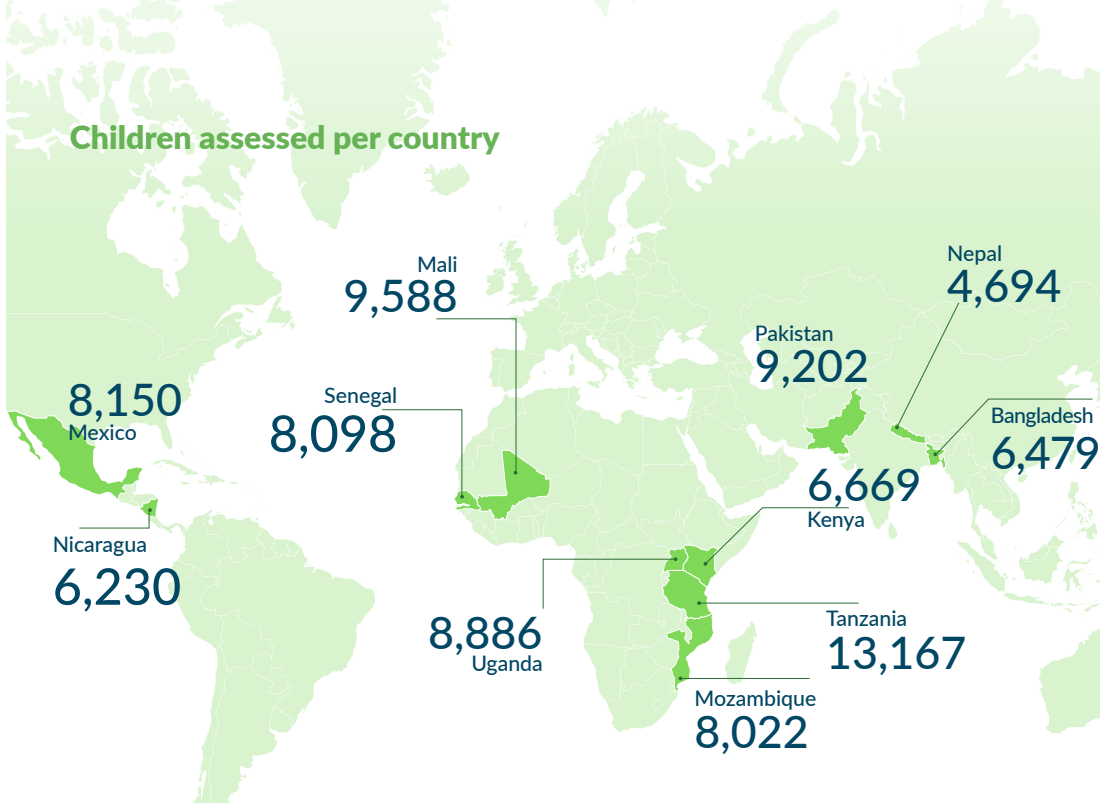




PAL NETWORK
People's Action for Learning

Education exclusion in the Global South: evidence from the PAL Network

In 2025, PAL Network implemented nationally representative household assessments across Africa, Asia and the Americas



Our Reach in 2025

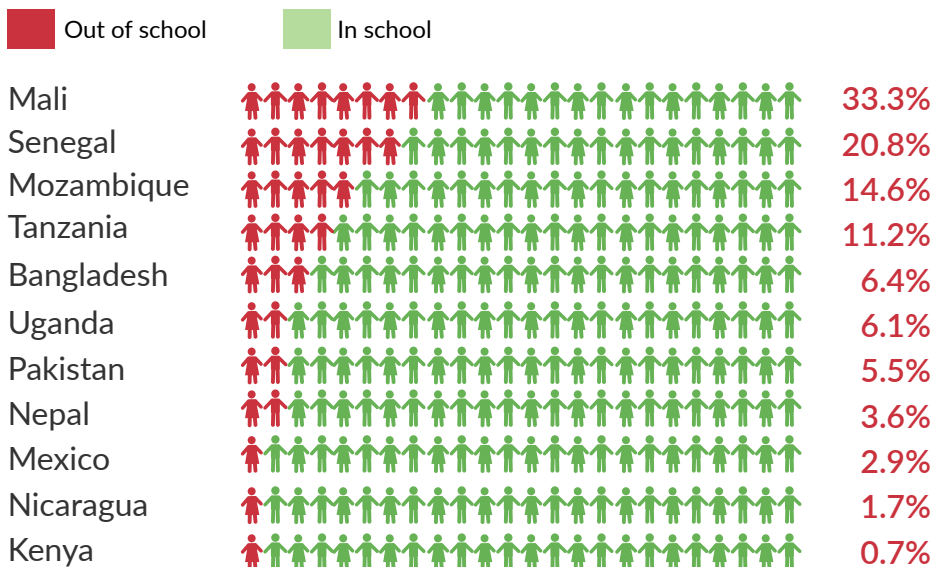
- 89,185** children assessed age 5-16 years
- 56,913** households surveyed
- 2,917** communities reached
- 11** participating countries

How many children are not attending school?

Household assessments reach children who are out of school and often missing from official statistics.

Nationally representative enrolment rates

Percent of children age 5-16 who are out of school



Key Takeaways

Out-of-school rates vary widely across participating countries

Mali (33.3%), Senegal (20.8%) and Mozambique (14.6%) lead OOS rates.

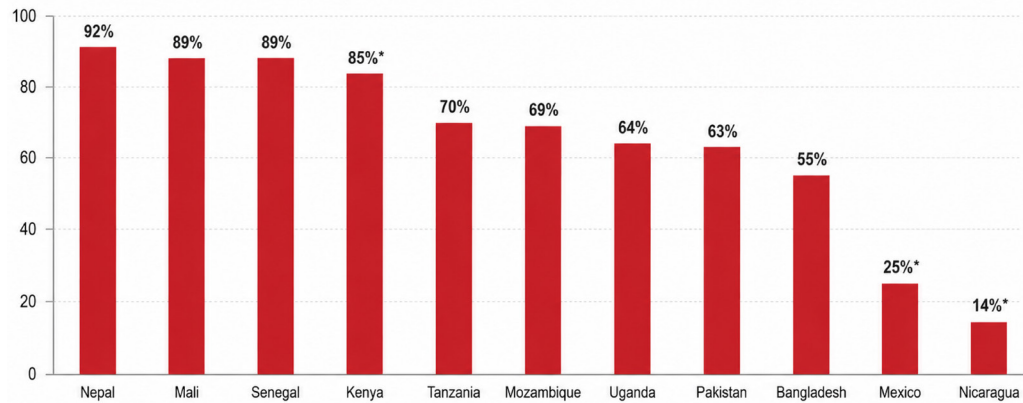
Seven countries are below 7%, with **Kenya at 0.7%**.

The International Common Assessments of Numeracy (ICAN) and Reading (ICAR) are household-based, oral, one-on-one assessments that meet the global reporting criteria for SDG 4.1.1(a), as defined by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

Patterns of education exclusion

ICAN-ICAR captures where exclusion occurs across countries and how it accelerates across grades.

Percentage of OOS Children who never enrolled



Sample size N < 100 (unweighted) for grade sub-categories in Kenya, Nepal and Nicaragua hence not shown in the analysis.

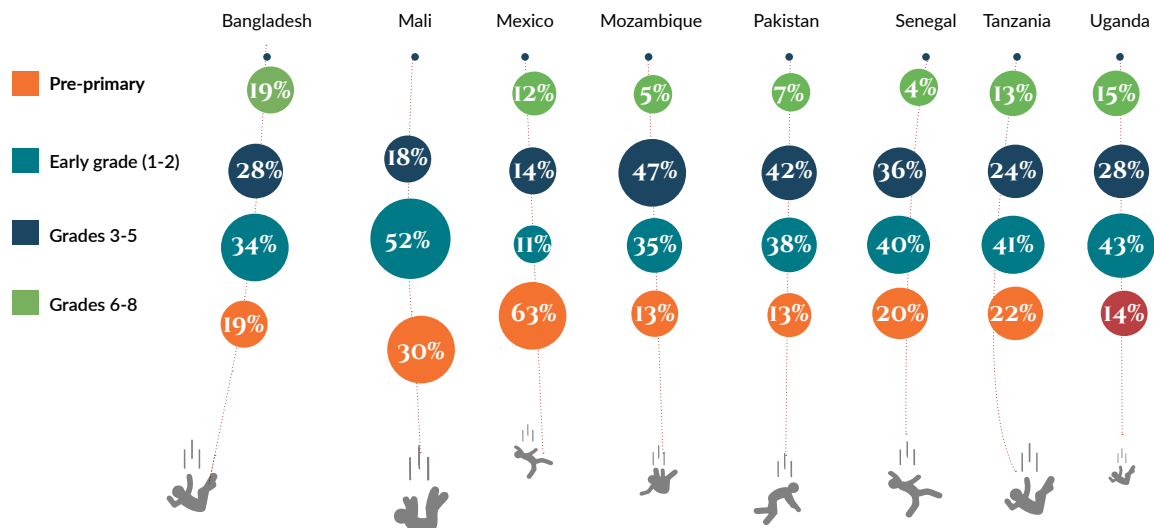
Key Takeaways

In most countries, the majority of out-of-school children were never enrolled.

Among those who do enrol, **most dropouts** occur during **early grades (grades 1-2 or grades 3-5)**, suggesting retention strategies to be targeted as soon as possible.

Last Grade Completed Before Dropping Out

Distribution of once enrolled but currently out-of-school children (age 5-16)



Sample size N < 100 (unweighted) for grade sub-categories in Kenya, Nepal and Nicaragua hence not shown in the analysis.

What is the gender split among out-of-school children?

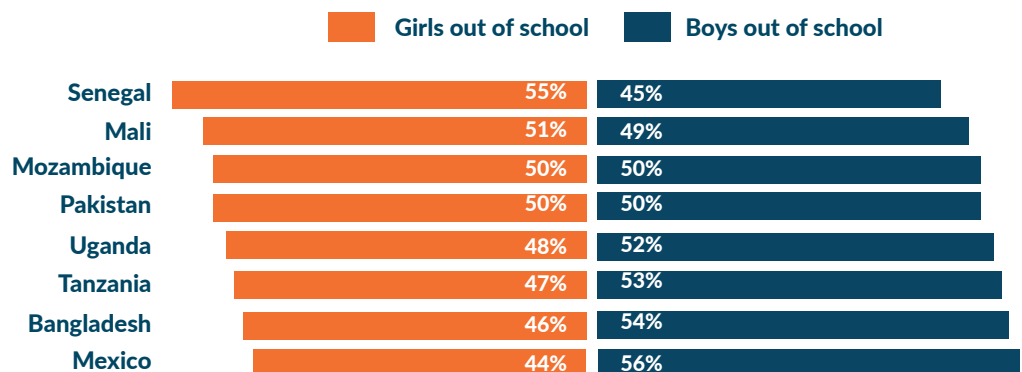
Key Takeaways

Girls are the majority of out-of-school children in 3 out of 11 participating countries.

Gender gaps vary widely, but boys are more likely to be out of school in most countries.

Nicaragua and Mexico present the largest shares of out-of-school boys.

Share of out-of-school children (age 5/16)



This is the first in a series of spotlight briefs showcasing evidence generated by the 2025 ICAN-ICAR common assessments of children's foundational learning in the Global South.

[Download the Report](#)

