

GEM Gender Report on Education Access, 2026

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Why in news?

The 2026 UNESCO GEM Gender Report on Education Access was released on October 9, 2026, coinciding with the International Day of the Girl Child.

- **GEM Gender Report** - It is published alongside the 2026 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report: Access and Equity and serves as the dedicated gender edition of the core 2026 GEM Report.
- **Objective** - It focuses on gender equity in access to education and assesses both progress made and persistent challenges worldwide.
- **Published by** - UNESCO.
- **GEM Report** - It examines how countries have improved educational access and equity over the last 25 years, focusing on participation in pre-primary, primary, secondary, and post-secondary education.
- It also evaluates progress in reducing disparities based on gender, location, wealth, and disability.



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Global Education Monitoring Report

Key findings of the GEM Gender Report

- **Out-of-School Numbers** - In 2024, approximately 273 million children, adolescents, and youth were out of school globally, marking the seventh consecutive year of increases in the out-of-school population.
- This includes 13 million children excluded due to conflict in ten West Asian countries.
- **Gender gaps have narrowed** - Since 2000, the share of countries with fewer than nine girls enrolled for every ten boys fell from 15% to 2% in primary education & from 18% to 5% in upper secondary education.
- **Upper Secondary Completion Gap** - While significant progress has been made toward gender parity in primary school enrollment, *global graduation rates drop sharply* at higher levels.
- Globally, 4 in 10 adolescent girls and young women do not finish upper secondary education, with only a 45% completion rate worldwide.
- **Severe Regional Disparities** - In Sub-Saharan Africa, upper secondary completion for girls drops to just 25%.
- A dedicated regional companion paper developed with the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) underlines the compound barriers girls face in the region.
- **Digital and Economic Gaps** - In low-income nations, 9 out of 10 adolescent girls lack internet access, limiting modern workforce skill development and leaving them critically disadvantaged compared to boys in acquiring modern digital competencies.
- **Intersecting Disparities** - The report highlights how factors like wealth, geographic location (rural vs. urban), conflict, and climate change compound gender-based inequalities.
- **Positive Progress** - Over a 25-year tracking period, some countries have slashed out-

of-school rates by at least 80% (such as Madagascar and Togo for children; Morocco and Vietnam for adolescents; Georgia and Türkiye for youth).

Reference

[UNESCO | Gem Gender Report, 2026](#)

