers through class visits, supervision visits of head teachers, the Collectif des Directeurs d'Écoles (CODEC, Collective of School Head Teachers), Cellules d'animation pédagogiques et culturelles (pedagogical and cultural animation units) and internal units. Nevertheless, interviewees stress that these efforts are likely to be in vain due to a lack of commitment by teachers who are unsatisfied with their working conditions (school environment, availability and quantity of pedagogical inputs), salary levels and promotions that are slowed down by the administration.

Almost all teachers interviewed reported a strong relationship between a 'good teacher' and 'school performance'. Teachers should be exemplary, be aware of their responsibilities and know the learning content and teaching approaches. Teachers believe they are neither provided with the required supervision nor supported by the requisite teaching materials. They also feel that their career issues are not being addressed and highlight that resolving this issue would strongly motivate them in their work. Resolving administrative delays and providing schools with sufficient teaching materials would increase satisfaction and further motivate teachers.

4.3.4. School Management and leadership

***Hypothesis**: Head teachers understand that their role is to support teachers to improve learning and to create an inclusive school environment.*

School administrators noted that the head teacher is the technical arm of the hierarchy within the school. The head teacher needs be as aware as the teachers of initiatives and measures taken to improve learning and realize the vision of basic education. Their role is fundamental in the school, and in everyday school life. They are education advisers, called upon to coach, guide, support and advise.

Beyond the pedagogical aspect, the head teacher is in charge of the inclusive management of the school, which must be a space open to all sensitivities while respecting diversity, equity and gender. Their everyday behaviour should allow all actors to be involved in school management and to considerably improve skills.

Head teachers believe their role in school management has evolved considerably. They must now show leadership in all areas and position themselves as a coach: 'She/he should have the ability to train, supervise and support her/his colleagues and be exemplary because, if there is a problem with management, it affects the motivation of the teachers and even the results of the pupils.'

Higher authorities (IEF and district inspectors) are not very present in school management within the school, according to school community actors. The community was aware of visits at the beginning of the year but less aware of occasional visits for professional monitoring of teachers.

Teachers also said they received no written documents after these visits. Overall, there was little exchange between the school and its community, with many in the community considering these issues as being exclusively for teachers and administrative staff. However, the community has some overall knowledge of the performance of their children's schools compared with other schools.

4.3.5. Supervision and monitoring

***Hypothesis:** Regular supportive supervision within the school (peers and school management) and outside the school improves accountability.*

Supervision and follow-up are guarantees of good quality learning. At the local level, education inspectors and school head teachers monitor and supervise teachers for reading in the first years. This is done through class visits and supervision of teaching units.

The IAs' role is to ensure that all structures fulfil their missions by 'creating the necessary conditions for management dialogue bodies to function, develop quality-oriented plans, and continue to provide alternative offers, daaras, gateway classes and all possible and relevant forms of offer that can support the most remote areas'. Such an ambition requires resources, both material and human, which are not always available. As part of some projects, such as PAQEEB, financial resources are made available to IAs and schools. However, such initiatives are not mainstreamed, even if the availability of substantial funding encourages improvement of learning quality. Good monitoring requires resources, and funding comes from the MEN, programmes and municipalities. Paradoxically, few school head teachers and heads are trained in financial management. They are appointed by the national teaching staff association or, if necessary, by the IA or IEF. Consequently, it is imperative to improve financial and administrative skills among school heads and head teachers.

In terms of learning, head teachers believe that regular monitoring is of paramount importance for the smooth running of the school. Regular monitoring of class workbooks and education reports allows for assessment of curriculum compliance. Student performance can be improved by systematizing 'class visits', 'the establishment of discussion circles' and 'the revitalization of cellules d'animation pédagogique internes [internal pedagogical support units]'.

Teachers, for their part, believe that monitoring learning is an important aspect of measuring performance and that each student should be the subject of individual follow-up to detect insufficiencies early and propose strategies to address gaps. Student progress in reading and mathematics is currently monitored and assessed

through daily assessments in homework books. Records of errors and performance on standardized assessments are also tools that could be used to monitor student results.

4.3.6. Community and parental engagement

***Hypothesis**: Communities and parents support their schools and local teachers, and actively support their children's education.*

At the central level, the Groupe national des partenaires de l'éducation et de formation (National Education and Training Partners Group) and its subsections are the main actors in the community. They take part in consultations during regional and sectoral reviews to provide advice on school management. At the lowest level, CGEs should be institutionalized.

It is important for the community to understand the challenges of the education sector and actively contribute to its smooth running. USAID's Lecture pour tous project has fulfilled this ambition well: 'The community has been supported; society has supported learners at home on reading. They even went so far as to give textbooks and house booklets to parents.' Some schools have CGEs and APEs and their functionality has been measured through various assessments.

Indeed, except at a few schools, all interviewees recognized the role of CGEs in school management. A teacher commented, 'Parents are involved in the management of the school with a functional and dynamic CGE.' As for APEs, reporting suggests they exist in name but not in practice, a situation that has affected the commitment of parents, who should promote continuity of learning at home and offer students support. Collaboration between parents and teachers helps improve children's results. One teacher noted that 'a child who does not yet know how to read and calculate has more need of help at home because the learning time in class is insufficient'. Parents' involvement often focuses on improving the school's physical environment (e.g. weeding and building huts or improved shelters) as well as the learning environment (e.g. educational support for children at home and lobbying donors to support the school with funding and/or materials).

Parents and the community are encouraged to take part in regular monitoring of their children's progress and participate in skills improvement. Stakeholders interviewed recognized the varied contributions of communities to schools. Meetings with parents provide an opportunity to share school results, raise awareness and encourage hands-on involvement. In some areas, the community builds classrooms and teachers' houses.

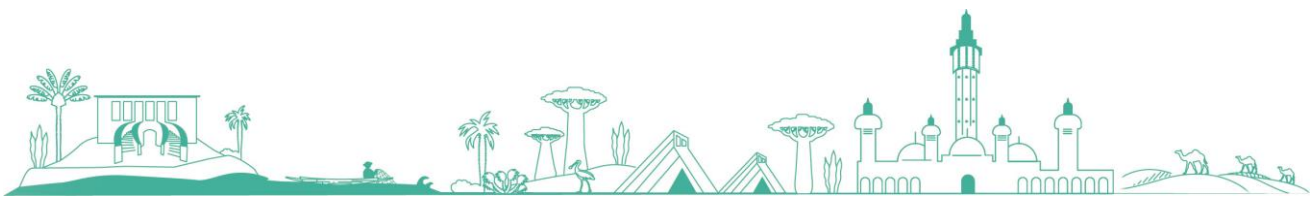
4.3.7. Learning assessments

***Hypothesis:** The results of assessments are used at all levels of the education system.*

Some interviewees emphasized that the impact of various assessments on performance was important and said they should be further used to guide strategies. Ensuring systematization and regularity of results is essential, as they are shared with all stakeholders: '[A]ll the stakeholders are there: the parents of the pupils, the representatives of the workers' unions, the CODEC. We share the results and point out the shortcomings. On arrival, we detail remedial strategies to be implemented.'

The CRFPE directors believed assessments must, in the long term, influence education policy implementation . They noted that this included the entire assessment process, from harmonizing progress to test administration; production of remedial tools and strategies should build on previous results. They argued that during inspections, evaluations make it possible to progress and take decisions that can lead to change or reform and that it was therefore essential to initiate teachers into the culture of assessment. They also believed stakeholders should be trained on criterion-referenced assessment and new exam formats.

The IEFs proposed improvements to assessments, including harmonization of assessment strategies and formats. They suggested that context variables should be accounted for in national assessments as in international assessments. Despite considerable progress, efforts are needed to improve assessment tools, according to some head teachers: 'Assessment tools should be adapted to the way the world is going: computer equipment (tablet), with paper left behind (evolve towards digital).' If more systematic, these assessments could be used to restructure programmes to meet international standards.



4.4. RESULTS OF LESSON OBSERVATIONS

In the 8 targeted schools, 20 CI, CP and CE1 classes were observed in all. There were more schools in rural areas (55%) than in urban zones (45%). By subject, 70% of the classes observed were French lessons and 30% were in mathematics (**Table 12**).

TABLE 12
The distribution of classes observed by subject and material

Zone	Grade observed	French		Mathematics		Total	
Rural areas	1,666	Number of classes	%	Number of classes	%	Number of classes	%
	CI	4	80%	1	20%	5	45%
	CP	1	50%	1	50%	2	18%
	CE1	2	50%	2	50%	4	36%
	Total rural areas	7	64%	4	36%	11	55%
Urban areas	CI	3	100%		0%	3	33%
	CP	2	67%	1	33%	3	33%
	CE1	2	67%	1	33%	3	33%
	Total urban areas	7	78%	2	22%	9	45%
Total		14	70%	6	30%	20	100%

Physical environment
For two thirds of the classes visited, classroom facilities were satisfactory, with 37% adequate for the number of students and 35% having enough space to circulate. There were appropriate resources available (e.g. maps, models, boards, globes and math tools) for only 31% of the classes visited. Regarding 21st century materials (e.g. calculators, interactive whiteboards, and computers and tablets for students and teachers), they were available for only 3% of the classes visited. The physical environment was more attractive in the IEF classes in Almadies and Podor (**Table 13**).

TABLE 13
Physical environment of classes (several answers possible)

Equipment	Almadies	Podor	MYF	Goudomp	Total
Classroom facilities	53%	72%	100%	65%	66%
Availability of appropriate resources	47%	20%	0%	35%	31%
21st century materials	0%	8%	0%	0%	3%
Total physical environment	12%	17%	15%	15%	15%

Note: MYF = Médina Yoro Foula.

Lesson observations
This is the component on which the schools that were visited performed best (60%). A good attitude from the teachers was reported in 21% of the classes visited. In these classes, the teacher guides the pupils in the discovery of concepts and moves around the class to follow and coordinate the work. The teacher also encourages students to work with different methods and guides them in handling and using teaching materials. In 18% of classes, lessons were well organized and structured through an introduction, a presentation and a conclusion/evaluation. Finally, in 15% of classes, students worked individually tasks in an organized way and in accordance with the objectives of the lesson. Weak performance in the main teaching method was noted in 6% of the classes visited and in 4% of mathematics lessons. The observation of the lessons shows the strongest performance in the IEFs of Almadies and Podor (**Table 14**).

TABLE 14
Pedagogical resources used by teachers (several answers possible)

Pedagogical resources	Almadies	Podor	MYF	Goudomp	Total
The teacher asks high-level and challenging questions to engage students	33%	35%	33%	33%	34%
The teacher does not ask low-level questions, which weakens/lowers student participation	33%	35%	33%	33%	34%
The teacher does not ask questions during the lesson	33%	29%	33%	33%	32%
Total teaching strategies	12%	12%	23%	16%	13%

Note: MYF = Médina Yoro Foula.

Teaching strategies
Overall, in 68% of the classes visited, the teacher asked students high-level and stimulating questions. On the other hand, in 32% of the classes, the teacher did not ask questions. The teachers in the IEFs of Almadies and Podor were more efficient in terms of teaching strategies than their peers in Médina Yoro Foula and Goudomp (**Table 15**).

TABLE 15
Teacher teaching strategies

Pedagogical resources	Almadies	Podor	MYF	Goudomp	Total
Main educational resources used by the teacher	17%	6%	8%	10%	11%
Main teaching method	6%	7%	8%	6%	6%
Mathematics: lesson content	5%	2%	8%	3%	4%
French: lesson content	12%	13%	8%	18%	14%
Lesson content	12%	7%	8%	12%	10%
Organization of the lesson	14%	20%	25%	21%	18%
Student practice	12%	19%	17%	13%	15%
Observation of the teacher's attitude	21%	26%	17%	16%	21%
Total lesson observation	64%	59%	46%	59%	60%

Note: MYF = Médina Yoro Foula.

Classroom environment
In 56% of classes visited, students actively participated in lessons, showed interest or engagement, and took initiative during discussions. The classes were well managed by the teacher in 44% of those visited. The teacher brought order to the classroom; however, there were also some interruptions in the teaching-learning process. As for availability of textbooks for students, 22% of students did not have textbooks for the subject observed. Student participation and class management were better in the IEFs of Almadies and Podor. The availability of textbooks was low for students in the IEFs of Podor and Goudomp (**Table 16**).

TABLE 16
Classroom environment

Pedagogical resources	Almadies	Podor	MYF	Goudomp	Total
Student participation	63%	63%	50%	50%	56%
Class management	37%	38%	50%	50%	44%
Number of students without textbooks for the course observed	11%	23%	100%	21%	22%
Total classroom environment	12%	11%	15%	11%	12%

Note: MYF = Médina Yoro Foula.

4.5. FIELDWORK RESULTS AND RELATIONSHIP WITH CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

There were major differences between the best and worst performing IEFs. The best had significantly lower numbers per class, were better equipped with teaching materials and did not employ a double-shift class approach or hold classes in temporary shelters. Lesson observations also revealed stronger teacher competence, while underlining the skills issues among teachers in both high-performing and low-performing IEFs. Only one in five teachers adopted a positive attitude, consisting of guiding pupils in the discovery of concepts, moving around the class to follow up and coordinate work, encouraging pupils to work with various methods and guiding pupils in the handling and use of teaching materials.

Less than 2 in 10 teachers organized and structured lessons well through an introduction, presentation, conclusion and evaluation. In only 15% of the classes did students demonstrate good learning practice, meaning they worked individually on the same task and class organization was adapted to the lesson. Very low performance was noted regarding use of the main teaching method[5] – considered appropriate in 6% of classes visited – and lesson content, considered appropriate in 4% of mathematics classes. These results highlight the urgency of building teacher capacity to significantly improve the level of student learning. The low motivation of teachers and a significant drop in their real income seem to be critical factors affecting their performance.

Learning by teachers is a major concern for both inspectors and teachers. While some suggested the poor learning of students is a result of insufficient time devoted to the basic education curriculum, others wondered if teachers had sufficient knowledge of good learning strategies and pointed to their dissatisfaction about working conditions (environment, training, availability of educational resources), pay and administrative delays to career development.[6]

[5] The main teaching method that is considered appropriate combines the syllabic method (teaching of sounds and their combinations to construct syllables and words) and the global method (teaching from words of phrases or texts to obtain sounds).
[6] Teacher salaries increase every two years if they are rated by their head teacher (step change). Their salaries also increase following the successful completion of a professional examination (grade change). Teachers often remain for many years without changing step or grade, and thus without a salary increase, because the administrative actions necessary to validate the change of step or grade are not taken. Sometimes, the administrative delay is due to professional examinations not being organized.

5. Two positive case studies

Among the policies implemented within the Senegalese basic education system, two remedial approaches are particularly noteworthy. The first aims to give a second chance to children who left school prematurely or have never attended school, by putting them in so-called bridge classes. This policy improves access to primary education for the school-age population. The second approach aims to organize lessons for pupils who are in difficulty at school and thereby improve the quality of learning and reduce dropout.

5.1. BRIDGE CLASSES OR SECOND-CHANCE SCHOOLS

A major feature of Senegal's primary education system is that it fails to accommodate all school-age children. With the GER stagnant at 85%, 15% of children aged 6 to 11 do not enter school and risk remaining illiterate. For every 100 children who enter school, 38 will not complete the primary cycle, meaning they do not master skills that allow them to read, calculate fluently and escape illiteracy.

Integrating children who have never entered the school system, or who left prematurely, gives them a second chance to realize their right to education. This is the role of the bridge classes in the Senegalese education system, which significantly help improve the efficiency of the basic education system and increase the enrolment rate. Basically, bridge classes integrate children who have not attended school, reintegrate dropouts and train young people. To ensure that bridge classes can play this role, the MEN has drawn up Plans d'accélération de la scolarisation (Schooling Acceleration Plans) in the regions with a view to raising the GER at the national level.

The implementation of bridge classes brings together IAs and IEFs, local authorities and civil society organizations active in the education sector at the decentralized level. Some technical and financial partners support the government in this implementation. For instance, the Organisation international de la francophonie, through its Programme d'appui aux innovations et aux réformes éducatives (Educational Innovation and Reform Support Programme), supports curriculum revision and the creation of suitable content for teachers. A pilot in the Kaffrine region, in central Senegal, is seeking to reintegrate young girls who have dropped out of school.

5.2. REMEDIAL LESSONS

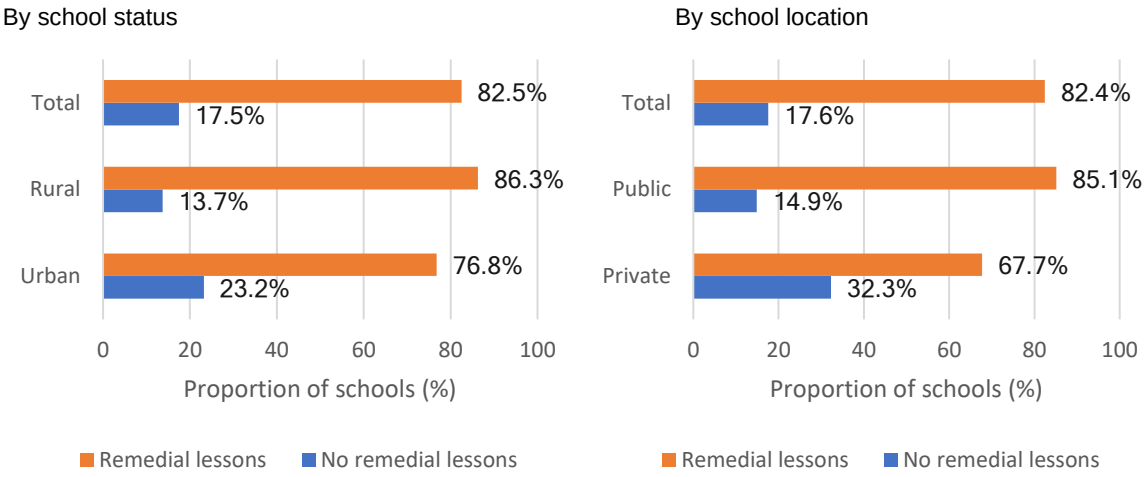
Remedial education is a set of corrective actions integrated into the pedagogical process to assist students in overcoming difficulties that may disrupt progress and avoid the accumulation of obstacles that may jeopardize future learning. This support is provided to learners who have difficulty acquiring and/or mastering certain aspects of knowledge or concepts. Remedial education occurs, in principle, at the end of each learning task and aims to inform pupils and teachers of the degree of mastery achieved. The approach can reveal where and how pupils are experiencing learning difficulties in order to offer or teach strategies that support progress (MEN, 2016).

To improve the quality of student learning, particularly in reading, PADES has dedicated one of the axes of support to helping students succeed better through a remedial system. As remedial education should be based on identification of shortcomings, INEADE carried out an assessment at the CI level for cohort monitoring and at the CE1 level as a reference. The objective was to determine the programme's impact at the end of implementation in 2022. Following the evaluation, the MEN Primary Education Department at the developed a remedial education plan linked to the overall education management system. The plan is part of the guidance framework for academic support for schooling, which outlines the main guidelines of the support policy for students in difficulty. It responds to both equity and efficiency concerns. Over the long term, the evaluation is intended to provide a general direction for how to remedy shortcomings in the system and support decentralized actors.

The results of the 2021 SDI survey showed that more than 82% of schools provided remedial lessons. This proportion is higher in the public sector, with over 85%, than in in the private sector with 68%. In urban areas, nearly 77% of schools provided remedial lessons, compared with 86% in rural areas (**Figure 27**). Overall, more than 57.3% of teachers have taught remedial lessons in schools, while 5.7% say they provided the classes at home. More teachers from the public sector (59.6%) than the private sector (41.8%) carried out remedial lessons

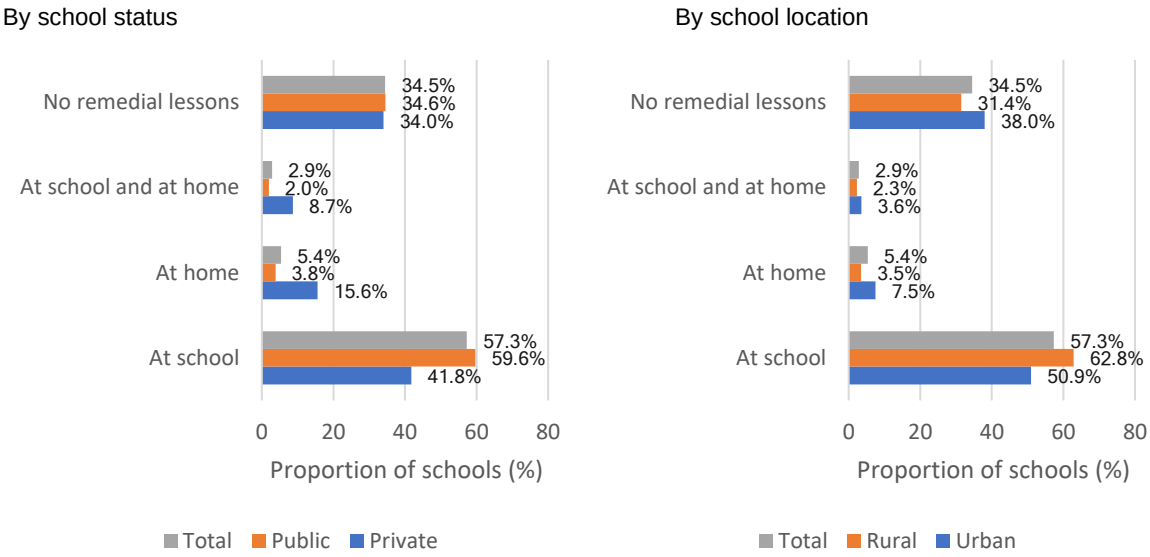
at school. This trend is reversed for courses taught at home; teachers from private schools were more likely to deliver lessons at home. The proportion of teachers providing remedial courses is higher in rural (62.8%) than urban areas (50.9%) (**Figure 28**).

FIGURE 27
Proportion of schools providing remedial lessons



Source: IPS, 2021

FIGURE 28
Proportion of teachers giving remedial lessons Proportion of teachers giving remedial lessons



Source: IPS, 2021

6. Conclusions and recommendations

The objective of this study was to take stock of the basic education situation in Senegal. Significant progress was revealed in access to education despite a decline in enrolment. While expanding access to schooling is needed to achieve learning for all, major efforts are required to improve learning outcomes. Seven critical factors across the education system were examined: (i) vision and focus on performance, (ii) teaching and learning, (iii) teachers, (iv) school management and leadership, (v) supervision and monitoring, (vi) community and parental engagement and (vii) learning assessments.

Progress has been made in the basic education system across these factors. With regard to vision and performance, progress has been made in local schools. Notable advances include the abolition of registration fees in public primary schools, the creation of school canteens in highly vulnerable rural areas, the enrolment of children with disabilities in primary school and improved student performance.

The main advances observed under teaching and learning are the introduction of a skills-based approach in the curriculum, regular integration of improvements in the curriculum, wide dissemination of the curriculum among teachers and the introduction of national languages in certain regions. Positive changes under teacher management include the recruitment of teachers through competitive processes and the systematization of initial and continuing training in CRFPEs and schools. School management has seen marked progress, such as decrees to create and operationalize CGEs and the Union des comités de gestion des écoles (School Management Committees Union); the introduction of a decentralized approach, in particular directly transferring resources from the central level to schools; progress reported in schools with a CGE and performance contracts; and an increased budget share attributed to the education sector.

Community engagement is marked by significant involvement of parents in the running of schools, the existence of functional APEs and significant contributions by households to financing public schools. Finally, the basic education system has several assessment systems to its credit: harmonized and standardized evaluations, end-of-cycle evaluations organized by the MEN Direction des examens et concours (Examination and Competition Department), assessments by SNERS, PASEC and the World Bank's SDI survey.

Nevertheless, the basic education system continues to face significant challenges that must be overcome to achieve universal and quality basic education. The most important of them are:

- Low quality of teachers
- Poor learning by students
- Inadequate education funding to support achieving education strategy goals
- Absence of a harmonized system to measure the level of learning and of a policy on use of assessment results
- Low access to preschool and a drop in primary school enrolment.

The following conclusions are drawn from the results of the literature review and discussions with the main actors in the basic education system. They are classified according to critical educational factors examined by this study.

Vision
The government's vision for the development of basic education should be better adapted to th various stakeholder categories, especially parents, whose commitment to their children's education is not sufficient. In many families, children only learn at school, do not practise at home and come to class tired from working in the fields. Better sharing of the vision that education equips children with basic skills and allows them to adapt to technological, economic and social changes could persuade those parents who are not convinced of its benefits that it is indeed important.

Teaching and learning
Improving school performance requires correcting inequality among public schools, better equipping disadvantaged establishments with teaching equipment, ending overcrowding in classes and reducing high teacher turnover in rural and peri-urban areas.

To improve learning, especially for children with learning difficulties, the number of students per teacher should be reduced. This can be achieved by building classrooms and recruiting teachers, employing reading and math instructors for students with learning difficulties and creating a secure school environment. Substantial

improvements in the curriculum are needed. The time allotted to reading and mathematics is insufficient given the complexity of the skills-based approach, which remains a major innovation for many teachers.

The use of teaching guides is also a source of difficulty. The need for better adaptation of the guides to local contexts and to the languages spoken are other reasons for revising the curriculum. Low availability of teaching materials and recommended teaching aids also requires attention.

The government seeks to introduce national languages into basic education by 2026. Three years from the deadline, all arrangements must be made to produce the necessary educational documents, understand teachers' linguistic profile, identify the teaching areas of each national language to be introduced, train teachers, plan a teacher redeployment programme and budget initial activities.

At the core of the proposals for short-term actions to improve learning outcomes are remedial courses for students in difficulty and changes in the CRFPE training programmes. These should put more emphasis on information and computer technology for education.

Teachers
As interviews and lesson observations revealed, teachers face significant competence issues. Observation of teacher attitudes during lessons, organization and structure of lessons, acquisition of knowledge by students and teaching methods shows the urgent need to upgrade teacher skills to significantly improve learning quality. Extending the duration of initial and continuing teacher training is necessary to provide teachers with pedagogical skills that meet the requirements of the curriculum, which follows a skills-based approach. Swift action needs to be taken in schools to address reading deficiencies in early grades. To do this, emphasis must be placed on the supervision of teachers who teach the early grades, in particular through internal reading and mathematics units. Improving teachers' working conditions, increasing their pay and eliminating delays in career advancement would further strengthen their commitment and improve the learning outcomes of their students.

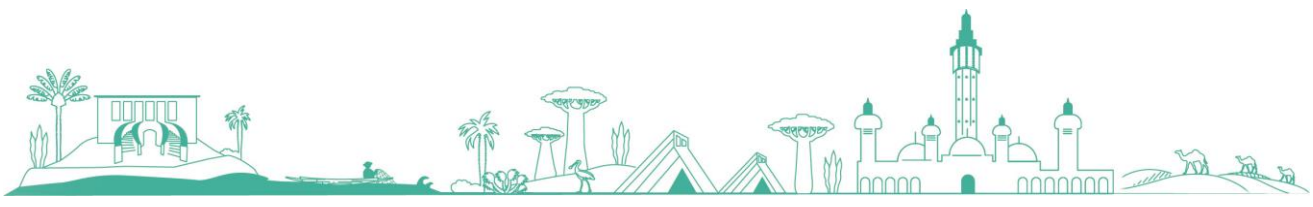
School management and leadership
The main challenge to financing basic education is the substantial gap between the cost of a 10-year school system and the availability of public resources. In the short term, the option available to the government is to significantly modify public spending in favour of basic education through intrasector allocation. Increased stability in the availability of budgets for bodies including IEFs and IAs is a necessary condition for proper application of the policies defined in the performance plan. Delays in funding hamper implementation of institutional action plans and school inspections.

Almost no school head teachers have been trained in financial management. To ensure the efficient use of resources, financial training must be provided to them. Recruitment by competitive process should be the rule for all appointments to positions of responsibility at the level of schools, IEFs and IAs. These positions should be open to candidates with strong skills in financial and administrative management of a school or in academic inspections.

Supervision and monitoring
Greater emphasis should be placed on the effectiveness of head teachers in monitoring learning and the regular monitoring of workbooks and educational reports to assess teacher compliance with the curriculum. Class visits, discussion circles and revitalized internal pedagogical support units are tools available to head teachers. IEFs should carry out more frequent missions in schools. The subdivision of IEFs into district-level units would allow for the increased presence of inspectors in schools.

Community and parental engagement
The community is committed to better quality. The most frequent meetings between parents and teachers are biannual or quarterly evaluation result meetings. Other meetings organized under the control of the CGE or APE are rare and bring together only a few members of these committees. There should be more interaction between parents and teachers on student performance. Systemic reforms should give parents more opportunities and tools to engage, building on the achievements of numerous projects and making it possible to better involve communities in school management and the monitoring of learning.

Local authorities can play a bigger, more important role in improving learning through reduction of temporary shelters, construction of classrooms and enclosure walls, development of more washbasins and toilets, and provision of office furniture, tables and benches. They can also provide incentives to retain teachers in difficult rural or peri-urban areas. The recruitment of tutors to support students with learning difficulties, especially in the fundamental disciplines of reading and mathematics, as well as the strengthening of parental commitment should also be included in the authorities' role. Similarly, local authorities can make parents more aware of issues



related to education by conducting personalized follow-up of students at home and facilitating more frequent interaction with teachers to help parents better understand how to support their children's education.

Learning assessments

Senegal should adopt a national policy for learning assessments and create a mechanism to guarantee regular evaluations. This needs to be supported by an operational budget for implementation. The basic education system should have a standardized national assessment system that tests on a regular basis, e.g. every three years, which would create a baseline for assessing comparable evidence over time on the level of student learning. Investing in such a system is a necessary condition for improving education quality.

Evaluation of learning plays a fundamental role at all levels of the education system and for all its actors. Therefore, it is necessary to further train actors in learning assessments and new exam formats. Harmonization of evaluation strategies and formats also deserves attention. While international assessments consider context variables, this is generally not the case in national assessments. A closer alignment of the content of national assessments with international tests would help teachers adopt assessment approaches and implement tools that support international standards, and thereby assist student learning. Assessment tools should be adapted to make greater use of technology over paper support. At the system level, evaluations should be used to restructure programmes and align them to international standards.

Five major recommendations can be drawn from these conclusions:

1. Increase the skills of teachers to improve their mastery of the basic education curriculum which has an impact on students' cognitive acquisition.
2. Change the allocation of public education sector spending in favour of basic education.
3. Reduce the deficit in school infrastructure to decrease the number of pupils per class and eliminate temporary shelters, which are a source of demotivation for pupils, parents and teachers.
4. Develop a national policy for the assessment of learning in basic education and establish a national system to conduct regular standardized assessments – for example, every three years.
5. Take all necessary actions to allow widespread use of national languages in the early years of primary education.

Abbreviations

AFD	Agence française de développement (French Development Agency)
APE	Association de parents d'élèves (parent–teacher association)
CE1/CE2	Cours élémentaires 1/2 (first and second elementary grades)
BFEM	Brevet de fin d'études moyennes (middle school leaving certificate)
CFEE	Certificat de fin d'études élémentaires (primary school leaving certificate)
CGE	Comité de gestion d'école (school management committee)
CI	Cours d'initiation (introductory grade)
CM1/CM2	Cours moyens 1/2 (first and second intermediate grades)
CODEC	Collectif des directeurs d'écoles (Collective of School Head Teachers)
CONFEMEN	Conférence des ministres de l'éducation des états et gouvernements de la Francophonie (Conference of Ministers of Education of States and Governments of La Francophonie)
CP	Cours préparatoire (preparatory grade)
CRES	Consortium pour la recherche économique et sociale (Economic and Social Research Consortium)
CRFPE	Centres régionaux de formation des personnels de l'éducation (Regional Education Staff Training Centres)
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
GAR	Gross admission rate
GDP	Gross domestic product
GER	Gross enrolment rate
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
IA	Inspection d'académie (academy inspectorate)
IEF	Inspection de l'éducation et de la formation (education and training inspectorate)
INEADE	Institut National d'étude et d'action pour le développement de l'éducation (National Research and Action Institute for Education Development
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MEN	Ministère de l'éducation nationale (Ministry of National Education)
MILO	Monitoring Impacts on Learning Outcomes
MPL	Minimum proficiency level
PAAME	Projet d'amélioration des apprentissages en mathématiques à l'élémentaire (Primary Mathematics Improvement Project)
PADES	Programme d'appui au développement de l'éducation au Sénégal (Senegal Education Development Support Programme)
PAQEEB	Projet d'amélioration de la qualité et de l'équité dans l'éducation base (Basic Education Quality and Equity Improvement Project)
PAQUET	Programme d'amélioration de la qualité, de l'equité et de la transparence (Quality, Fairness and Transparency Improvement Programme)
PASEC	Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs de la CONFEMEN (CONFEMEN Programme for Education System Analysis)
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
RNSE	Rapport national sur la situation de l'éducation (National Education Status Report)

SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDI	Service Delivery Indicator
SNERS	Système national d'évaluation des rendements scolaires (National School Performance Assessment System)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
XOF	West African franc

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