

Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI) Baseline Study

COUNTRY LEVEL REPORT – MAURITANIA

APRIL 2021

Acronyms

AFD	Agence française de développement
AfDB	African Development Bank
CLE	Country Level Evaluation
CME	Campagne mondiale pour l'éducation/World Campaign for Education
COMEDUC	Coalition des organisations mauritanienes pour l'éducation
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DG-DEVCO	Directorate-General International Cooperation and Development (EU)
DP	Development Partner
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESP	Education Sector Plan
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FNAPEE	Fédération nationale des associations des parents d'élèves et étudiants
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GCI	Gender at the Centre Initiative
GE	Gender Equality
GEP	Girls' Education Project
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPI	Gender Parity Index
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
JSR	Joint Sector Review
KII	Key Informant Interview
LEG	Local Education Group

M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAEPSP	Ministère des affaires économiques et de la promotion des secteurs productifs
MAIEO	Ministère des affaires islamiques et de l'enseignement originel
MASEF	Ministère des affaires sociales, de l'enfance et de la famille
MEF	Ministère de l'économie et des finances
MEJS	Ministère de l'emploi, de la jeunesse et des sports
MENETP	Ministère de l'éducation nationale et de l'enseignement technique et professionnel
MENFTR	Ministère de l'éducation nationale, de la formation technique et de la réforme
MESRTIC	Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur, de la recherche scientifique et des technologies de l'information et de la communication
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OOSC	Out-of-school Children
PASEB	Basic Education Sector Support Project
PAT	Plan d'action triennal
PMF	Performance Measurement Framework
PNDSE	Programme national de développement du secteur de l'éducation
PSEF	Plan sectoriel de l'éducation et de la formation
PTF	Partenaires techniques et financiers
RESEN	Rapport d'état sur le système éducatif national
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

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Mauritania – Baseline Country Report

1.1 Introduction

The Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI) aims to mobilize the advocacy, resources, and expertise needed to support governments in accelerating progress in gender equality, in and through education. With support from four of the G7 donors and a multi-stakeholder partnership, Mauritania is one of eight partner countries in sub-Saharan Africa where GCI will be implemented. Specifically, the Initiative will focus primarily on ensuring that country-owned interventions, strategies and plans are financed, implemented and monitored for sustainable results. To this effect, a baseline study was conducted from October 2020 to March 2021.

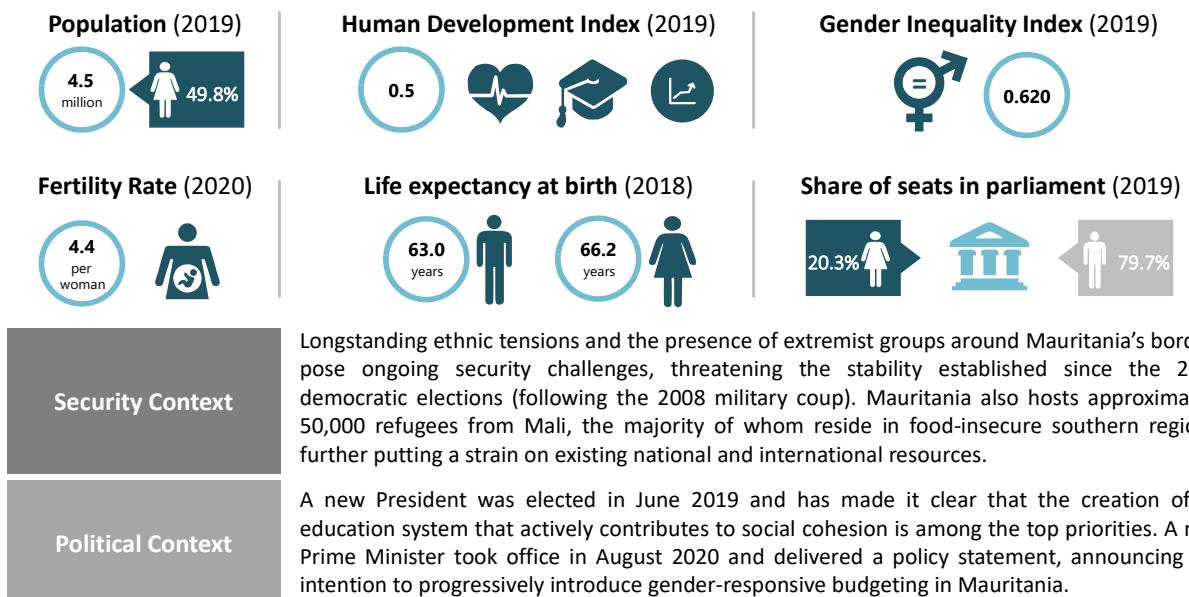
This report presents current gender equality-related findings for Mauritania, representing one of eight country reports within the broader global baseline study for the GCI. This country report for Mauritania includes: (1) A snapshot of the key gender and education issues in the country; and (2) the results of baseline data collection for each of the outcome-level indicators outlined in GCI's performance measurement framework (PMF). Key conclusions emerging from the results of the baseline data collection are presented in the global baseline study report.

1.2 Methodology

Data to determine baseline values on the various indicators in the GCI results framework was primarily collected through secondary data sources. This report draws on document and database reviews, relying when possible on existing sector monitoring processes and mechanisms, such as a joint sector review (JSR) conducted in 2018 and an education sector analysis conducted in 2015, as well as on national plans/strategies related to gender equality, among others.

Due to the context of the current COVID-19 crisis, data collection was conducted remotely, with limited access to key documents and secondary sources. Furthermore, the Universalia team was not able to schedule any interviews with stakeholders in Mauritania, despite requests having been made. While the team of consultants was able to lead the baseline exercise remotely, a richer set of evidence is lacking in some areas to present additional information or make stronger assertions. Gaps for some results indicators are highlighted in the analysis of the baseline findings ([section 1.5](#)). See [Appendix I](#) for a full list of documents reviewed.

1.3 Background Information on Mauritania



Source: UNDP Human Development Report (2019); World Bank Open Data (2020); UNFPA World Population Dashboard (2020)

1.4 Snapshot of Gender and Education in Mauritania

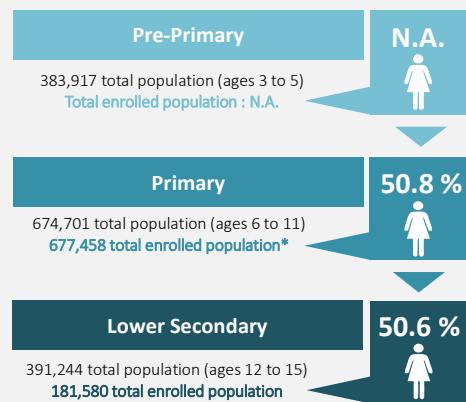
Gender in Education

Education system

The education system in Mauritania consists of five distinct levels: (1) Pre-primary education (three years); (2) primary education (six years); (3) lower secondary education (four years); (4) upper secondary education (three years); and (5) higher education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

Twenty percent of all formal schools are privately-funded, with the percentage of new enrollments in the private system growing exponentially. Privately-funded religious schools (*mahadras*), which are not part of the formal education system, are also critical in the country's education sector as they either replace formal education or complement formal schooling for many school-aged children.¹

Total school age population and total enrolled population in Mauritania by level of basic education and sex (2019)



¹ GPE, Summative CLE -- Mauritania, 2018.

Key issues in gender and education:

- **Poverty remains a key obstacle to education access.** The costs associated with schooling, such as books and school supplies, are prohibitive. This is especially true for girls whose education is often undervalued in society in comparison with boys.
- **School distance is also a challenge.** There are very few schools dispersed across the country's rural regions, with students required to walk long distances to get to school. This poses an additional risk for female students who are more vulnerable to different forms of violence on their way to school, and for whom education already presents a perceived opportunity cost.
- **Lack of school infrastructure, particularly sanitation facilities,** is another reason why female enrolment in secondary schools remains low in rural and poor areas. Girls face added challenges with menstrual hygiene management and a lack of access to private toilets in schools contribute to female school absenteeism and dropouts.

The following visuals present additional key underlying causes of gender inequality in the education sector and an overview of key indicators for gender and education.²

² Sources for overview of gender equality issues in Mauritania: GCI Country Profile – Mauritania; Mauritania Profile on Girls not Brides: <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/mauritania/>; OECD Development Center, Social Institutions and Gender Index – Mauritania Profile, 2019.

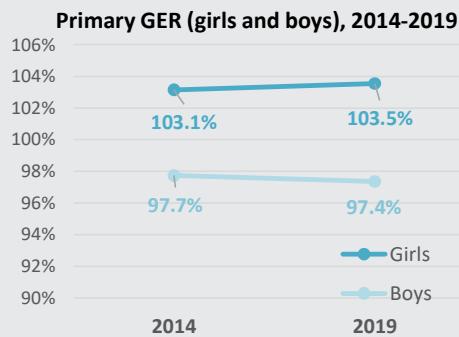
Overview of Gender Equality in Mauritania

Child Marriage (% of women aged 20-24 years who were married before age 18, 2019)	Mauritania has the 18 th highest prevalence of child marriage globally. The legal minimum age of marriage is 18 for girls and boys, but traditional customs and poverty create the conditions for the practice to persist. Pregnancy outside of marriage is a crime, often forcing girls to get married if they become pregnant. Mauritanian girls from poor households are almost two times more likely to marry young than those living in wealthy households. Additionally, 43% of women with no education were married as children, compared to 22% who had at least completed secondary education.
Adolescent Birth Rate (births per 1,000 women aged 15-19, 2019)	Mauritania has no national strategy or policy to address early pregnancy, which constitutes a significant challenge for girls at the lower secondary level. The country's current education sector plan does not address the issue nor advocate for girls who become pregnant so they can return to school and reach their full potential.
Violence Against Women (% of women aged 15 and older who experienced violence by a partner)	To date, Mauritania does not have a law for a comprehensive response to gender-based violence at the national level. In the past, a draft law presented to the Parliament has been rejected on two occasions. Individual laws address specific forms of violence, such as rape and female genital mutilation. Yet, there are no legal protections or remedies for women experiencing other forms of violence, including spousal abuse and sexual harassment. The lack of a comprehensive legal framework, combined with a cultural acceptance of practices that are harmful to women, have both enabled the perpetuation of violence against women in the country.

Overview of Trends in Key Indicators for Gender and Education

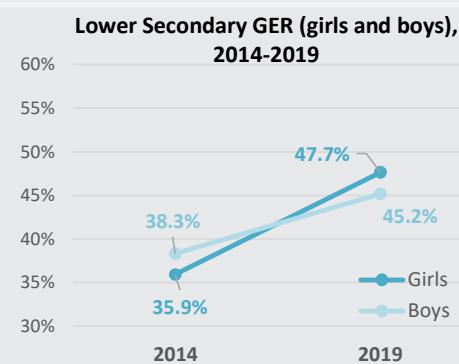
Primary Gross Enrollment Rate (GER)

GER for boys and girls have stagnated between 2014 and 2019, with the GER for girls higher than that of boys throughout the period. The gender parity index (GPI) for primary GER slightly increased from 1.05 to 1.06 during the same period.



Lower Secondary Gross Enrollment Rate (GER)

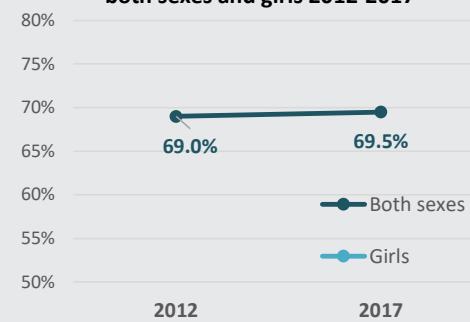
While the lower secondary GER increased for both sexes during the period 2014-2019, this increase was comparatively slightly higher for girls. Throughout the period, the lower secondary GER for girls has been higher than that of boys.



Primary Completion Rate

Primary completion rates in Mauritania have stagnated around 70% between 2012 and 2017. However, the country has made important progress and girls increasingly tend to complete their primary education in comparison with boys, as shown by the Gender Parity Index for completion rates which steadily increased from 1.0 in 2012 to 1.1 in 2017.

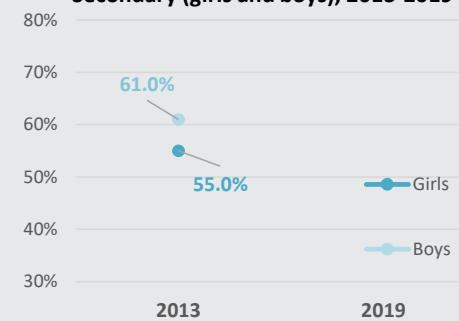
Primary Completion Rate, both sexes and girls 2012-2017



Transition Rate from Primary to Lower Secondary

Girls' transition from primary to lower secondary education was six percentage points lower than boys' in 2013. More recent transition rates are not available for Mauritania.

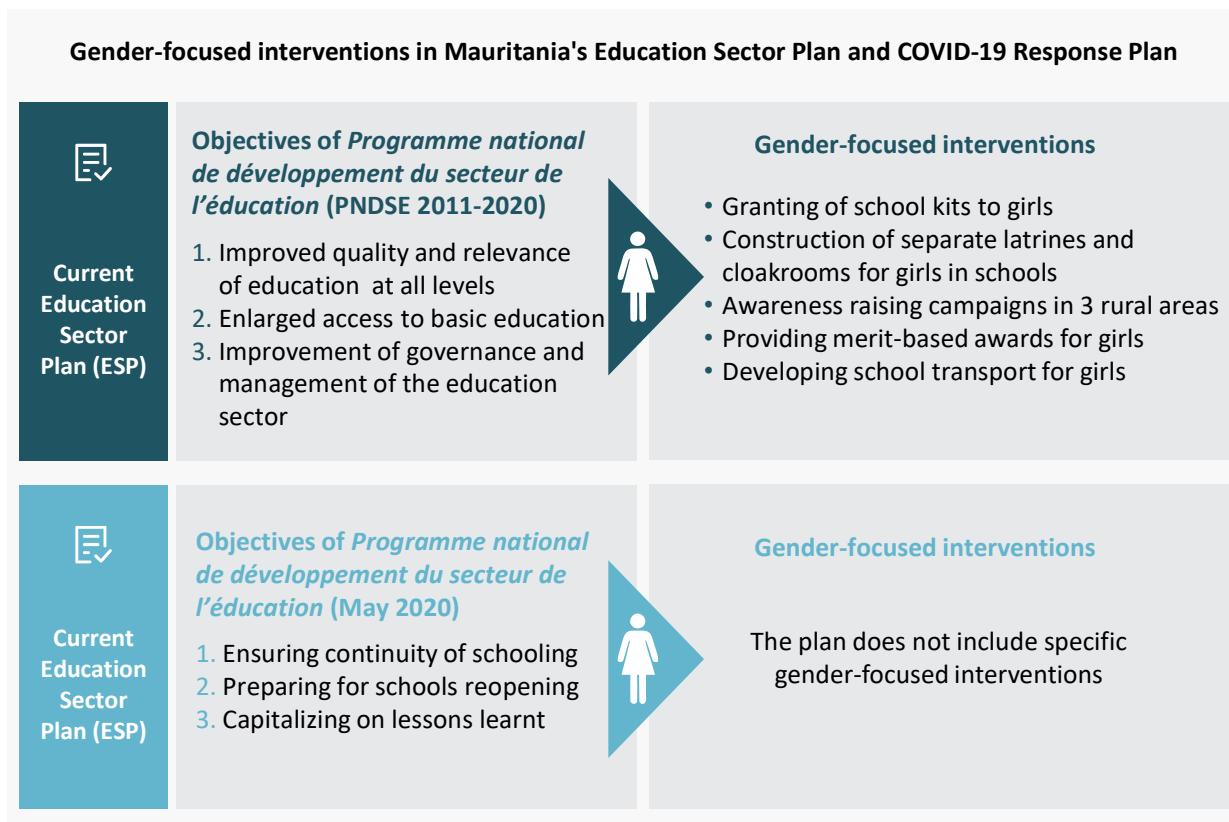
Transition Rate from Primary to Lower Secondary (girls and boys), 2013-2019



Source: UNESCO UIS (2019); GPE CLE - Mauritania (2018), GPE – Mauritania website

Education Sector Plans

Mauritania's current education sector plan (ESP) is the *Programme national de développement du secteur de l'éducation* (PNDSE II) 2011-2020. The country also issued an emergency response plan for the education sector in May 2020 to address the COVID-19 crisis.



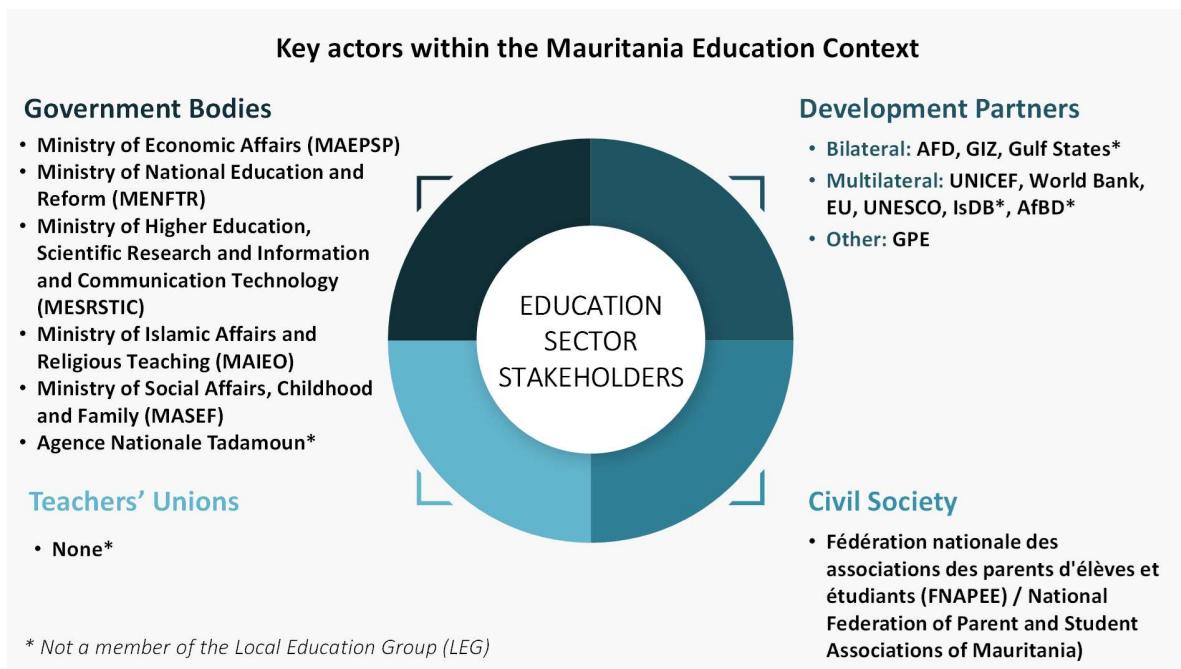
Mauritania's previous education sector plan entitled *Programme national de développement du secteur de l'éducation* (PNDSE I) covered the period 2001-2010. Joint sector reviews (JSR) of the PNDSE I were undertaken in 2017 and 2018. Please see the table below for a timeline of key sector plans and reviews.

Education Sector Stakeholders

There are currently **five ministries covering education** in Mauritania. Please see the table below for a breakdown of ministry and responsibility.

NAME OF MINISTRY	RESPONSIBILITY IN EDUCATION
Ministry of Social Affairs, Childhood and Family <i>Ministère des affaires sociales, de l'enfance et de la famille</i> (MASEF)	Early childhood education and gender related policies
Ministry of National Education, Technical Training and Reform <i>Ministère de l'éducation nationale, de la formation technique et de la réforme</i> (MENFTR)	Primary and secondary education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)
Ministry for Employment, Youth and Sports <i>Ministère de l'emploi, de la jeunesse et des sports</i> (MEJS)	Promotion of education and TVET
Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Religious Teaching <i>Ministère des affaires islamiques et de l'enseignement originel</i> (MAIEO)	Religious teaching through <i>mahadras</i> and improvement of adult literacy
Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Information and Communication Technology <i>Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur, de la recherche scientifique et des technologies de l'information et de la communication</i> (MESRSTIC)	Higher education

The role of the Local Education Group (LEG) is played by the *Groupe local des partenaires en éducation*, which meets two or three times per year and is currently led by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance. It includes representatives of the five ministers of education (MoEs), development partners who finance PNDSE II implementation, and one civil society representative. Several prominent stakeholders remain absent, including teachers' associations, NGOs involved in education service delivery, several donor agencies, and representatives from mahadras or private schools.



1.5 Baseline Findings

This section of the country report systematically addresses the baseline values for each of the outcome-level indicators outlined in the GCI performance measurement framework, based on a comprehensive document review of the most current information available.

All sources of information from which baseline values were derived are identified in the tables below. A comparison of baseline findings and comparative conclusions for Mauritania and all other partner countries will be addressed in the global baseline study report.

The time period which was considered for this baseline review was **2019 to July 2020**, i.e. information on actions, events, meetings or statements which took place prior to 2019, and post-July 2020 were not counted as baseline entries for indicators. However, some exceptions to this were made, especially in relation to the most recent ESPs, ESP implementation reporting, or education sector analyses (ESAs) published prior to 2019.

When relevant information was found from after July 2020, this is included in the report narrative for consideration to be included in GCI monitoring for the first full year of implementation of the initiative.

Intermediate Outcome 1

Intermediate Outcome 1: Improved gender equality mainstreaming in and through education led and implemented by Ministry(ies) of Education in conjunction with other relevant Ministries		
Performance indicators	Data collection methods and data sources that provided information to establish the baseline value	Baseline
1a Implementation rate of gender equality provisions within approved ESPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ESP: <i>Plan national de développement du secteur éducatif 2011-2020 (PNDSE II)</i>; ■ Triennial budgeted action plan (2019-2021) 	Insufficient data to provide a baseline value for implementation rate
1b Degree of coherence among interventions led and/or implemented by MoEs to address barriers to GE in education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Global Partnership for Education Country-Level Evaluation (GPE CLE) (2018) ■ JSR Aide-mémoires (2019) ■ PNDSE II ■ Stakeholder E-mail communications (November- December 2020) 	Not Coherent

Assessment of indicator 1a focused on the current ESP and the most recent implementation data available for the ESP. At the time of baseline data collection, no annual implementation report for the PNDSE II was available to determine a baseline value for indicator 1a. While the triennial budgeted action plan (2019-2021) that accompanies the ESP includes one objective on the development of girls' access to education (*Objectif B35 Développer la scolarisation des filles*), there was insufficient data available to assess the implementation rate (i.e. GE provisions planned vs. GE provisions delivered) of gender equality provisions within the PNDSE II, as well as insufficient information to assess the budget execution rate (i.e. actual vs. planned budget expenditures) of GE-focused activities within the PNDSE II. As such, no baseline value could be established for this indicator, as there was insufficient relevant data available from the documents reviewed.

Budget Execution Rate for Measuring Indicator 1a

Assessment of indicator 1a focused on current Education Sector Plans (ESPs) and the most recent implementation data available on ESPs. It was initially anticipated that a review of available reports on ESP implementation (e.g. annual implementation reports, mid-term reviews, joint sector review reports, with data source varying by country) could determine the rate (i.e. percentage) or proportion (i.e. ratio) of GE provisions delivered against those planned. However, no baseline data on the 'implementation rate' for GE provisions (i.e. actions, resource allocations, or other measures related to ESP implementation aimed explicitly at enhancing GE in education) within approved ESPs could be identified from available sources in GCI pilot countries. Thus, where it was possible, the baseline value for indicator 1a was calculated differently than anticipated, as follows: 1) the number of GCI pilot countries officially reporting 'budget execution rates' (i.e. actual vs. planned budget expenditures) for GE provisions within approved ESPs; and 2) changes to the budget execution rates (actual expenditures relative to budget) for GE provisions within ESPs for GCI pilot countries reporting this data.

With respect to indicator 1b, the degree of coherence among interventions led and/or implemented by MoEs to address barriers to GE in education was assessed based on five criteria using a four-point scale (see textbox below). The assessment of this indicator relied primarily on the 2018 GPE CLE report as it was the most up-to-date document available and reasonable to presume that the information reflects the current state.

Mauritania was found to meet none of the five criteria for coherence and was rated as not coherent for the reasons explained below:

Criterion 1: There was no evidence of a pooled fund or SWAP to date in Mauritania. The 2018 GPE CLE notes that some of the donors interviewed for the evaluation compared education sector coordination with that of the health sector in Mauritania, with the latter being perceived as more open, harmonized and evolving towards the use of pooled funding mechanisms. The 2018 GPE CLE also states that there is limited evidence of promoting greater alignment among the LEG with national systems nor harmonization among development partners during the period under review, either in the form of pooled funding, coordinated reporting, or joint evaluation.

Criterion 2: There was no evidence of a functional coordination mechanism around gender in Mauritania. The GPE CLE does not mention such a mechanism, nor is it mentioned in the JSR review published in February 2019. According to an e-mail exchange with a key stakeholder, GE in education does not appear to have been a matter discussed during previous LEG meetings; and the issue of GE in education has not been specifically discussed by development partners.

Criterion 3: There was no evidence of alignment between ESP gender objectives and the interventions of key education sector actors. The 2018 GPE CLE notes that there has been no discernable improvement in alignment or harmonization of international investment with government systems nor any movement towards pooled funding or joint reporting among development partners.

Criterion 4: The 2018 GPE CLE highlights that in addition to the LEG, the government of Mauritania has an internal coordinating structure for the governance of PNDSE II among the five education ministries to include: An inter-ministerial committee which operates at a policy level and is responsible for strategic direction and performance, and a steering committee which operates at a more operational level responsible for coordination and implementation oversight. However, the 2018 GPE CLE also highlights that the limited coordination between the five ministries in the education sector appears to represent a significant challenge for sector dialogue in the Mauritanian context. The government's internal PNDSE II coordination and governance structures are not fully functional or effective, and the institutional architecture for PNDSE II governance is complex. The external evaluations of both existing Triennial Action Plans (PATs) under PNDSE II underscore the complexity of institutional arrangements for PNDSE II, the lack of policy coordination or joint action between ministries in education, and consequentially the absence of genuine sectoral dialogue or sectoral decision-making.

Criterion 5: There was little evidence of joint monitoring and evaluation of ESP objectives, strategies, action plans and initiatives related to addressing gender barriers to education. Joint monitoring mechanisms are in place (JSRs have been held in 2017 and 2018). However, while the JSR report published in February 2019 addresses GE in education, it does not specifically mention or analyze gender barriers.

Criteria and Rating Scale for Indicator 1b

To establish a baseline value for indicator 1b, the degree of coherence among interventions led and/or implemented by MoEs to address barriers to GE in education was assessed based on five criteria, which were developed by the Universalia team during the baseline study. The five criteria are:

- 1) There is a pooled fund or SWAP which includes specific provisions to address gender barriers to education;
- 2) There is a dedicated and functional coordination mechanism in the education sector addressing gender barriers in education (e.g. Gender Working Group of LEG);
- 3) There is evidence of alignment between ESP gender objectives and the interventions of key education sector actors;
- 4) There is evidence of complementarity, synergy, collaboration among education sector actors to implement joint and/or coordinated initiatives with regard to addressing gender barriers to education;
- 5) There is evidence of joint monitoring and evaluation of ESP objectives, strategies, action plans and initiatives related to addressing gender barriers to education.

Furthermore, the baseline value for indicator 1b was established according to the number of criteria met, using a four-point rating scale defined as follows: Highly coherent = all 5 criteria met; Coherent = 3-4 criteria met; Somewhat coherent = 1-2 criteria met; Not coherent = None of the criteria met.

Immediate Outcome 1.1

Immediate Outcome 1.1: Strengthened institutional systems and processes within MoE to mainstream gender equality in education sector analysis, policies, planning, budgeting, strategies, and programs

Performance indicators	Data collection methods and data sources that provided information to establish the baseline value	Baseline
1.1a Gender responsiveness of education strategic sector planning documents and tools at the national and subnational levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ESP: <i>Plan national de développement du secteur éducatif 2011-2020 (PNDSE II)</i>; ■ ESA: <i>Analyse sectorielle (RESEN)</i> (2015) ■ GPE CLE (2018) ■ Triennial budgeted action plan (2019-2021) 	Somewhat gender-responsive

The gender responsiveness of education strategic sector planning documents and tools was assessed based on the number and extent to which six gender-responsive criteria were met, using a four-point rating scale (see textbox). Data sources used focused on the most recent sector planning documents.

Only two of the six gender-responsive criteria (Criterion 1 and 4) were deemed to have been adequately met to determine the gender responsiveness of education strategic sector planning documents and tools at the national and subnational levels.

Criterion 1: The PNDSE II presents an analysis of the education sector, which highlights some of the key trends of GE in education in terms of enrollment rates, transition rates, and retention rates, as well as an analysis of geographic disparities. The ESA (RESEN 2015) also briefly examines gender in the education sector, particularly in terms of geographic disparities.

Criterion 4: The Triennial Budgeted Action Plan (PAT 2019-2021) has a dedicated budget for actions to address gender issues in education at the secondary level (*Objectif B35: Développer la scolarisation des filles*). This objective has a corresponding general activity on putting measures in place to promote girls' education, notably in rural areas: *Mise en place de mesures visant la promotion de la scolarisation des filles, notamment en milieu rural* - with nine specific tasks such as awareness raising campaigns, awards to deserving girls, distribution of college kits for girls, school infrastructure improvements, among others.

Criteria 2, 3, 5 and 6: Other criteria of gender responsiveness in education were not adequately met, resulting in a baseline determination that education strategic sector planning documents and tools at the national and subnational levels are considered only somewhat gender-responsive.

Criteria and Rating Scale for Indicator 1.1a

To establish the baseline value for indicator 1.1a, the gender-responsiveness of education sector planning documents and tools was assessed based on six criteria drawn from UNGEI's Appraisal Form: Is the Education Sector Plan gender-responsive?³

The six criteria are:

1. Analysis of the gender situation in the education sector;
2. Participation of key stakeholders with expertise on gender in ESP development. These could include CSO representatives, gender focal points in MoEs, and other relevant ministries;
3. Coherence of the ESP with national gender goals and priorities on issues affecting girls' and boys' education, such as sexual and gender-based violence, child marriage, child labour, etc.;
4. A budget specifically dedicated to addressing gender issues in education;
5. A gender unit or focal point for gender equality in MoEs equipped with resources at national and sub-national levels (the assumption is that they have the influence, capacity, budgets, and time to do their work);
6. An M&E plan that takes gender into consideration by providing for sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis (e.g. baseline and targets).

Based on the number of criteria met, the baseline value for indicator 1.1a was established according to a four-point rating scale defined as follows: Highly gender-responsive = All 6 gender-responsive criteria reflected; Gender-responsive = 4-5 gender-responsive criteria reflected; Somewhat gender-responsive = 2-3 gender-responsive criteria reflected; Not gender-responsive = Fewer than 2 gender-responsive criteria reflected.

³ See UNGEI's Education Sector Plan Gender Review: A guide to support gender responsive education planning (2013) for a further breakdown of the various elements that were considered in assessing each of these six criteria.

Immediate Outcome 1.2

Immediate Outcome 1.2: Strengthened technical capabilities within MoE and other relevant ministries working in conjunction with MoEs to mainstream gender equality in education, including in emergency contexts

Performance indicators	Data collection methods and data sources that provided information to establish the baseline value	Baseline
1.2a Number and position of staff at MoE and other relevant Ministries who report using in daily work new knowledge and skills acquired through training on mainstreaming gender equality in education, including in emergency contexts		0 staff at MoE and other relevant Ministries

Assessment of this indicator relied on the most recent information available from 2019 to July 2020. Based on the documents reviewed, there was no evidence to indicate that Mauritania has recently had, or currently has, any significant programmes or initiatives which provided training to ministerial representatives over the past year on mainstreaming gender equality in education (including in emergency contexts). Any information on whether potentially trained individuals use new knowledge and skills in their daily work is therefore unavailable.

Immediate Outcome 1.3

Immediate Outcome 1.3: Strengthened capacity of MoE to change internal organizational culture to advance gender equality

Performance indicators	Data collection methods and data sources that provided information to establish the baseline value	Baseline
1.3a Number and type of (new) actions taken by senior MoE decision- and policy-makers reflecting a commitment to strengthen or institutionalize mainstreaming GE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ COVID-19 response plan: Plan de riposte de l'éducation en réponse à la pandémie du COVID-19 (May 2020) ▪ GPE Website 	1 new actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ COVID-19 response plan

Assessment of this indicator relied on the most recent information available from 2019 to July 2020. Based on the documents reviewed, one initiative was identified: The COVID-19 education response plan issued in May 2020 entitled “*Plan de riposte de l'éducation en réponse à la pandémie du COVID-19*”. While this COVID-19 response plan does not specifically mention actions related to GE mainstreaming, the GPE website highlights a \$3.5 million USD COVID-19 grant (Islamic Development Bank) supporting the following, among others: Vulnerable children, especially girls in poor areas; and training teachers to provide psychosocial support to students, especially girls.

For consideration to be included in GCI monitoring for Year 1 of the Initiative: A statement made in September 2020 by Mauritania’s new Prime Minister briefly mentions the empowerment of women, women’s rights, women’s political participation, the promotion of women in entrepreneurship, and the socio-economic rehabilitation of girls’ who have prematurely dropped out of school. The statement also specifies that the government intends to progressively introduce gender-sensitive budgeting.

Immediate Outcome 1.4

Immediate Outcome 1.4: Strengthened leadership by MoE for inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral dialogue and coordination to address demand- and supply-side barriers to gender equality in education

Performance indicators	Data collection methods and data sources that provided information to establish the baseline value	Baseline
1.4a Evidence of MoE collaboration and coordination with other ministries/ units/ agencies in support of initiatives that are critical to gender equality in education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ MASEF Strategy (May 2015) ■ JSR Aide-mémoires (2019) 	Some evidence

While the baseline study attempted to find the most updated evidence of MoE collaboration and coordination with other ministries/units/agencies in support of initiatives that are critical to GE in education, it also relied on information provided in documentation published prior to 2019.

Based on sources consulted, non-education ministries do not appear to be significantly involved in existing education sector dialogue mechanisms in Mauritania, with the exception of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Promotion of Production Industries (*Ministère des affaires économiques et de la promotion des secteurs productifs* - MAEPSP). Specifically, this Ministry is responsible for budget allocations to the education sector and its Secretary General is the chair of the LEG. The Ministry of Interior and Decentralization is also involved in the implementation of the PNDSE II; however, there was no evidence of their involvement in, or support of, initiatives that are specifically critical to GE in education.

In terms of GE in education, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and Family (*Ministère des affaires sociales, de l'enfance et de la famille* - MASEF) appears to be the ministry that collaborates most with MoEs in Mauritania. Their Action Plan (2015-2017) lists a series of actions related to the promotion of girls' education, including: Advocacy campaigns, awards, boarding schools, cash transfer programs, and school buses. The MASEF strategy (May 2015) states that gender should be mainstreamed in most sector policies and programmes, including in education. To this effect, the strategy planned to create specific gender units within different ministries. However, there is no evidence that this has been effectively implemented since 2015. One of the recommendations made by the 2019 JSR aide-memoire is to reactivate these gender units in conformity with the June 7, 2017 PM decree n°2017-080 on the creation, composition, attributions and operation of a coordination, piloting and monitoring mechanism for the National Strategy for the Institutionalization of Gender (*Stratégie nationale d'institutionnalisation du genre*).

According to its May 2015 strategy, the MASEF also intended to provide technical support to other ministries in developing gender-responsive approaches to policy programming. The strategy also highlighted plans for collaboration with the MoE in order to fight against gender stereotypes and promote a culture of gender equality. Specifically, this plan for implementation in coordination with the MoE included two actions: 1) The revisions of school curricula and handbooks; and 2) plans for the design of a programme on Human Rights Education (including GE and non-discrimination as a human right).

Intermediate Outcome 2

Intermediate Outcome 2: Improved education sector enabling environment in support of MoE's efforts in gender equality mainstreaming in and through education		
Performance indicators	Data collection methods and data sources that provided information to establish the baseline value	Baseline
2a Degree to which Annual Joint Sector Review aide-mémoires include references to GE in education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Joint Sector Review (JSR) (2019) ■ JSR Aide-mémoires (2019) 	Satisfactory

The degree to which annual JSR aide-mémoires include references to GE in education was assessed based on a four-point scale: Significant = numerous references and cross-cutting integration of GE; Satisfactory = evidence of integration of GE but not cross-cutting; Limited = some references to GE; Unsatisfactory = no or very few references to GE.

The latest JSR available was published in early 2019 and covers achievements for 2018. In its terms of reference, it lists a series of specific objectives including the examination of four thematic areas; one of these thematic areas is labelled “Gender and Equity in the Education System” (*Genre et équité dans le système éducatif*).

The JSR aide-mémoires contains a section with findings for this thematic area, among other findings linked with issues related to equity (e.g. geographic disparities, poverty). While references to GE in education are limited and not cross-cutting, it is worth noting that six of the seven recommendations are focused on, or refer to, GE in education.⁴

The JSR aide-mémoires also contains a section presenting the achievements of a project which partly aims at enhancing girls' access to schools at the secondary level. The project is entitled *Autonomisation des femmes et dividende démographique au Sahel* and includes a sub-component entitled *Amélioration de l'accès et de la rétention des filles au secondaire*.

⁴ In French, the recommendations are listed as follows: 1. *Institutionnaliser la dimension genre au sein des ministères en charge de l'éducation et de la formation professionnelle*; 2. *Redynamiser les cellules sectorielles genre : MEF, MENETP et du MAIEO conformément aux dispositions du décret PM n°2017-080 du 07 juin 2017 portant création, composition, attributions et fonctionnement d'un mécanisme de coordination, de pilotage et de suivi de la Stratégie Nationale d'institutionnalisation du Genre*; 3. *Rendre les systèmes d'informations sur l'éducation et la FTP plus sensibles au genre et à l'équité (collecte, analyse et publication), assurer la publication périodique des statistiques désagrégées par sexe, lieu de résidence, localisation administrative, handicap, niveau de vie des parents*; 4. *Le rapport annuel de la situation de l'éducation devra mieux analyser et refléter les dimensions du genre et de l'équité*; 5. *Elaborer un rapport annuel parallèle au rapport du Gouvernement sur la situation du secteur par des parties prenantes extérieures à l'administration publique (Centre spécialisé en éducation, OSC)*; 6. *Elaborer et mettre en œuvre une stratégie nationale d'accélération de l'élimination des inégalités et des disparités dans le système éducatif axée sur la problématique des enfants hors écoles (atteinte des cibles genre et équité de l'ODD4)*; 7. *Renforcer les capacités des équipes de gestion du système éducatif à tous les niveaux (national et régional) dans les domaines du genre et d'analyse des inégalités*.

In addition, the JSR aide-mémoires reports on trends in key education indicators, including a few references to sex-disaggregated data. These mostly include references to GE in education,⁵ but lacks substantial reporting on gender disparities in the education sector.

Immediate Outcome 2.1

Immediate Outcome 2.1: Strengthened capacity of national- and local-level civil society organizations, including youth-led organizations, to undertake effective evidence-based policy advocacy, campaigning and programming on GE in education

Performance indicators	Data collection methods and data sources that provided information to establish the baseline value	Baseline
2.1a Number of references to CSO policy positions/actions, campaigning and programming on GE in education, in LEG Annual GCI Update		Baseline will be collected in late 2021, when each country completes its GCI LEG Annual Report
2.1b Number of coordination meetings held by education-oriented CSOs focusing on GE in education		0 coordination meetings held by education-oriented CSOs focusing on GE in education Multiple requests for information did not result in receipt of documents showing evidence of GE in education-focused CSO meetings. For the purposes of the GCI Baseline, the value recorded shall therefore be 0.
2.1c Number of LEG meetings attended by CSO representatives		0 LEG meetings attended by CSO representatives Multiple requests for information did not result in receipt of documents showing evidence of LEG meetings being held. For the purposes of the GCI Baseline, the value recorded shall therefore be 0.

As LEG annual GCI updates will only be produced once implementation of GCI effectively begins in Year 1, the baseline for indicator 2.1a will be collected in late 2021, once each country completes its GCI LEG Annual Report. Baseline values for indicators 2.1b and 2.1c were based on information available from 2019 to July 2020.

⁵ References include: gross enrollment rate higher for girls than for boys; repetition rates higher for girls than for boys for the past 5 years at primary level; repetition rates slightly lower for girls than for boys in lower secondary level; repetition rate lower for girls than for boys in upper secondary level; transition rates for both boys and girls.

With respect to indicator 2.1b, despite multiple requests for information, no documents were received to evidence CSO coordination. For the purposes of the GCI baseline, the value recorded shall therefore be zero.

With respect to indicator 2.1c, no meeting minutes were available to evidence that LEG meetings were being held. As such, the GCI baseline was recorded as zero.

For consideration to be included in GCI monitoring for Year 1 of the Initiative: Regarding indicator 2.1c, a stakeholder shared minutes from the last meeting held in October 2020. These minutes do not indicate if the meeting was attended by the *Fédération nationale des associations des parents d'élèves et étudiants* (FNAPEE), which is the only civil society organization member of the LEG in Mauritania. The GPE CLE (December 2018) noted that, while civil society organizations (CSOs) are invited to participate in sector planning sub-committees and joint sector review workshops, their membership in the LEG has been an issue of ongoing discussion between donors and government since the start of PNDSE II in 2011. At the urging of donors to include more civil society representation, the government invited the FNAPEE as a member to represent civil society in 2015.

Immediate Outcome 2.2

Immediate Outcome 2.2: Improved coordination for GE in education through LEGs, under the leadership of MoE		
Performance indicators	Data collection methods and data sources that provided information to establish the baseline value	Baseline
2.2a LEG scores on the revised (with gender integrated) “LEG Self-Assessment and Performance Feedback” tool (developed by GPE)		Baseline will be collected in late 2021/early 2022, when the GCI facilitates gender-integrated LEG Self-Assessment in the 8 countries
2.2b Number of GE-focused LEG meetings or sessions		0 GE-focused LEG meetings or sessions Multiple requests for information did not result in receipt of documents showing evidence of LEG meetings being held. For the purposes of the GCI Baseline, the value recorded shall therefore be 0.

The “LEG Self-Assessment and Performance Feedback” tool was not yet ready to be used in Mauritania nor the seven other participating countries at the time of the baseline data collection.

Information to assess indicator 2.2b relied on the most recent information available from 2019 to July 2020. Information on the number of GE-focused LEG meetings or sessions was not found in the October 2020 LEG meeting minutes available. According to email communications with a stakeholder, it was mentioned that GE does not appear to have been a topic discussed during this LEG meeting or previous LEG meetings.

Immediate Outcome 2.3

Immediate Outcome 2.3: Improved policy and practice dialogue for GE in education at national, continental, and global levels		
Performance indicators	Data collection methods and data sources that provided information to establish the baseline value	Baseline
2.3a Number and focus of joint policy and practice statements on GE in education by education sector actors at national, continental and global levels	News article on the website of the COMEDUC Coalition: http://comeduc.net/francais/2020/05/05/declaration-commune-de-la-campagne-mondiale-pour-le-education-cme-apporter-rapidement-une-reponse-concernee-a-la-pandemie-de-covid-19/	<p>1 statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Declaration made by members of the CSO coalition for education as part of the CME (Campagne mondiale pour l'éducation/World Campaign for Education) (May 2020) <p>Focus of statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis on GE in COVID-19 education responses
2.3b Number and type of alliances, partnerships, and networks for policy and practice on GE in education created/strengthened at national, continental, and global levels	News article of the website of Ministry of Social Affairs, Childhood and Women: https://www.masef.gov.mr/spip.php?article941	<p>1 partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of the multisector platforms for the fight against GBV for women and girls (November 2019)

Information to inform the baseline value for indicator 2.3a focused on joint policy and practice statements on GE in education made during the baseline review period (i.e. 2019 to July 2020). Based on a search of the websites and social media platforms of education sector actors in Mauritania (e.g. MoE, CSOs and multilateral and bilateral donors), one joint policy and practice statements on GE in education was found to have been made during the baseline review period:

- Joint Declaration made by members of the CSO coalition for education as part of the CME (Campagne mondiale pour l'éducation/World Campaign for Education) on May 5, 2020. The joint statement calls for an equity and human rights-based response to COVID-19 from governments, with a specific mention of girls' education.

With regards to indicator 2.3b, the Universalia team conducted a search of the websites and social media platforms of various education sector actors for information that evidences alliances, partnerships and networks focused on policy and practice in GE in education that were either created or found to be active during the baseline review period (i.e. 2019 to July 2020). In Mauritania, one partnership was found, which was included in the country-level baseline value for indicator 2.3b:

- Launch of the multisector platforms for the fight against GBV for women and girls, which will be operating across all policy sectors.

For consideration to be included in GCI monitoring for Year 1 of the Initiative: With regards to indicator 2.3a, through a search of education sector actors' websites and social media profiles, the Universalia team also found relevant supporting information on joint statements that were made outside of the baseline review time period cut-off point (i.e. July 2020), and thus could not be considered as a data source informing the baseline value. However, relevant data contained in these sources of information could be considered to measure progress against this indicator for the GCI monitoring exercise to be conducted after the first full year of implementation.

- Statement made by the Minister of Education on demographic diversity and girls' schooling at a joint event organized by international organizations and attended by several countries in October 2020. This statement could be considered as a joint statement on GE in education practice by national level education sector actors and could be used to inform measurement of progress against indicator 2.3a after GCI's first full year of implementation.

Immediate Outcome 2.4

Immediate Outcome 2.4: Improved coordination and collaboration among global GCI Alliance Development Partners (DPs) to advance GE in and through education		
Performance indicators	Data collection methods and data sources that provided information to establish the baseline value	Baseline
2.4a Number and focus of joint statements on GE in education by GCI Alliance DPs	Search of websites of GCI Alliance DPs	0 joint statements on GE in education Research did not uncover any DP joint statements regarding this country. Baseline value = 0.
2.4b Number and focus of joint publications on GE in education produced by GCI Alliance DPs	Search of websites of GCI Alliance DPs	0 joint publications on GE in education Research did not uncover any DP joint publications regarding this country. Baseline value = 0.

No baseline values could be established for indicators 2.4a and 2.4b, despite two attempts at collecting and analyzing relevant sources of information. Relevant supporting data to measure progress against indicators 2.4a and 2.4b will likely only emerge during the first full year of GCI implementation.

Appendix I List of documents consulted

- 2017 Joint Sector Review
- AFD et Ministère Français des Affaires Étrangères, Rapport final : Évaluation de l'action de la France pour l'éducation de base dans les pays du G5 Sahel. Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritanie, Niger, Tchad (2005-2015), 2018
- GCI, Country Profile – Mauritania, n.d.
- Global Partnership for Education in Mauritania : <https://www.globalpartnership.org/where-we-work/mauritania>
- La Coalition des Organizations Mauritanienes, Rapport suivi des engagements du gouvernement par rapport à l'Agenda 2030, 2017
- Lahaye, L., Roberty, F., FTI appraisal of the PNDSE II, 2011
- LEG meeting minutes, October 2020
- Mauritania Profile on Girls not Brides : <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/mauritania/>
- Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances, Aide-mémoire de la revue sectorielle conjointe 2018, Janvier-Février 2019
- Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances, Direction des Projets Éducation/Formations, Rapport de mise en œuvre du plan sectoriel de l'éducation (PNDSE II), 2018
- Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle, Rapport final: Projet d'appui à l'enseignement de base - PASEB II : Cadre de gestion environnementale et sociale, 2020
- Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche scientifique, L'enseignement supérieur et la recherche: éléments d'efficacité, 2018
- Ministère des Affaires Économiques et du Développement, Analyse sectorielle 2015 (RESEN), Août 2015
- Ministère des affaires sociales, de l'enfance et de la famille, Plan d'action 2015-2017
- Ministère des Affaires Sociales, de l'Enfance et de la Famille, Stratégie nationale d'Institutionnalisation du genre 2015, Mars 2015
- OECD Development Center, Social Institutions and Gender Index – Mauritania Profile, 2019
- République Islamique de Mauritanie, Déclaration de politique générale du gouvernement, Septembre 2020
- République Islamique de Mauritanie, Plan d'action triennal (PAT) 2019-2021, Août 2018
- République Islamique de Mauritanie, Plan de riposte de l'éducation en réponse à la pandémie du COVID-19, Mai 2020
- République Islamique de Mauritanie, Plan national de développement du secteur éducatif 2011-2020 (PNDSE II), n.d.

- République Islamique de Mauritanie, Secrétariat d'État à la Condition Féminine, Stratégie nationale de Promotion féminine 2005-2008, 27 juillet 2004
- République Islamique de Mauritanie, Stratégie nationale d'alphabétisation 2015-2024
- Universalia, Results For Development, ITAD, GPE Country-level Evaluation of Mauritania, 2018
- World Bank, Basic Education Sector Support Project (PASEB II) 2020-2025: Project information document, 9 June 2020
- World Bank, Basic Education Sector Support Project (PASEB I)⁶ 2014-2018: Project appraisal document, 5 February 2014

⁶ Projet de soutien pour le secteur de l'éducation de base.