

Secondary education: the next great challenge



Albert Motivans

UNESCO Institute for Statistics
Brookings Institution, Washington, DC
6 December 2011

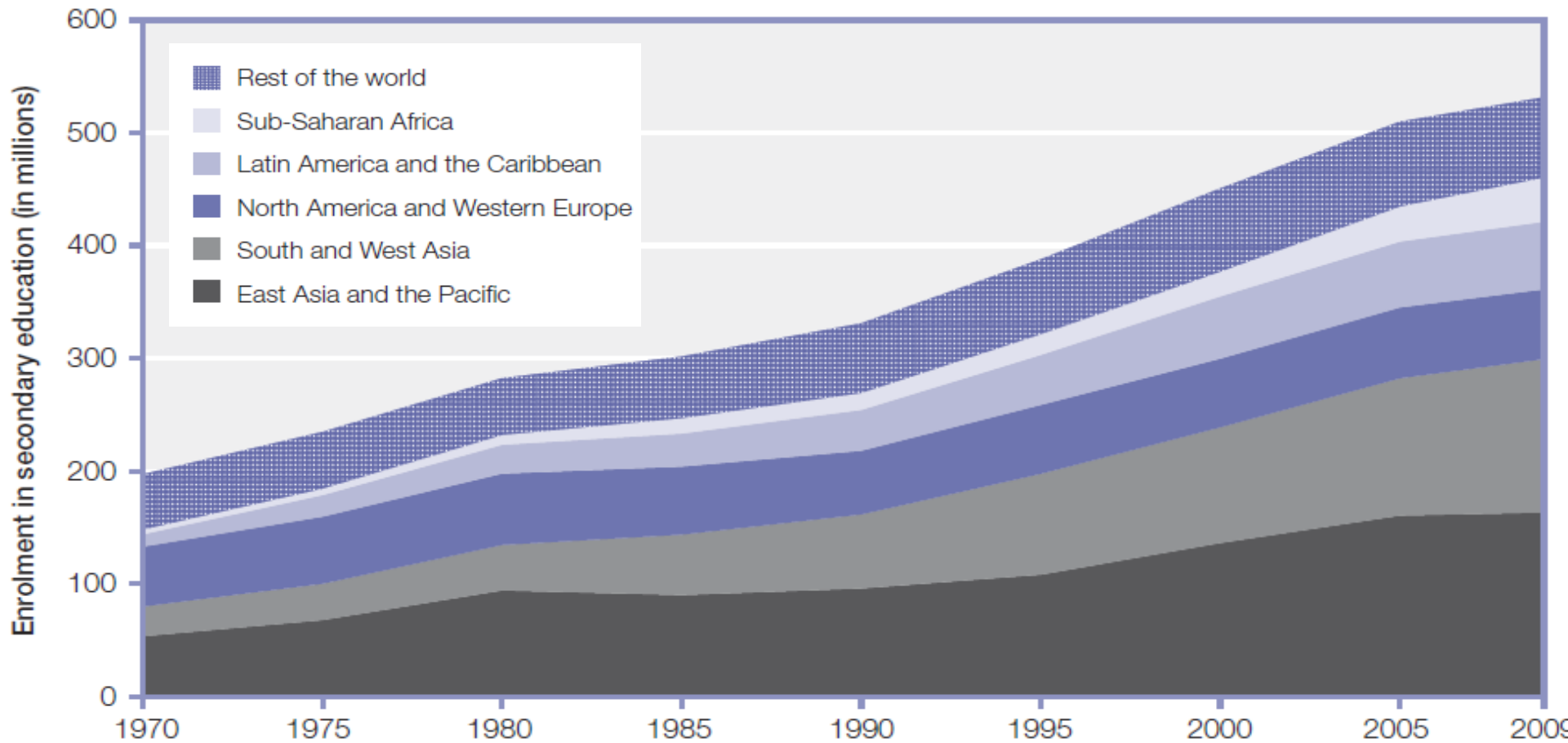
Nearing universal primary education, yet concerns about quality remain

- Proportion of primary school age children in school increased from 84% in 1999 to 90% in 2009
- 81% of children completed primary in 1999 compared to 88% in 2009
- Concerns remain about education quality and shortcomings in the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills even among completers

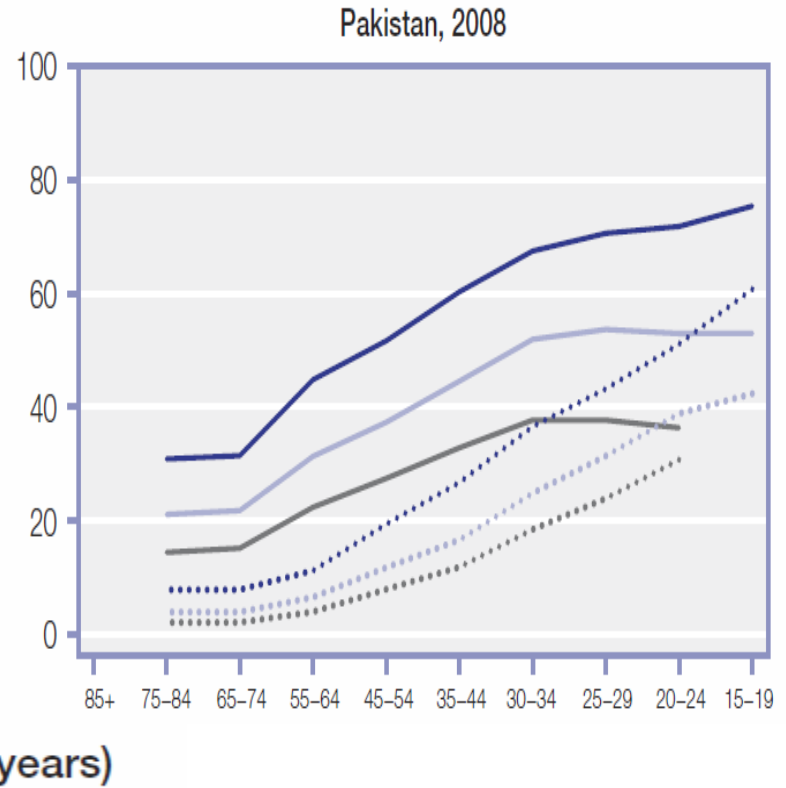
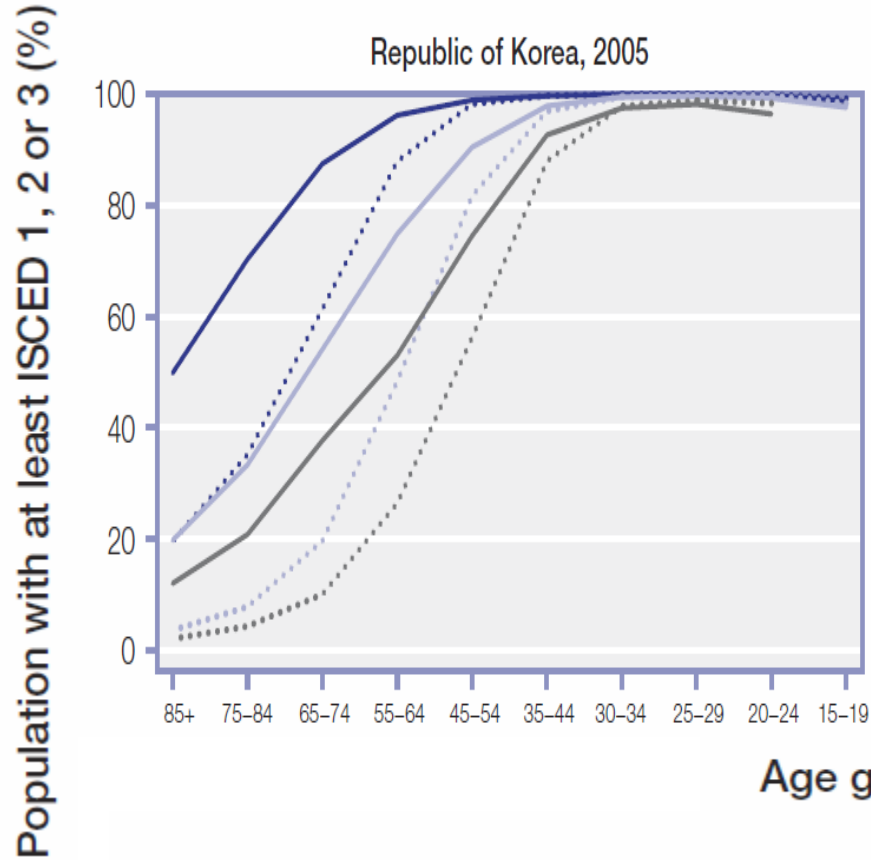
Secondary education as a bridge to a better future

- Key transition point between primary and higher education or school and the labour market
- Brings greater individual returns, such as employment, income, health status, etc. and social benefits through economic growth, better public health, civic participation, etc.
- Few regional and no global development targets, but 72 million lower secondary age youth were out of school in 2009 (compared to 67 million in primary)

Global number of secondary enrolments, 1970 to 2009



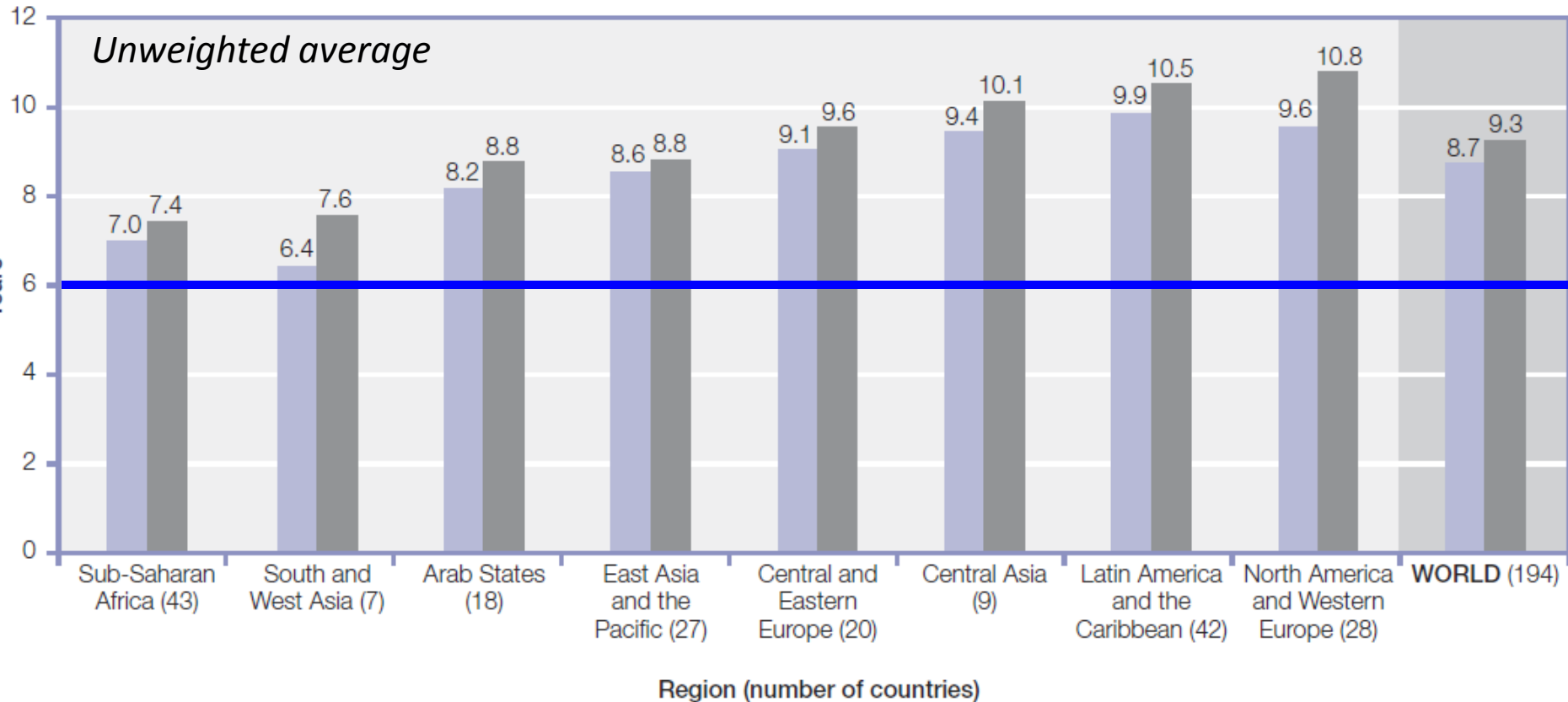
How long does it take to achieve broad access to secondary education?



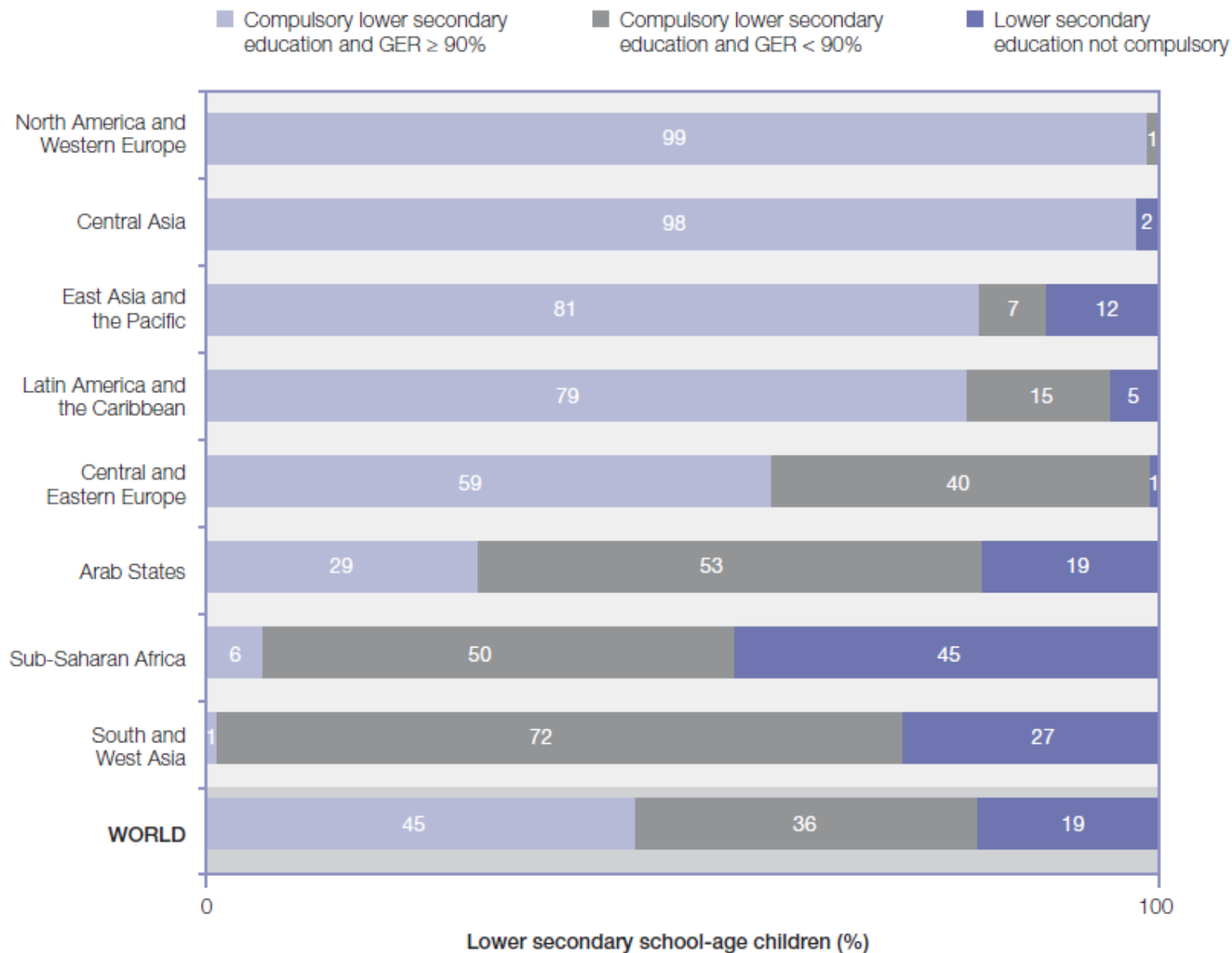
At least primary education (ISCED 1): male ——— female
 At least lower secondary education (ISCED 2): male ——— female
 At least upper secondary education (ISCED 3): male ——— female

Lower secondary education emerging as the new global norm

■ 1999 ■ 2009

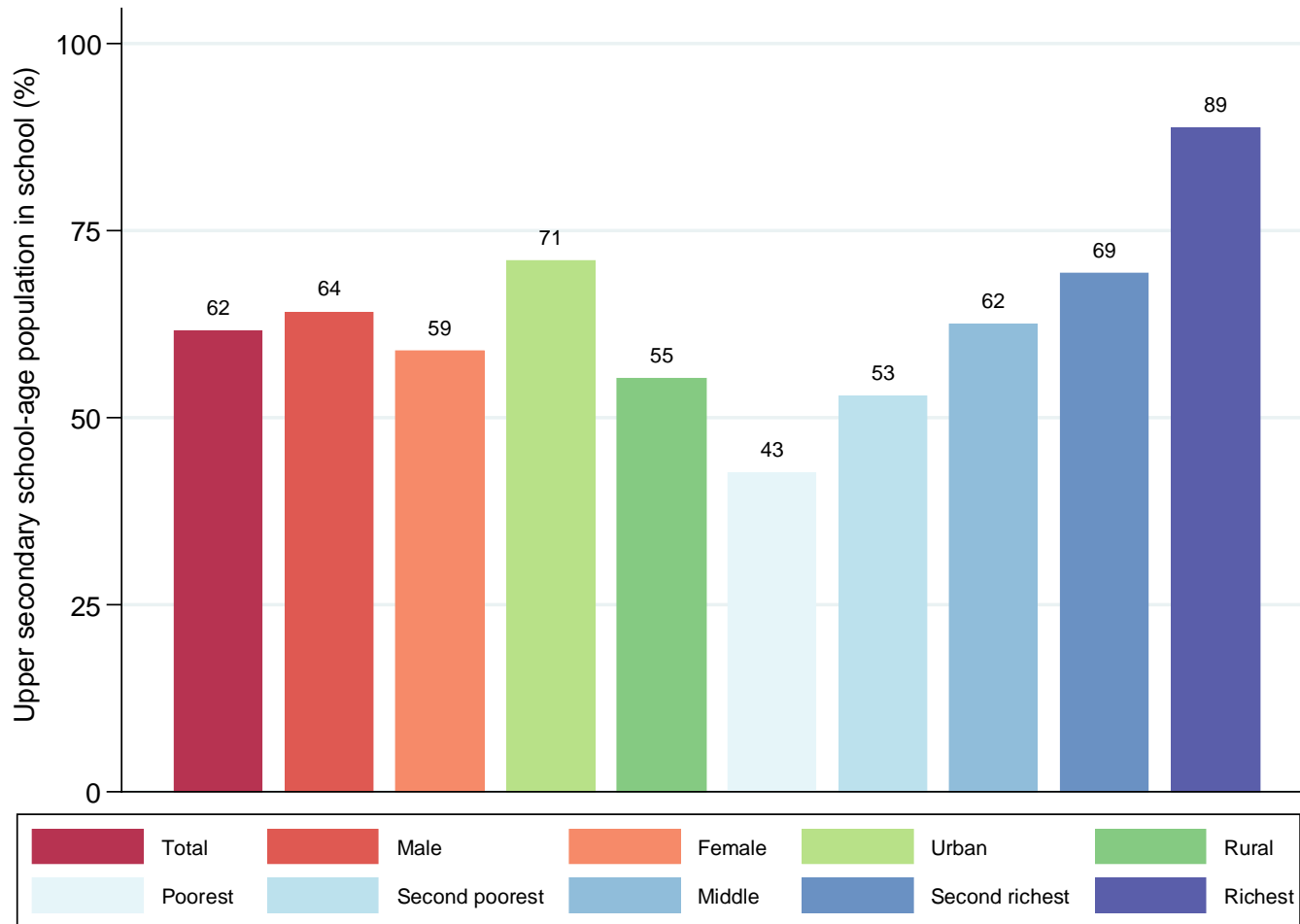


But commitments not always met...

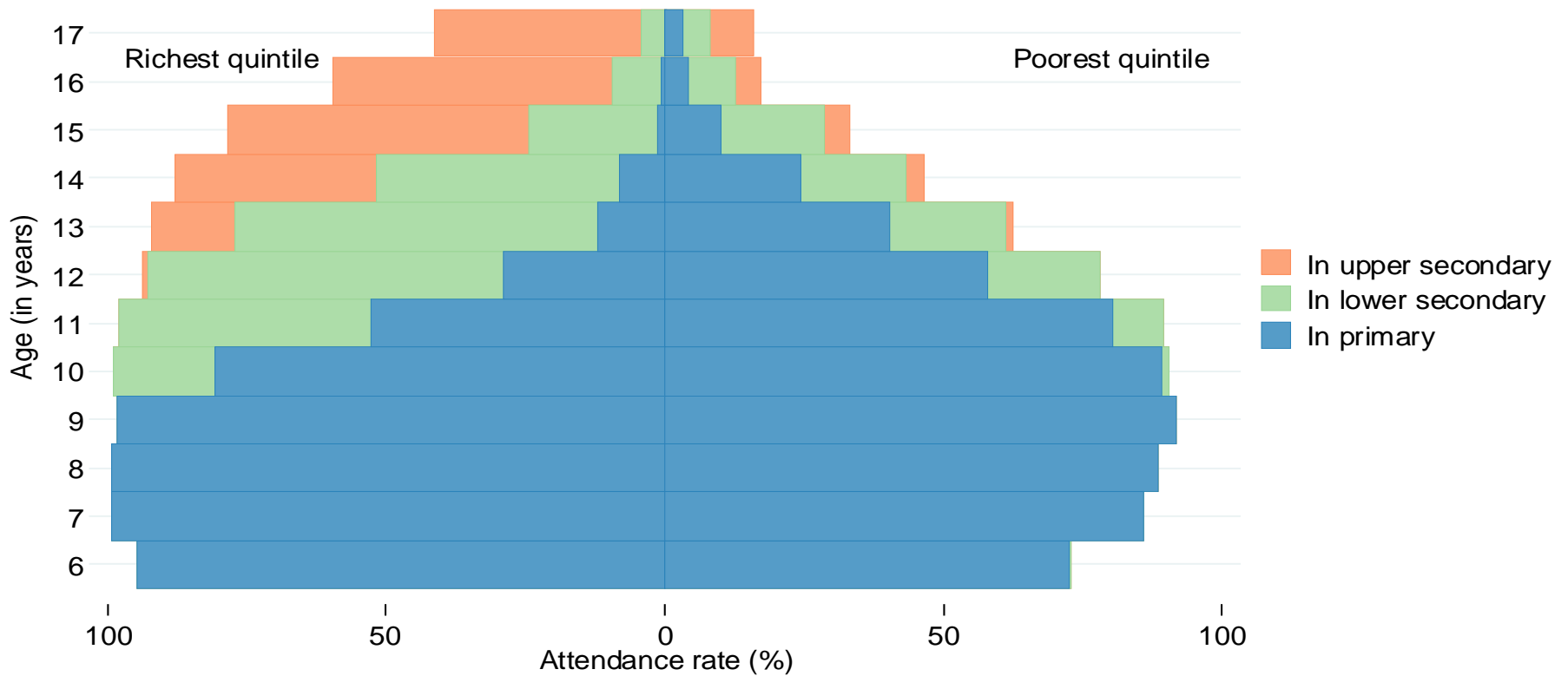


Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011

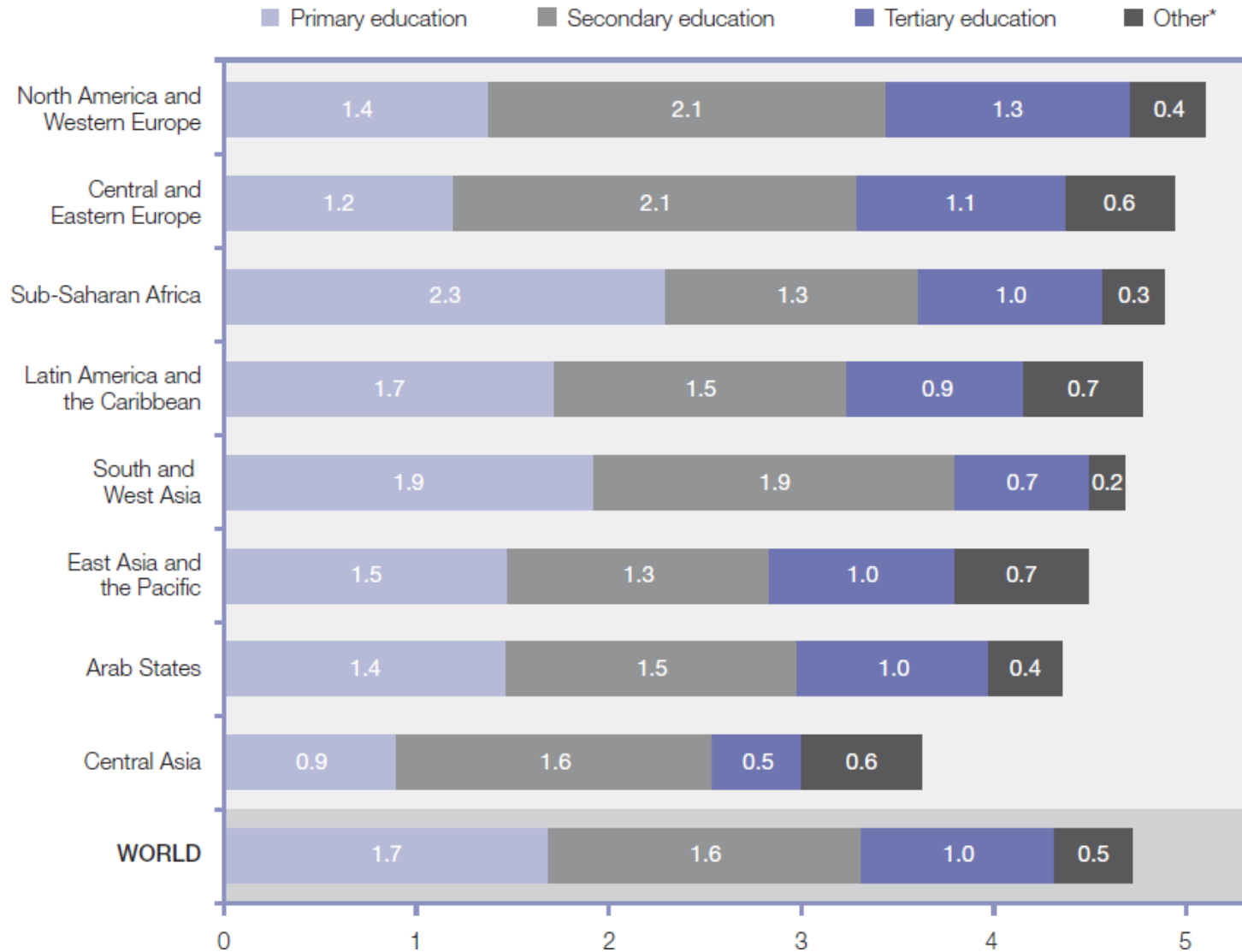
Upper secondary school-age children in school in Egypt, 2008



School attendance rates by wealth quintile in Cambodia, 2010



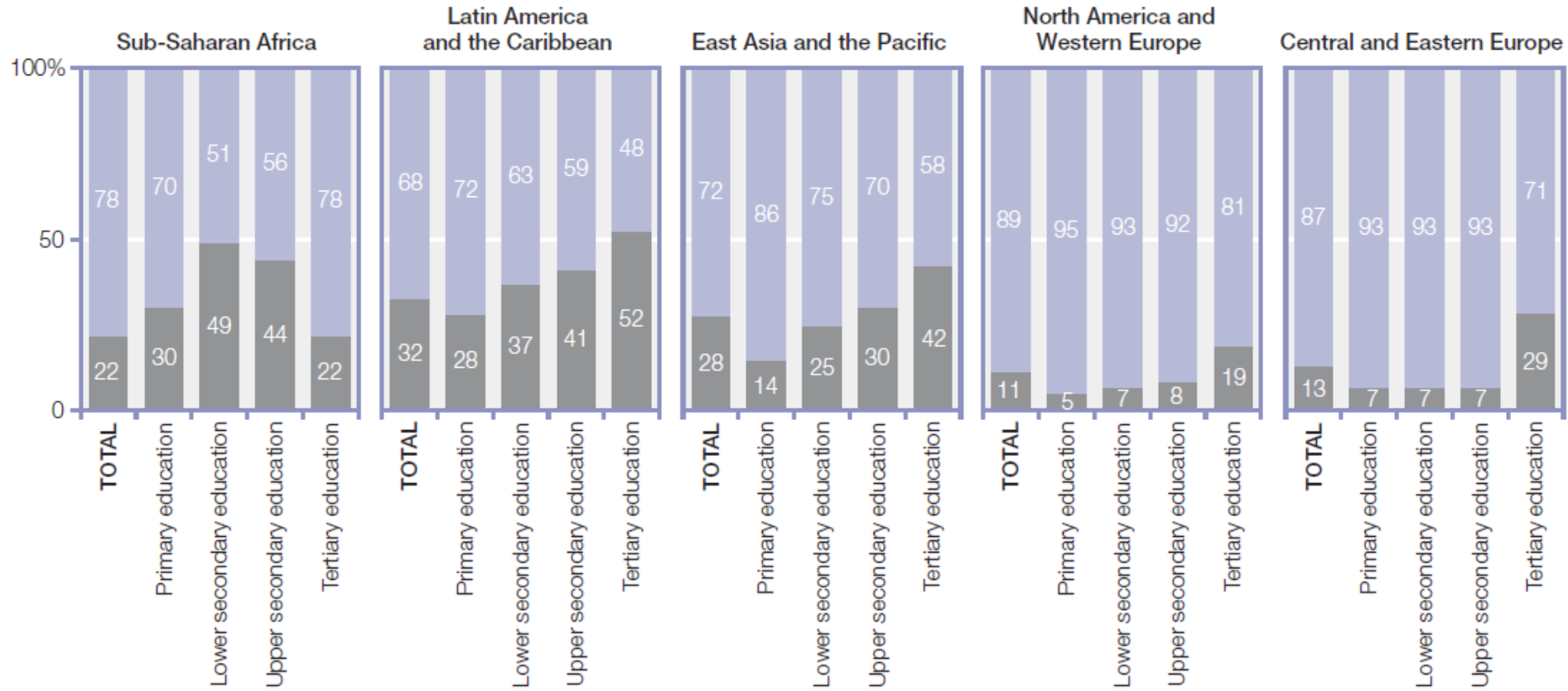
Public spending as a share of GDP by education level, 2009



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011

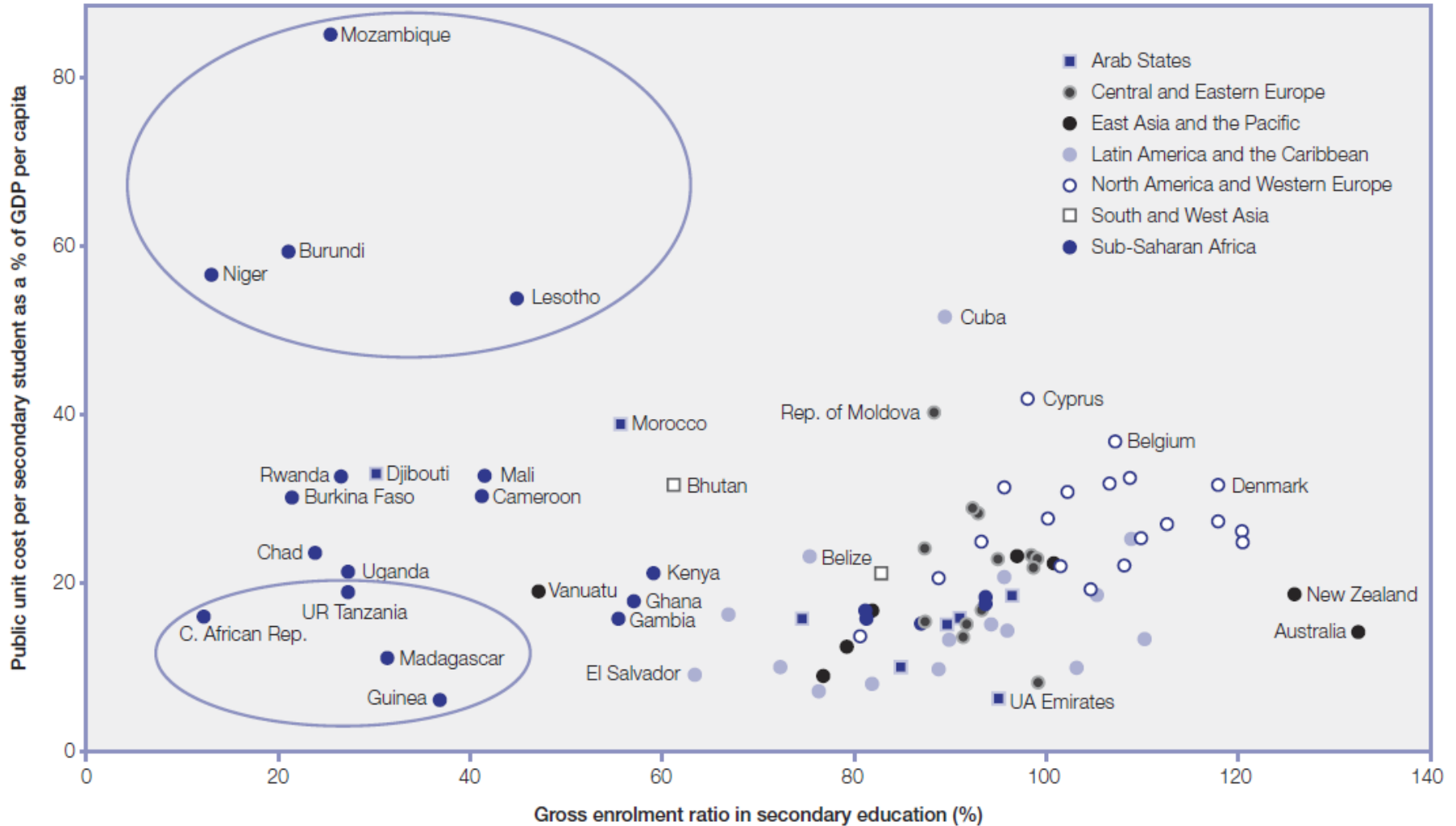
How much do households contribute to secondary education costs in the 2000s?

■ Household contributions ■ Public expenditure



Varying costs of secondary education

Public spending per secondary pupil as a % of GDP per capita and secondary GER



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011

Key policy issues for expanding secondary learning opportunities

- Few defined goals/targets for secondary
- Legal frameworks for compulsory education are no guarantee of implementation
- Education disparities widen for all groups
- Demand for teachers more diversified
- Gaps in knowledge about education quality
- Costs for households are considerable