

Engendering Empowerment: Education & Equality

A companion volume to the E4 conferences

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Foreword

More than 20 years ago, the global community met in Jomtien, Thailand, pledging to provide every person – whether child, youth or adult – with educational opportunities designed to help them live and thrive. In short, we promised education for all.

Ten years later, world leaders participated in the World Education Forum in Dakar and the United Nations Millennium Summit in New York and reaffirmed their commitment to achieving Education for All by 2015.

In 1990 in Thailand, we discussed the need for an 'expanded vision' to universalize access to education and promote equity. In the years since that declaration was pledged we have made huge strides towards giving every girl and boy a chance to receive an education. The number of children who are not in school has dropped by almost a third in the past 10 years, and the proportion of girls out of school has decreased considerably.

But many are still left behind. Figures from 2009 show that an estimated 67 million children, more than half of whom are girls, are still denied any form of education.

Therefore, I believe it is once again time to expand our vision. It is time to revisit our strategies and methods and seriously question what works, what does not work, and why it is not working. We must ask detailed questions to determine who the girls are that do not have access to schools. Are they in the mountains? Are they in scattered communities? Are they caught up in the midst of conflict? Are they in areas where cultural issues prevent families from sending their children to school? We must then respond with precise and well-defined strategies for intervention.

In my experience, the last mile is always the hardest. Business as usual is not going to be enough to serve the millions of girls who are still out of school or experiencing inequality. We must all recognize that this last mile is going to be much more difficult and adjust and improve our methodologies and innovations.

To respond to this need for innovative thinking in the area of gender equality in education and to mark the tenth anniversary of the Education for All flagship for girls' education, the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) convened a global conference in Senegal in 2010. 'Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equality' brought together a vibrant mix of scholars, practitioners, government representatives and development partners to galvanize debate on the issues of poverty, quality of education, and violence as they frame the discourse on gender equality and girls' education.

I hope that in the next 10 years we can meet again and celebrate that we were able to reach every child, every girl, in every family, in every community, in every nation.

Graça Machel

Dakar Declaration on Accelerating Girls' Education and Gender Equality

We the participants of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative global conference 'Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equality', assembled in Dakar in May 2010, call for urgent action in support of girls' rights to education, gender equality and empowerment opportunities.

The rights of girls and women are guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Discrimination in Education and the Beijing Platform for Action.

In Jomtien in 1990, we established the Education for All Framework; in Dakar in 2000, we strongly endorsed the need for targets for education, especially for girls.

Since then, there has been considerable progress: about 22 million more girls enrolled in primary schools from 1999 to 2007, and gender gaps in primary school enrolments have narrowed in many countries.

Despite the progress that has been made, poor quality of education, extreme poverty, structural inequality and violence against girls continue to jeopardize the achievement of the education- and gender-related Education for All and Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

Powerless and poor girls make up the most disadvantaged group in education. Achieving equity in education will entail putting in place a rights-based empowerment framework that will target the most vulnerable and transform power hierarchies in learning spaces, communities and policy structures in order to give poor and vulnerable girls a voice and ensure that their right to quality education is sustained.

Gender equity is at the centre of transformative, quality education. Attention to the physical, social and academic aspects of multiple learning environments is necessary to enhance opportunities, especially for adolescent girls, and to move beyond basic education. Recognition of teachers as professionals, supported by gender-responsive curricula, is likewise key to ensuring gender equality.

Because poverty is both structural and multidimensional and has differential impacts on girls and women, interventions for girls' education must cover multiple sectors. Education policies, strategies, plans and budgets must all be gender-responsive.

Gender-based violence remains an obstacle to the full achievement of girls' rights to education. We call for effective strategies and for enforcement of legislation and policies to ensure safe and secure learning environments for girls. Protective and innovative learning opportunities must also be created for children and young women affected by HIV and AIDS and for those in armed conflict and emergency situations.

We envision a world in which a special initiative for girls' education is no longer needed – a world in which all girls and boys are empowered through quality education to realize their full potential and contribute to transforming their societies, so that gender equality becomes a reality.

Dakar, Senegal, 20 May 2010

Introduction

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set global targets to achieve universal primary education and eliminate gender disparity in all levels of education by 2015. As the deadline to meet those goals draws near, it is increasingly evident that although significant progress has been made, there is still much more to do.

In 2000, then-United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan launched the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). It originated in the widespread realization that millions of girls were still unable to fulfil their right to education, despite almost universal endorsement of this right through ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

UNGEI advocates for girls' education and gender equality in education through a network of partners at global, regional, national and sub-national levels. The initiative works specifically to eliminate the barriers that keep girls out of school, and it envisions a world where all girls and boys are empowered through quality education to realize their full potential, leading to true equality between the sexes. UNGEI is particularly driven in its work by MDG 2, which calls for universal primary education, and MDG 3, which promotes gender equality and empowerment of women.

Tremendous achievements have been made in the decade since UNGEI was first

launched. Close to 40 million more children are in school now than in 1999, when two thirds of out-of-school children were girls. Yet 67 million primary school-age children were still out of school in 2009, and more than half of them were girls. The persistent challenges that girls face in accessing and completing a quality education require renewed commitment, enhanced partnerships and novel approaches both locally and globally.

To respond to this need for innovative thinking, and to mark its tenth anniversary, UNGEI convened a global conference in 2010 – 'Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equality', often referred to by its shortened name E4.

The overarching goal of the conference was to harness the power of partnerships to improve girls' access to quality education globally. A diverse group of practitioners, government representatives, academics and development partners came together to share their experiences and perspectives and to galvanize debate on girls' education and gender equality in education. The conference began as an electronic meeting in April–May 2010, followed by a face-to-face meeting in Dakar, Senegal, in May 2010, which resulted in the Dakar Declaration on Accelerating Girls' Education and Gender Equality (see page v).

This volume captures the critical debates and issues that informed the conference – from its inception to the Dakar Declaration – and will serve as the analytical reference document for practitioners and academics working on innovative approaches and methodologies that aim to ensure an opportunity for all children to receive a quality education.

Papers were presented at the meeting on poverty, quality of education and violence as they relate to girls' education and gender equality. These papers are listed at the end of this volume and are available through the conference website, <www.e4conference. org>. Several papers will also be published in 2012 in a special issue of *Theory and Research in Education*, an international peer-reviewed journal.

This publication aims to distill the key ideas and outcomes of the meeting to inform future action. It brings together the background documents prepared for the conference and the results of the deliberations, as well as a summary article on gender violence and education that was authored following the conference.

Chapter 1 is a 'situation analysis' developed by Elaine Unterhalter, Professor of Education and International Development at the University of London's Institute of Education. It summarizes the overarching context to the conference and the rest of this volume, exploring issues around the efforts of multiple partnerships working to promote gender equality in education. It also looks at the challenges that emerged between 2000 and 2010, and the issues that were insufficiently tackled or overlooked.

The chapter draws on existing evidence to point to ways in which inadequate attention to the pervasiveness of unequal power within societies has meant that the important partnerships established have not yet been able to fully reach their potential. The analysis indicates the need to combine improvements in enrolment with the need to address multiple disparities that are shown to particularly affect girls.

The volume also includes brief analytical reviews of the three thematic areas covered at the conference, developed by three of the participating organizations: the World Bank; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

'Gender, Poverty and Institutions: Intersecting sources of education inequality' argues that it is not enough to consider gender gaps at large. Rather, educational indicators lag most significantly for children and youth who face multiple sources of disadvantage: gender, income, poverty, place of residence, disability, ethno-linguistic background, demographic and/or socio-economic factors. Income poverty remains the most important and pervasive factor in this disparity. The contribution reflects on the evidence relating to the gendered nature of intersecting socio-economic inequalities and makes the case for a multi-sectoral approach as well as systemic reforms that include both targeted interventions to increase demand for girls' education as well as untargeted measures that improve the overall quality of school education.

'Education and Gender: Between promise and progress' asserts that quality education is critical to address persistent gender inequalities in education. In particular, the paper argues for a shift in monitoring focus – from gender parity to gender equality indicators. This requires measuring meaningful progress towards the fulfilment of the right to education and in turn assessing both quantitative and qualitative information on a wide range of phenomena that underpin the rights of men and women to, within, and through education. The contribution reviews existing secondary data on recent trends in educational participation and gender parity; gender and schooling trajectories in primary and secondary education, gender, teachers and learning outcomes; and challenges in monitoring progress towards greater gender equality.

'Human Rights, Gender Violence and Education' provides a brief analytical overview of the emerging scholarship on gender violence and education. The contribution reflects on existing evidence to offer a framework for understanding the issues faced by adolescents, especially girls, relating to their emerging sexuality and gender identity, gender violence and its impact on their educational experience. Educational environments that perpetuate violence are extremely disempowering and can cause long-term and often irreversible physical and psychological harm, especially for girls. Gender violence in school and the policy vacuum that often surrounds the issue need to be addressed urgently if we are serious about ensuring the right of all children, especially girls, to basic education.

This volume also includes a detailed conference report that provides a summary account of the deliberations of the e-discussion as well as the face-to-face conference in Dakar. Poor quality education, extreme poverty, structural inequality and violence against girls were identified by conference delegates as major obstacles to achieving real gender equality in education by 2015.

What emerges from this volume, and from the collective experience of the E4 conferences, is that the world has come a long way in the past decade to narrowing the gender gaps in education. What is even clearer, as the global community ramps up towards the 2015 MDG deadline and beyond, is that empowering every girl and boy through a quality education is the only certain path to sustainable development.

The achievement of gender equality in education rests on effective partnerships between all groups involved; the conference placed this issue high on the global agenda and the challenge now is to continue the powerful momentum from the conference at global and national levels. This volume reflects the commitment of UNGEI to that end.

1

Partnership, Participation and Power for Gender Equality in Education

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INTRODUCTION

Worldwide nearly 1 billion people have had no schooling or left school after less than four years. Nearly two thirds of those people are women and girls (Unterhalter 2009). Although the numbers of children who never go to school are declining, an estimated 77 million children, 55 per cent of whom are girls, are still denied any form of education (UNESCO 2008, 61). These children come overwhelmingly from the poorest communities in any country and from countries with long histories of conflict.

In many countries, children may enrol in school but are not able to attend regularly; progress to the end of a primary, let alone a secondary, cycle; or learn much of value. Women make up two thirds of the estimated 776 million adults, aged 15 and over, who have had no schooling (UNESCO 2009, 274). The scale of this injustice and the gender inequalities entailed have mobilized a range of actions by partnerships in national and international organizations. UNGEI is one such partnership, formed in 2000 to help lead this process. And at the opening of a new decade, how far have we come?

^{*} Written by Elaine Unterhalter.

The UNGEI vision entails work "to improve the quality and availability of girls' education in support of the gender-related Education for All goals, Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2 to achieve universal primary education and MDG 3 to promote gender equality and empower women" (UNGEI 2008). UNGEI is "committed to accelerating action on girls' education and revitalizing the broad social mobilization and high-level political action needed to ensure that every girl, as well as every boy, receives a quality education" (ibid.). Some aspects of these aspirations have been achieved over the last 10 years with opportunities opening up for more girls around the world to go to school and complete at least a cycle of primary education. In the coming 10 years, we face many complex challenges in realizing a widely shared vision for gender equality in schooling and equitable outcomes for girls and women. How can we take forward learning from countries that have been successful in improving gender equality in education?

What kinds of partnership will help those who still face enormous obstacles? How can we deepen the gains made thus far, so that enrolment in school means education of quality for all girls and boys and sustained work in support of gender equality? In supporting a wide range of transformative partnerships in the new decade we need to understand what was difficult and overlooked in the decade that has just passed. Some key challenges are how to confront and overcome particular gendered hierarchies of power, how to overcome the lack of connection between different levels and forms of policy formulation and practice, and how to build and support participatory processes that involve a wide constituency in confronting gross inequities. What is entailed goes well beyond the task of enrolling girls' names on registers or seating them in class.

Taking up the cause of education entails thinking of gender equality, both inside school and out, and in the complex relationships that can challenge poverty, ill health, fragile livelihoods and lack of adequate participation. Giving substance to gender equality also means tackling violence against girls and women, a key element that perpetuates non-participation in school and fulfilment of education aspirations. All these challenges require insight and refined understanding of processes that are often overlooked or taken for granted.

In exploring these issues in greater detail this situation analysis for the UNGEI E4 conference gives an overview of what has been achieved in the past decade and points to ways in which inadequate attention to inequalities in power and obstacles to participation have meant that important established partnerships cannot yet fully reach their potential without additional mobilization of analysis and action.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?: PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRESS

The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) gave renewed prominence to the education and training of women (strategic objective 2) and concerns of the girl-child (strategic objective 12). In 2000, governments, multilateral organizations and civil society coalitions signed up for the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All (EFA) and the MDGs. UNGEI was launched in April 2000 to improve global coordination of action for quality girls' education as a fundamental human right. Kofi Annan, then-United Nations Secretary-General, outlined its remit as encompassing:

... an expanded and open partnership of the United Nations system, Governments, donor countries, NGOs, the private sector and communities and families, to demonstrably narrow the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005; to ensure that by 2015 all children everywhere – boys and girls alike – will be able to complete primary schooling. (Annan, 2000)

These aspirations have been met in some parts of the world but not in others. Despite money invested, problems persist. There are still major obstacles in realizing rights to education, in education and through education for many millions. Gender inequalities are deeply entrenched in this denial of rights.

The gender gap in primary education enrolment has narrowed since 2000 but not in all regions. In 2009 40 countries, with the largest complement in Africa, were considered unlikely to meet the goal of gender parity in primary school enrolments by 2015¹ (UNESCO 2008, 98). In some countries there has been a narrowing of the gender gap in secondary schooling, but 50 countries still have such large gender disparities in enrolments in favour of boys that they are unlikely to achieve gender parity by 2015 (UNESCO 2008, 97). Even in countries where more girls than boys are in school, this does not always reflect conditions of gender equality, as girls may be in school because they lack openings in the labour market.

We have not been able to ensure that all children everywhere will be able to complete primary schooling by 2015. Table 1 shows the countries with greatest gains in improving the gender parity index² in Africa, South and South East Asia, and Arab

¹ This compares to 37 countries with larger numbers of girls in secondary school than boys, and judged far from achieving gender parity by 2015.

² That is a measure of the number of girls at a particular level of schooling as a proportion of the number of boys. A gender parity index of 1 means equal numbers of girls and boys; less than 1, more boys than girls; and more than 1, more girls than boys.

states between 1999 and 2006. The figures indicate how difficult it has been to maintain these gains in relation to attendance and completion.

It can be seen that while Ethiopia and Senegal have achieved enormous improvements in gender parity in enrolment and attendance, a similar level of improvement in enrolment in Nepal and Yemen has not translated into gains in gender parity index (GPI) for attendance, while in all countries attendance rates are a fraction of enrolment. Although Ethiopia's improvements in gender parity in primary enrolment have not been sustained to the secondary level, in Cambodia, Nepal and Senegal there have been dramatic improvements in gender parity at secondary level.

	GPI primary NER 1999	GPI primary NER 2006	GPI primary attendance 2000–07 (F/M)	GPI survival rate to Grade 5 (2005)	GPI secondary GER 2006 (1999)	% of girls in lowest (highest) quintile with no education
Ethiopia	0.69	0.92	1 (45/45)	1.03	0.67 (0.68)	84.1 (38)
Senegal	0.88	0.98	1.01 (59/58)	1	0.76 (0.64)	89.2 (28.3)
Yemen	0.59	0.76	0.6 (41/68)	0.96	0.49 (0.37)	n/a
Djibouti	0.73	0.82		n/a	0.67 (0.72)	n/a
Nepal	0.79	0.87	0.95 (82/86)	1.1	0.89 (0.70)	57.9 (28.1)
Cambodia	0.91	0.98	1.02 (86/84)	1.05	0.79 (0.53)	37.1(17.2)

Table 1. How do the best improvers measure up?

Source: UNESCO (2008) 300-380; UNICEF (2009), 24-27; DHS, 2004; 2005a; 2005b; 2005c; 2007

However, in all the countries the proportion of girls and boys progressing beyond the primary cycle is low. In Yemen dramatic improvements in GPI for primary enrolments are not matched by attendance improvements, and there is very limited gender parity at secondary level. In Djibouti gender parity at secondary level has actually fallen, despite some increases at primary level. For all the best improvers Demographic and Health Survey data show that there are huge gaps between the proportion of girls in the highest quintile with no education and those in the lowest.

These uneven achievements must be compared against countries where improvements in the GPI have been very limited since the late 1990s. In some of these countries, the data is out of date or inadequate, making a real assessment of the situation extremely difficult. In the many countries that have had decades of conflict (e.g., Chad and Niger), the proportion of girls in the lowest quintile without education is enormous but also considerable even in the highest quintile.

5	GPI primary NER 1999	GPI primary NER 2006	GPI primary attendance 2000–07 (F/M)	GPI survival rate to Grade 5 (2005)	GPI secondary GER 2006 (1999)	% of girls in lowest (highest) quintile with no education
Niger	0.68	0.73	0.7 (31/44)	0.92	0.73 (0.68)	93.3 (55.2)
Pakistan	n/a	0.78	0.88 (67/64)	1.07	0.78	83.2 (21.8)
Central African Republic	0.66*	0.72	0.84 (54/64)	0.86	0.4*	n/a
Chad	0.58 (GER)	0.68 (GER)	0.76 (31/41)	0.94	0.33 (0.26)	98.1 (49.2)
Congo	0.95 (GER)	0.9 (GER)	1.01 (87/86)	no data	0.84	17 (1.6)
Cote d'lvoire	0.74 (GER)	0.79 (GER)	0.85 (57/67)	0.89 (1999)	0.54 (1999)	n/a

Table 2: Some countries with limited improvements in GPI in primary and secondary schooling

Source: UNESCO (2008); 300-380; UNICEF (2009), 24-27; DHS 2005d; 2006; 2006; 2007 *1991 data

In addition to the children who will never enrol, many will drop out or attend school with such poor provision for teaching and learning that they cannot be judged to have completed primary schooling. UNESCO analyses of attendance show being poor, rural and a girl means a greater likelihood of irregular school attendance (UNESCO 2008, 78–79), while studies of attainment in mathematics, reading and writing show there can be vast inequalities between children in the same country (UNESCO 2008, 112–113).

In many of the international comparisons of student attainment (the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality [SACMEQ], Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA]) there are no noticeable national gender gaps. In fact, girls perform better than boys in some subjects, though data has not always been analysed to see whether there are marked gender gaps in quality, distribution and socio-economic status. The potential to undertake a detailed sub-national analysis looking at education outcomes and opportunities is illustrated in work by Saito on a number of SACMEQ countries (Saito 1998, Saito 2004) and by Onsomu, Kosimbei and Ngware (2006) on Kenya. These studies show how regional disparities, level of teacher training, and conditions at home interact to yield lower reading and mathematics scores for girls.

The broad partnership for gender equality in education set up in 2000 and encompassing many different constituencies has had some significant achievements in expanding access to schooling, but it has also faced considerable difficulties in reaching the poorest quintiles, and ensuring quality and equity in post-primary transfer and provision. Some of the causes relate to inadequate money, time, knowledge, skill and political commitment to make gender equality in education go more deeply than a question of access (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005, Tikly and Barret 2007, Subrhamanian 2007, Chapman and Miske 2007, Fennell and Arnot 2007, Stromquist 2009). Other reasons relate to the complex web of inequalities associated with poverty, climate change, conflict, and inadequate distribution of resources for nutrition, water, health and HIV (Betancourt et al.; Vavrus 2003; Kirk and Winthrop 2007; Pappas et al. 2008; UNESCO 2008; Birdthistle et al. 2009; Alderman, Hoogeven and Rossi 2009; Chipeta 2009; Unterhalter, North and Parkes 2010). Violence against women and girls, often unremarked and assumed, is also known to be implicated in difficulties girls have in accessing or continuing school (Leach and Mitchell 2006; Reddy and Dunne 2003; Parkes, Januario and Figue 2009).

These problems are amplified by difficulties of maintaining connections among different constituencies engaged in action for gender equality and education. While it is envisaged that these connections run with equal levels of openness and attentiveness between global, national and local organizations, in practice this level of discussion and engagement is rare (Unterhalter et al. 2009; North 2009; Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead 2007). The initial vision of partnership articulated in 2000 was presaged in the Beijing 1995 vision for enhancing access, participation and completion, attending to questions of quality and equality, and addressing intersecting injustices (Beijing Platform for Action 1995, Unterhalter 2007). These formulations envisaged horizontal connections so that gender and education initiatives would intersect with work on health, livelihoods, and initiatives to challenge cultures of violence against girls and women, and increase the participation of women in decision-making and in decent work. But in practice, networks of collaboration and joined-up initiatives have not always worked well (Stromquist 2008; Aikman, Unterhalter and Boler 2008; Morley and Lussier 2009; Roby, Lambert and Lamber, 2008). The aim for partnerships to take forward visions of gender equality in education and improved human rights aspirations regarding girls' education has to be assessed in light of enormous global inequalities within and among countries, each marked by considerable gender injustice. The current crises associated with the economy and climate change may well exacerbate these difficult conditions, but may also offer some significant opportunities.

In renewing the vision for a wide global social justice partnership to engender equality and empowerment in education, this discussion paper looks first at economic, political and social relations that shape disempowerment and have hampered work to take forward gender equality and human rights claims in education. It next considers the promise of a range of forms of participation highlighting issues that need greater depth of discussion and mobilization.

The worldwide concern with expanding access to education since 2000 has seen considerable attention in international and national policymaking to building more schools; employing more teachers, in some countries removing fees, in others offering cash transfers to ensure children go to school; and giving concerted attention to the effects of HIV and AIDS on schooling (Glick 2008, UNESCO 2008, Lewin 2009). But this concern has emerged at a time when inequalities within and between countries have been growing, and when structures of global political and economic power have responded very slowly and unevenly to calls for gender equality (Connell 2009; Hausmann, Tyson and Zahidi 2007; Verloo 2007; Rai and Waylen 2008). Advances in supporting a culture of human rights and equality in some parts of the world happen together with gross violations of rights in others.

Although in many countries constitutional commitments and key policies affirm the importance of gender equality in education, and similar declarations guide the work of international organizations, in the words of a South Africa head teacher the goals for EFA and the MDGs are "heard a long way off" (Unterhalter et al. 2009). These concerns struggle to find their place with everyday realities of high levels of unemployment or under-employment, extensive hunger, and lack of adequate conditions for livelihood or health. In many countries inadequate effort goes into supporting teachers or local district education officials to implement the gender equality aspirations outlined for schools (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005, Ames 2005, Page 2005, Chapman and Miske 2008, Fennell and Arnot 2007, Greany 2008). In Karlsson's (2010) detailed study of the work of gender officers in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, it is evident how little time, policy framing or resources they have for their work.

In some contexts an exclusive focus on girls' education has led to confusion about gender equality goals. Thus, when, as for example in a country like South Africa, more girls than boys are in school, officials come to think they have 'done' gender, although issues remain concerning economic, political and social rights; violence; and ideas about masculinity and femininity that undermine equality concerns (Dieltiens et al. 2009, Morrell et al. 2009). Understanding gender relations and the experiences and needs of the poorest boys and girls are critical areas of policy and practice. The forms

of political and economic power in a society might mean that these particular areas of policy and practice are neglected in a general focus on national achievements or enrolling more girls. The challenge remains to understand the complexity of gendered power in local settings and the educational conditions that can support change and provide quality schooling.

Finance for education is a major site of power. But there has generally been little assessment of gender when education budgets and aid flow are scrutinized and the level of service delivery to men and women assessed. Although Poverty Reduction Strategies prepared for the World Bank or International Monetary Fund require an assessment of gender in looking at education levels or income, there is little provision for assessing where money in the education budget is spent and whether expenditure does indeed reach girls and boys, and women and men in equal or appropriate amounts and whether spending helps to overcome wider inequalities and conditions associated with violence or merely reproduces them.

Gender budgeting holds considerable promise to undertaking this task, but has not yet been fully implemented in relation to scrutinizing education budgets (Budlender, 2007). For more than 10 years, the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme has done excellent work tracking government budgets, mobilizing popular opinion and building capacity to do gender budgeting; however they have not yet looked rigorously at the education budget and income flows to school level. Some preliminary work on this for the Transforming Education for Girls in Nigeria and Tanzania (TEGINT) project shows very marked differences in financial resources at school level with dramatic consequences regarding quality aspects of education (TEGINT 2009).

Important work on gender budgeting in relation to education and health delivery has been done in Mauritius, with high-level support from within government (Verdickt 2009). However these very favourable conditions are often not easily replicated in other countries. Generally there has been a lack of aid and other financial flows directed towards gender equality work in education or programmes specifically concerned with aspects of violence against women or girls. Direct budgetary support makes it difficult to track how aid is spent.

The money promised in 2000 to support EFA has not flowed quickly or efficiently enough (Mundy 2006, Riddell 2007, UNESCO 2008, Coxon and Munce 2008) and has not adequately reached the lowest quintile or privileged the gender equality aspects of quality (Rose 2005, Jones and Chant 2009, Vandemoortele 2009, Filmer 2009).

Broad ambitions for gender equality in education are translated in a very attenuated form into action at local level and, indeed, spaces of reform may themselves become sites of exclusion, where gendered hierarchies exercise power that subordinates women and girls and reinforces inequalities. These processes are evident in some initiatives to reform curriculum, teacher training and school management.

Research indicates that assumptions that knowledge of science or mathematics is inappropriate for girls continue to be widespread (Geist and King 2008; Skelton, Francis and Valkonova 2007; Athill and Jha). Highly paid or regarded jobs in teaching are closed to women in many countries (Kirk 2009, Rathgeber 2009, Moorosi). Revising textbooks to portray women and girls more equitably and to encourage interest and engagement of men and boys with children and care remains an uphill struggle (Blumberg 2007, Phirbhai 2007, Burton). Much work on gender and schooling focuses on interventions, or limited actions to ensure girls are enrolled in school. This does not often translate into institutionalized arrangements to secure gender equality in curriculum, language of instruction, teacher training, pedagogies in use, or management. In addition interactions with civil society organizations are often limited just to mobilization for enrolment campaigns and not for deeper processes of dialogue and critique. Although a combination of these strategies (Interventions, institutionalization and critical, reflective interactions) is needed to build gender equitable education, hierarchies and forms of gendered power often mean these connections are not made (Unterhalter 2007)

Realizing quality primary education for all, regardless of gender, entails coordinated social policy. But government departments often do not coordinate their work well. Privileging enrolment in primary education as the major policy goal may take attention away from or minimize important connections with the treatment of women within a society, ownership of property, opportunities for decent work, and sharing the responsibilities of care (Maslak 2008, Unterhalter 2007, Subrahmanian 2007). In addition, while it is well known that poverty keeps children out of school and that amongst the poorest there are larger numbers of girls than boys out of school (Lewin 2009), and that lack of adequate nutrition means it is very difficult for children to learn (Hillier et al. 2009), in only a very few countries has comprehensive school feeding been introduced and all school fees and levies been abolished.

Although a pilot project in Pakistan, for example (Kazianga et al. 2009), showed how school feeding schemes are associated with important intra-household allocations of food and systematic reviews of empirical studies show that food for education programmes do support attendance under certain conditions (Adelman, Gilligan and Lehrer 2008), comprehensive school feeding has not been widely introduced. Often school feeding is only provided in lower primary classes, although older adolescent girls who do not eat enough will be much more vulnerable to ill health associated with pregnancy and delivery later in life. The lack of attention to the connections among family livelihood, health and gender equality in government social policy and the campaigning work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is an important missed opportunity.

Concern regarding the HIV and AIDS pandemic, and recognition that school is an important site to provide some of the education that could protect against its spread, led to considerable concern with 'joined-up' planning in thinking about gender and schooling. But very few countries gave sufficient attention to gender in their education and HIV plans (Clarke 2008, Idogho 2008) and realizing gender equality in schools in the context of the epidemic has been enormously difficult (Aikman, Unterhalter and Boler 2008; Filmer 2008; Morrell et al. 2009). The difficulties of cultures and power associated with masculine and feminine identities in many countries make change particularly challenging.

Gender-based violence in and around school is starting to be documented with particular but different consequences for girls and boys (Leach and Mitchell; Parkes et al 2009). Research indicates the complex relationships associated with gender identities and access to power and esteem involved. In addition these questions are often cloaked in shame and a process of silencing ensues, which makes the question of policy and practice particularly delicate. Violence in, on the way to, or associated with school is emerging as an important reason why girls do not attend. However some research shows attending and completing school or membership of an adult education group may give girls and women particular resources to challenge gender-based violence.

Partnerships for gender equality in education that seek to express the aspirations of the Beijing Platform for Action require assiduous work to address unequal and unjust structures of political, economic and social power. Intensive work is needed not only on the level of policy and practice within national and international organizations to change and challenge these relations. In addition much more work is needed on conceptual clarifications, empirical studies, and how research is designed and conducted. More work is needed in higher education reflecting on gender questions and issues of human rights and global injustice, and these themes remain far too little considered in approaches to how teachers are trained (Unterhalter 2006, 2010, forthcoming; Walker 2006; Morley, Lugg et al.; Kirk 2008). In three critical areas of education the exercise of hierarchies of power appear particularly acute: the provision of quality education that places gender equality centre stage; the ways in which social policy in relation to health, livelihoods, employment and poverty can support gender equality initiatives in schools; and the problem of violence. Building partnerships in the new decade will need to develop more sustained analysis and plans for action in these areas.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR EQUALITY: THE PROMISE OF PARTICIPATION

Reassessing the partnerships that will drive forward future work on girls' education and gender equality requires considering how this form of organization can address problems of power exercised in a hierarchical and exclusionary manner, opportunities which do not connect across different areas of social provision, and outcomes that are not an enhancement of rights. At the centre of these problems appears to be the question of inadequate participation, restricted opportunities for listening to the demands of those most affected, and a pattern of ignoring the potential of ideas about gender equality, even though a major policy concern is girls' schooling. Enhancing different forms of participation appears to be a key opportunity for our partnerships in the coming decade. There are a number of ways this can be achieved.

Firstly, policy and practice can be more responsive to gender equality concerns and the complexity of ways in which gender intersects with other areas of discrimination. Gender mainstreaming was identified in 1995 as a key planning mechanism that could help give prominence to concerns with gender in all aspects of an organization's partnership work. Gender mainstreaming often highlights the importance of work across different sectors and the ways in which hierarchies operate. Experiences of using gender mainstreaming in education departments and NGOs have been mixed (Lind 2006; Subrahmanian 2007; Stromquist 2008; North 2010).

The resources needed to carry out and sustain this work have never been adequate. Nonetheless where very clear goals in relation to gender equality outcomes, intensive investments, high-level support, participatory structures, long-term mentoring and review are in place, important gains have been noted (Unterhalter and Dutt 2001; Miske, Meagher and DeJaeghere 2010; Verdickt 2009; Commonwealth Education Fund 2009). Gender mainstreaming, undertaken not as a technical bureaucratic exercise but as a means of enhancing participatory discussions within education, reflecting on questions of power and the nature of the articulation of education with other social-policy areas of health, livelihoods, and decision-making, continues to offer considerable potential to expose and change some of the hierarchies and forms of subordination that have made delivering quality education and redressing violence so difficult.

Secondly, including women in decision-making at all levels of policy and practice has the potential to end practices of exclusion and silencing. The familiar problem of gender policy evaporation (Longwe 1997; Cornwall, Harrison, Whitehead 2006; Brown 2007) is compounded because of a lack of coordinated attention to ensuring women's presence in decision-making bodies related to education. In addition, with some notable exceptions in Latin America and India (where partnerships have been built in the context of literacy campaigns), there has been little attempt to make connections between civil society organizations that campaign on education and women's rights (Stromquist 2007; Khandekar 2006). Thus for example, in South Africa and Tanzania, both countries with important organizations of women that mobilize on a wide range of issues, the demands of women's organizations (regarding reproductive rights, rights at work, or political voice), do not connect very explicitly with the work of women focused on education (Hassim 2006, Desa 2007, Brown 2008, Unterhalter et al. 2009, Diaw 2009). Indeed in some settings campaigns that focus only on expanding women's rights to education are seen as a distraction from recognizing indigenous rights or reaching the poorest (Paulson and Calla 2000, Aikman 1999, Lewin 2009). Governments generally do not consult with a wide range of women's organizations when reviewing education policy, and tend to focus on organizations that campaign on specific education issues, such as the distribution of sanitary towels in Kenya.

While women's organizations around the world have given prominence to high levels of violence against women, the consequences of discrimination against pregnant teenagers and, in a number of countries, adult women's literacy, these issues appear only sporadically taken up in education departments that deal with schooling; often they are formulated in terms of the problems of girls (Dieltiens et al. 2009, Thomas 2007, Dunne 2008). Although in some countries a number of seats in village education committees or local authority structures are reserved for women – and these appear to ensure good outcomes in education provision (Chattopadhay and Duflo 2003, Clots-Figueros 2007, Wilkinson 2007) – in too many countries there has been insufficient attention to women's participation in decision-making about schooling, looking not only at presence in formal structures but also the process though which resources are allocated and concerns with gender or injustice come to be articulated.

Thirdly, the potential offered by civil society organizations for enhancing participation in work to support girls' education and gender equality is considerable. In a number of countries particular attention has been given to supporting girls and boys to speak about and plan for how to fulfil their learning needs. Throughout Africa the Forum for African Women Educationalists has organized 'Tuseme' clubs in schools, where girls have opportunities to reflect on their aspirations for education and work out strategies to deal with problems they confront (Diaw 2009). In South Africa the Girls Education Movement and the Boys Education Movement allow for discussions of sexism and ways to overcome it. In many countries the mobilization of peer educators to share information on HIV has not involved girls and boys in reflections about gender and schooling (Morrell et al. 2009, Dunkle and Jewkes 2007, Archer and Boler 2008).

NGO or social-movement initiatives to build girls' empowerment, reflect on intersecting inequalities and develop a more inclusive pedagogy offer rich possibilities for addressing the question of quality in schooling (McCowan 2009; Ballard, Habib and Vallodia 2006; Conway 2008). In a number of countries work on women's livelihood and effects of climate change helps support connections between adult-education work and quality initiatives in schools (Lotz and Sitsika 2010; TEGINT 2010). These examples suggest very promising ways in which civil society can engage with governments to build partnerships concerned with keeping substantive gender equality under review, offering spaces of participation to the most marginalized, and highlighting particularly important social reform in areas such as post-conflict, HIV or climate change.

Although in the past there have been missed opportunities for the women's movement and the education movement to connect, the new decade offers some important opportunities to rebuild joint campaigns from the global to the local level. Momentum is building for a major, well-resourced structure to deal with gender and women's issues in the United Nations. UNESCO consultation on Beijing +15 is taking place as we complete this analysis eliciting a lively discussion.

In opening the debate, the Director-General of UNESCO noted how gender equality was to be one of the priorities of the organization's work in 2008–2013 and stated:

"Closing this [education gender] gap is one of the most urgent challenges of our time. Behind the statistics lie individual stories of deprivation and discrimination. They carry national and global consequences that are far too often ignored or relegated to the periphery of political concerns. And yet we know that gender equality in education and training is a potent driver of women's empowerment. It is one of the most important catalysts of social change and integration, a lever of poverty reduction and a driver of socioeconomic development" (Bokova 2010).

The Division for the Advancement of Women United Nations Economic and Social Council Expert Group consultation has pointed out how a return to the participatory human rights framework of the Beijing Platform for Action, with its concern for the education of girls and women connecting to other aspects of social change, will give a substantial boost to achieving the MDGs (Division for the Advancement of Women 2010). A number of education campaigns have highlighted the importance of gender issues, although their capacity to keep it as a major focus over many years of work often needs sustained support (Unterhalter and North 2009, Commonwealth Education Fund 2008).

Similarly, a number of campaigns led by women's organizations have made demands for education, bringing out the importance of establishing a connection to environmental and livelihood issues. The Association for Women's Rights in Development International Forum, an important mobilizer of feminist action, has highlighted the importance of building and sustaining links with young women, the huge range of ways in which they mobilize and the diverse opportunities for educational transformation (Association for Women's Rights in Development 2008). These examples suggest the idea of partnerships is moving in many directions, networking together different constituencies and promising some major advances in thinking and action.

Major issues that cut across the ways in which we understand participation for gender equality thus concern:

- the interconnection of education, health, water, nutrition and HIV;
- the effects of climate change;
- mobilization to combat violence;
- the intersection of poverty and other inequalities; and
- sustaining quality schooling and rights through education.

CONCLUSION

The Beijing Platform for Action of 1995 gave great prominence to the importance of expanding provision of education for girls and women throughout their lives as a key means to challenge discrimination and injustice.

In 2000 the launch of initiatives at the global level (the MDGs, EFA and UNGEI) continued to give prominence to questions of girls' schooling at national and local levels, and a very wide range of policy change was put into practice. This paper has both charted some of the achievements of those undertakings and highlighted some processes that made progress difficult: the pervasiveness of unequal power and the difficulties of sustaining participatory partnerships across a broad front. Nonetheless enormously creative and diverse initiatives are underway, despite the harshness of the present moment so marked by inequality, conflict, and threats associated with climate change and economic recession. This conference will provide a significant platform to learn from each other and take action collaboratively. Working for gender equality,

empowerment and women's rights though schooling is an enormous, but rewarding, challenge. We cannot underestimate the power of what we can do in and through education. It is a hugely rich environment from which ideas about equality have grown and will continue to flourish.

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2

Gender, Poverty and Institutions: Intersecting sources of education inequality

The World Bank*

PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION

Compared with two decades ago, more young people are entering school, completing the primary level and pursuing secondary and tertiary education. In low-income countries alone, average enrolment rates in primary education have surged upwards of 80 per cent and primary completion rates above 60 per cent (World Bank, 2011a). Thanks to a combination of policies and sustained national investments in education by governments, communities and private enterprises, developing countries have unprecedented numbers of schools, classrooms, teachers – and students.

Remarkable accomplishments have also been made towards achieving gender equality at all levels of education. Since 1990 the ratio of girls to boys enrolled has increased most at the primary level in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. At the secondary level the ratio has risen substantially in East Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. In tertiary education, Eastern European countries show the most progress (*see Figure 1*).

However, millions of school-age children remain out of school. Many never en-

^{*} Written by Elizabeth King and Vy Nguyen.

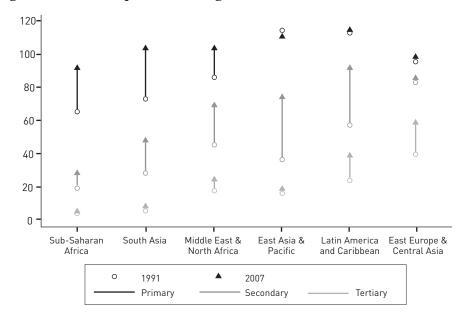


Figure 1. Notable improvements in girls' enrolment, 1991–2007

Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics.

Note: Due to limited data availability, change for tertiary level corresponds to 2003–2005 for East Asia & Pacific, 2000–2006 for South Asia and 2000–2007 for all other regions.

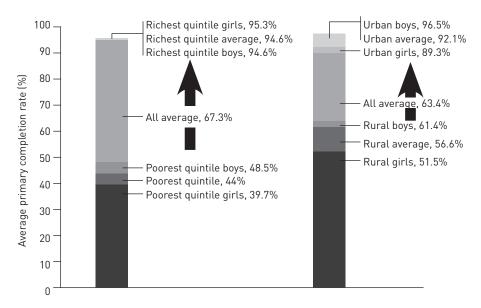
tered, and many leave well before completing even the primary level. Three fourths of the countries that are the furthest from meeting the education MDG on primary completion are in sub-Saharan Africa – and nearly half of those are unlikely to meet the gender equality goal (World Bank, 2011a). In these countries, broad reforms to address barriers to schooling for all children could result in further progress, but for some children in certain areas it may take sharper, more targeted interventions to close gender gaps.

GENDER, POVERTY AND EDUCATION

Grant and Behrman (2010), examining the trends across developing countries, conclude that the expansion of mass education has closed gender gaps generally, even in settings where there had previously been large gaps favouring boys. Their analyses of changes between the periods 1990–1999 and 2000–2006 reveal a more complex pattern in gender gaps. In particular, they conclude that boys are more likely than girls to ever attend school, except in Latin American and Southeast Asia, but that girls are more likely to remain in school and to complete more years of schooling. Therefore, improving girls' education worldwide requires overcoming initial barriers to schooling and providing girls with opportunities to set foot in school.

Among demographic and socio-economic factors causing gender gaps, income poverty remains the most important and pervasive factor. Differences in educational attainment are more highly associated with economic status than with gender, orphanhood or rural residence in poor countries (Filmer, 2008b). Our calculations (based on Demographic and Health Surveys in 27 low-income countries) show that, on average, fewer than 40 per cent of girls in the poorest-quintile households complete primary school, compared with 95 per cent in the richest-quintile households. Gender inequality is also wider among the poor than among the rich. The difference in primary completion rates between boys and girls in the poorest households is 9 percentage points, compared with 0.7 percentage points in favour of girls in the richest households (*see Figure 2*).

Figure 2. Multiple sources of disadvantage: Poverty, gender and rural residence in low-income countries



Source: Authors' calculation using latest available data from Demographic and Health Surveys 2000–2008. Note: Aggregates for low-income countries are averages of 27 countries for wealth disaggregates and 26 countries for urban/rural disaggregates weighted by primary school-age population.

Beyond gender and poverty: Multiple and intersecting inequalities in education

Poverty exacerbates gender inequality. Female-headed households are more likely to be poor or chronically poor than male-headed households (Lipton and Ravallion 1995; Buvinic and Gupta 1997; Lawson, McKay and Okidi 2006), and poor households are more likely to have larger gender disparities. But educational indicators lag most significantly among children and youth who face multiple sources of disadvantage, not income poverty alone: gender, place of residence, disability and/or ethno-linguistic background.³ Children from rural areas fare much worse in terms of school enrolment and attainment, compared with children in urban areas. As indicated in Figure 2, rural girls are much less likely to complete primary school (51.5 per cent rate) than urban girls or than boys in rural or urban areas (96.5 per cent).

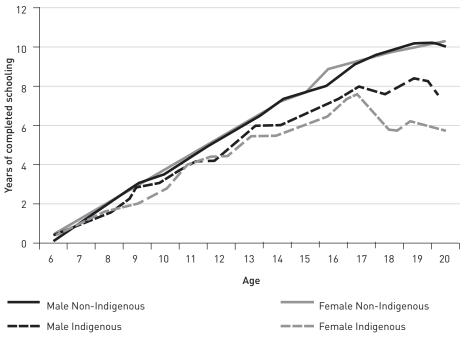


Figure 3. Schooling gender gap in Bolivia

Source: Duryea, Galiani, Nopo and Piras, 2007.

³ See, for example, the summaries and citations in Hall and Patrinos (2010), Lewis and Lockheed (2006), UNESCO (2010). Also see Filmer (2008a and 2008b) and Posarac and Peffley (2011) on the negative impact of disability on schooling attainment.

Disability is also strongly associated with lower education rates, and this correlation is stronger than those with gender or other socio-economic factors (Filmer, 2008b). Ethno-linguistic background also accounts for large disparities. In Bolivia, for example, there is no gender gap in completed years of schooling among the non-indigenous population, even at the ages that correspond to secondary and tertiary education. However, among the indigenous population, the gender gap is approximately two years of schooling for ages 18 to 20. Yet it is only half of the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous females, indicating that indigenous women have the fewest years of schooling (*see Figure 3*).

These patterns are repeated in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. There the ethnic majority Lao-Tai females have been catching up with males in terms of completed years of schooling, but the gender disparity among ethnic minority groups remains large across years and generations. For example, an 18-year-old girl from an ethnic minority community in a rural area completes fewer than two years of schooling, compared with about five years of schooling for a Lao-Tai girl in the same area (*see Figure 4*). Similarly, in Nigeria, Hausa girls in rural areas complete one-third year of schooling, on average, compared with 3 years for Hausa boys and 10 years for non-Hausa boys and girls (UNESCO 2010).

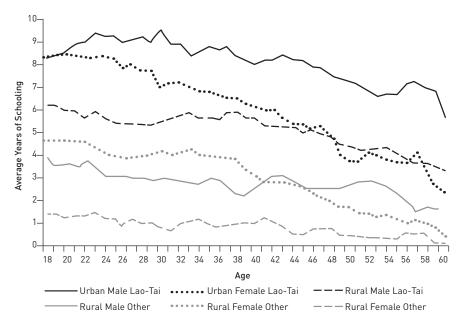


Figure 4. Schooling gap in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

Source: King and van de Walle, 2007.

Clearly, gender is not the only factor that explains inequalities in schooling, but among population groups that already suffer from other sources of inequality, gender widens that gap further. The very low level of education and large deficit for groups facing multiple sources of disadvantage suggest that the barriers they face are great even at the most basic levels, and that extraordinary efforts in policy and investments are needed to break down those barriers.

WHY GIRLS' EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT

Why is it crucial to ensure that the world's 3.4 billion girls and women have the same chances to gain an education as boys and men? First, education is a human right that is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This represents a universal recognition that education allows people to live fuller, healthier, more satisfying lives. For societies as a whole, education is also a strategic development investment. The human mind makes possible all other achievements, from health advances and technological innovations to infrastructure construction and cultural development. For all countries, educating all their people, not just half of them, makes the most sense for future progress.

Systematic exclusion of women from access to schooling and the labour force translates into a less educated workforce, inefficient allocation of labour, lost productivity and consequently diminished progress of economic development. Evidence across countries suggests that more gender equality in developing countries is associated with higher economic growth (Barro & Lee, 1994; Dollar & Gatti, 1999; Morrison, Raju, & Sinha, 2007). Using 1960–2000 panel data, Klasen and Lamanna (2009) find that the combined gender inequality in education and employment in the Middle East and North Africa, and South Asia respectively explains 0.9-1.7 and 0.1-1.6 percentage point differences in growth compared to East Asia. As growth in female employment in these regions slows down, gender inequality further widens the regional gap of economic growth. In addition, average human capital is 12 per cent less and growth is 0.3 per cent lower when boys receive more education than girls at the ratio of 70:30, compared with situations of gender equality. Abu-Ghaida and Klasen (2004) conclude that countries can benefit marginally more from educating women than men in terms of faster economic growth. In addition, it would seem that developing countries with more gender equality also have lower poverty rates (Morrison, Raju, & Sinha, 2007).

The benefits from women's education, however, go beyond higher productivity for them and beyond economic growth for all. Women with more education tend to be healthier, have fewer children and secure better health care and education for their children. These benefits transmit to their communities at large and cascade across generations. It is estimated that half of the 8.2 million fewer deaths of children under age 5 between 1970 and 2009 can be attributed to more education among women of reproductive age (Gakidou, Cowling, Lozano, & Murray, 2010). A recent study also concludes that countries with more educated women have coped with extreme weather conditions better than countries with less educated women (Blankespoor, Dasgupta, Laplante, & Wheeler, 2010). Indeed, many more studies have found empirical evidence that demonstrates why investing in girls' education is smart policy.

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS GENDER DISPARITIES

What policies and investments are likely to increase education of girls and women? Should interventions be targeted at girls and women in order to close gender gaps? To what extent can broad education reforms benefit girls and women and thus close gender gaps?

Economic and development policies have critical effects on gender inequality. Some are deliberately unequal (e.g., affirmative action policies), and others, despite appearing gender neutral, have unintended consequences for inequality. The extent and nature of gender bias differ across countries, and indeed, across communities within countries. Thus decisions about whether to intervene and which interventions to undertake should be based on an understanding of the local context.

Societal institutions (i.e., social norms, customs, rights and laws), together with economic institutions such as labour markets, shape and reinforce the roles and relationships between men and women and determine their opportunities and life prospects. Decisions within households – about the allocation of resources between men and women, or assignment of tasks and autonomy levels – can reinforce or mitigate gender disparities. So can dissimilar expectations for sons and daughters. Individuals take these contextual aspects into account in shaping their own aspirations and behaviours, as well as their ability to afford the investments in education. Addressing gender inequality therefore requires interventions at all levels – households, the economy, markets and institutions – to level the field of opportunities between men and women. It also requires promoting equal access to assets, markets and services and giving women greater political voice, more security and greater control over household decisions (King & Mason, 2001).

Governments and NGOs, including civil society groups and the private sector, have experimented with a variety of measures that attempt to address the multitude of factors that influence schooling (Lloyd and Young 2009). Constraints on the demand side can be addressed, for example, by reducing the cost of schooling through abolishing school fees and offering (conditional) cash transfers, targeted scholarships and vouchers that enable poor students to attend private educational institutions, or improving safety and mobility of girls. On the supply side, the number of schools can be expanded and school quality can be improved, both of which can increase demand.

The World Bank has supported and learned from many of these interventions, strategies and programmes. Over the past five years, more than half of World Bank education lending has promoted gender equality in education, including specific interventions targeting girls (World Bank, 2011b). The potential impacts of some of these interventions on enrolment and school continuation rates have been the subject of analytical and evaluative research. We cite a few specific examples below. A topic for further research would be estimating differential impacts on specific groups of girls and women.

Enhancing demand for education through targeted programmes

Current research suggests that in places where girls receive less schooling than boys, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia and in the rural areas of many countries, girls' schooling is more responsive to shifts in income and prices than boys' schooling. Measures to reduce the cost of schooling have been shown to promote girls' enrolment. These costs include both direct costs (such as fees for tuition, exams and textbooks) and the opportunity cost of schooling – that is, the foregone contribution to household income and labour (World Bank, 2011a).

For example, Mexico's Progresa/Oportunidades programme provides bimonthly subsidies to poor families with children between 7 and 18 years old, on the condition of a minimum school attendance rate of 85 per cent. The programme gives larger grants at higher grades and for females at the secondary level because the opportunity cost for girls and for higher levels of education is recognized as higher. The programme increased secondary education enrolment by 7.1 percentage points for boys and 5.2 percentage points for girls and schooling attainment for the poor by 0.7 grades. It also raised the progression rate from primary to lower secondary education by 11.1 percentage points, of which the effects are larger for girls than boys, with 14.8 and 6.5 percentage points respectively (Schultz, 2004).

Another initiative that lowers the cost of schooling is the girls' scholarship programme in Cambodia, a low-income country with average per capita gross domestic product of just \$550 (constant 2000 prices) in 2010. The programme awarded \$45 to every girl in school for three years beginning in 2003, provided she was enrolled, maintained a passing grade and was absent for fewer than 10 days a year. These scholarships raised the school participation of recipients by approximately 30 percentage points, with the larger effect, 43 per cent, for girls from low socio-economic status (Filmer and Schady 2008).

Similarly successful is a Female Secondary School Stipend Project that ran in Bangladesh from 1994 to 2003. The project compensates parents for the cost of girls' schooling, provided that specific conditions are fulfilled. Under the project, girls in Grades 6 to 10 in rural districts received a stipend that covers as much as 50 per cent of the cost of textbooks, uniforms, stationery, transportation and exam fees, on the condition that the girls attended 75 per cent of school days, attain at least 45 per cent marks on the annual exams and remained unmarried. The result was an 8 per cent increase in girls' enrolment for each additional year of exposure to the programme (Khandker, Pitt, & Fuwa, 2003).

In Malawi, ongoing research finds that among girls and young women aged 13 to 22, an average cash transfer of only \$10 per month can lead to significant increases in school enrolment, attendance and grade attainment. It also has led to modest improvements in test scores in mathematics, English reading comprehension and cognitive skills (Baird, McIntosh and Ozler 2010a, Baird, McIntosh and Ozler 2010b, World Bank 2010a).

In addition, the transfer programme appears to have reduced teen marriage and pregnancy, brought measurable improvements in mental health, delayed the onset of sexual activity and reduced risky sexual activity. An impressive decline of more than 60 per cent in the prevalence of HIV and HSV-2 (genital herpes) was reported. Unconditional transfers were more effective in reducing teen marriage and pregnancy and in improving mental health, while conditional transfers were more effective in improving learning in mathematics and reading comprehension. Smaller transfer amounts were generally as effective as higher amounts (Baird, McIntosh, & Ozler, 2010a; Baird, McIntosh, & Ozler, 2010b).

Can these programmes yield sustained improvements for girls beyond their initial impact? A stipend initiative for girls in Pakistan introduces incentives for girls to spend more time in school and less time at work (Alam, Baez and del Carpio 2011). An evaluation found that, in the short term, enrolment rates went up by almost 9 percentage points; five years hence, the programme seems to have also increased transition rates from middle to secondary school and completion rates at Grade 9.

Enhancing demand through untargeted measures

Targeted measures can be more costly to implement because of the administrative costs usually associated with targeting, so it is useful to examine also the potential impact of

untargeted interventions. These have been as effective as targeted interventions in some environments since the demand for girls' schooling seems more responsive to changes in costs, distance to school and school characteristics. The abolition of primary school fees in Uganda, for example, raised the primary enrolment rates of girls by 6 per cent compared to boys among children aged 9 to 12 and by 25 per cent among adolescents aged 12 to 18 between 1992 and 1999. It also increased girls' secondary attendance rates by 14 per cent (Deininger, 2003).

Since 2001, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan project in India has supported government efforts to bring 25 million out-of-school children into primary school, including girls, first-generation learners from minority communities and children with special needs. It called for locating primary school facilities within one kilometre of all habitations. The initiative was also to provide alternative education programmes and 'bridge' courses for out-of-school children and dropouts. The programme supported teacher recruitment and training, helped develop teaching materials and monitored learning outcomes. Villages were to identify out-of-school children and get them enrolled and to organize themselves to manage school resources and construct classrooms and school buildings. Support to each district helped spur context-specific innovations (World Bank, 2008a).

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is the largest ongoing Education for All programme in the world. Its success depends on whether it can narrow or eliminate gender gaps, prevent dropouts and provide quality education through the eighth grade. Since the project was launched, nearly 20 million more out-of-school children have enrolled in school, many of them girls. India is now closer than ever to achieving gender parity in primary education: In 2009, 94 girls were enrolled for every 100 boys, compared to 90 in the early 2000s. In April 2010, India also enacted the right to education, prescribing and ensuring free and compulsory education for all children between ages 6 and 14 (World Bank, 2010b).

In Yemen, three education investment projects have supported a number of strategies to address gender disparities. Beginning in 2001, these projects aimed to improve access to schooling and education quality. Methods included conditional cash transfers to girls, an improved teaching force and greater participation by communities and parents in school matters. In part due to these efforts, the gross enrolment ratio for girls in Grades 1 to 6 increased from 51 per cent in 1999–2001 to 76 per cent in 2007–2008. In 2008, the Government also abolished school fees for girls in grades 1 to 6 and for boys in grades 1 to 3, and 1,000 new female teachers were contracted and trained. A systematic analysis of the impact of these various measures is still to be undertaken, but anecdotal evidence suggests that contracting more female teachers is already attracting many more girls to school (World Bank, 2009).

Emerging challenges and priorities in girls' education and gender equality

Policymakers will face special challenges in the coming decade. The youth bulge in many developing countries implies a tremendous need for new schools, especially in rural areas. In the absence of sufficient fiscal resources, governments may need to involve all actors – from private providers and civil society organizations to communities, families, students and trainees – to help build and manage schools. For example, in urban areas of Pakistan provision of new private schools was found to be effective using a three-year government subsidy based on the number of girls enrolled (Alderman, Orazem, & Paterno, 2001). Alternatively, in certain rural areas, village education committees were assigned with procuring or constructing schools, recruiting teachers and monitoring school operations; the Government provides teacher training and school supplies. As a result, girls' enrolment has increased by 43 per cent and boys' enrolment by 38 per cent (Alderman, Kim and Orazem 2003).

Past interventions and impact evaluations of those programmes have given development actors more knowledge about the effectiveness of providing targeted scholarships, vouchers or conditional cash transfers and removing tuition fees, as well as their impact on the demand for girls' education. It has become clear that making more people aware of the benefits of girls' education, measuring gender inequalities and rallying more voices to speak about those inequalities are powerful ways to remind people of this critical development issue.

But significant knowledge gaps remain with respect to addressing the full range of obstacles. There is no shortage of ideas about interventions to promote gender equality; 'New Lessons: The Power of Educating Adolescent Girls' (Lloyd and Young 2009), part of the Girls Count series, examines an array of policies and programmes that aim to promote education of adolescent girls.

The familiar approach to gender equality focuses on single or bundled programmes rather than systemic reform. But the 10 actions recommended by Lloyd and Young's 2009 review of more than 300 programmes are far-ranging: scholarships for girls, recruitment and training of female teachers, girl-friendly curricula, pedagogical approaches that enhance learning and employment, after-school tutoring and greater support for non-formal education. These recommendations imply a need to address gender inequality using a system approach. For example, the recommendation to collect and compile data on non-formal education and upgrade, certify and license this part of the education system would be a general improvement, and it would also benefit adolescent boys. The challenge for policymakers and the development community will be to identify the reforms and programmes with the largest benefit for gender equality.

However, policies to address gender inequality in quality of education remain an unfinished agenda. Learning has not been the focus of past interventions. In addition, gender policy in education is not just about education. Early childhood development is critical to ensure that girls are as healthy as boys so they can enter school at the right age and complete a similar number of years of schooling. Labour policies that promise jobs and fair returns to educated women are incredibly important in providing incentives for families to send their daughters to school. Family support policies are also necessary, as women are the main caregivers in most households.

Educating girls should be a fundamental part of the global development agenda. It is also a core priority of the World Bank's Education Sector Strategy 2020, which aims to ensure that all children everywhere can realize their right to an education and better learning. The Education Strategy aims to promote gender equality by identifying where educational disparities are widest, exploring the factors that explain them and expanding the interventions that are most likely to help reduce the gaps. As argued above, addressing gender inequality requires a multi-sectoral approach. This means, among other things, ensuring equal access to schooling by providing a safe and healthy school environment for girls and improving the economic returns to female education by raising education quality, together with removing sources of gender-based labour market discrimination.

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3

Education and Gender: Between promise and progress

UNESCO Institute for Statistics*

INTRODUCTION

Within the context of rapidly expanding educational systems, relative opportunities for girls and boys have changed and global progress towards gender parity has advanced across regions and countries. However, from the perspective of student progression and education quality, progress is mixed and more difficult to discern.

This paper looks at four main issues:

- Recent trends in educational participation and gender parity
- Gender and schooling trajectories in primary and secondary education
- Gender, teachers and learning outcomes
- Challenges in monitoring progress towards greater gender equality

In practice, the concept of gender parity in education should be considered distinct

^{*} Written by Albert Molivans, this contribution draws mainly on the UNESCO Institute for Statistics Global Education Digest 2010, produced by a team of authors led by Dr. Nelly Stromquist. The findings are based on data for the 2008 school year and from assessments of learning achievement and nationally representative household surveys.

from the concept of gender equality. Gender parity aims at achieving equal participation for girls and boys in education based on their respective proportions of the relevant age groups in the population. Gender equality is understood more broadly as the right to access and participate in education, as well as to benefit from gender-sensitive educational environments, processes and achievements, while obtaining meaningful outcomes that link education benefits with social and economic life. Achieving gender parity is therefore understood as a first step towards gender equality.

RECENT TRENDS IN EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION AND GENDER PARITY

Educational opportunities and literacy levels have grown considerably over the past 40 years, particularly since 2000. Participation has increased, especially at higher levels of education. The number of girls in school has been growing, often faster than the number of boys. In absolute numbers, the capacity of the world's education systems has almost doubled since 1970, when there were 415 million students enrolled in primary education, compared to 696 million students in 2008. The number of secondary education students rose from 195 million in 1970 to 526 million in 2008. The number of students in tertiary education increased by 6 times over the same period, from 32 million to 159 million students in 2008.

Gender parity in primary and secondary education has long been an international development goal. Education for All Goal 5 calls for, "Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality." MDG 2 calls for achieving universal primary education by 2015.

Since 1970, girls' enrolment in primary education has increased faster than boys', helping to close the gender gap. Between 1970 and 2008, the primary school gross enrolment ratio increased by 20 percentage points for girls but only 8 percentage points for boys. As a result, the gender parity index increased globally from 0.84 to 0.97. Since 1999, the gender parity trend has been generally positive in most regions and at most education levels. Progress has been made towards greater parity, sometimes at a rapid pace (*see Figure 1*).

Despite the important progress in bridging gender gaps, persistent inequalities remain in many regions and at different levels of education. Only East Asia and the Pacific has reached or is close to gender parity in all levels of education. Most other regions are close to gender parity at the primary level, except for the Arab States, where tertiary education is closest to parity. The majority of countries fell short of achiev-

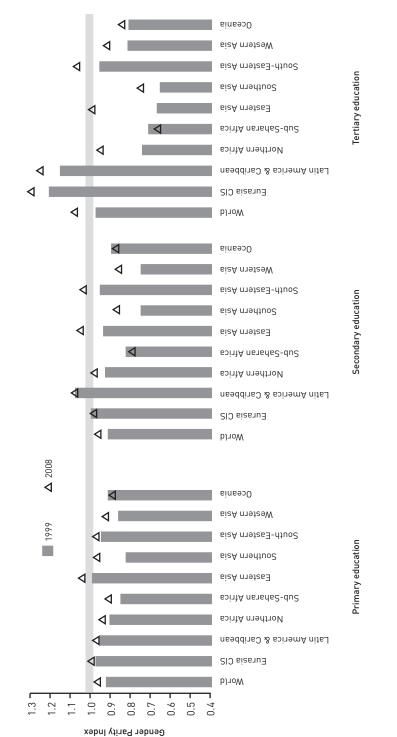


Figure 1. Changes in gender parity by region and education level since 1999

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2010.

Note: The gender parity index (GPI) is used to assess gender differences in education indicators. It is defined as the value of a given indicator for girls divided by that for boys. A GPI value of 1 signifies that there is no difference in the indicators for girls and boys. UNESCO (2003) defines achievement of gender parity as a GPI value of 0.97 to 1.03 (after rounding). ing the first step towards the gender goal (i.e., parity in both primary and secondary education by 2005). Only one country in three has reached parity in both primary and secondary education, according to the most recent statistics available for 157 countries that provided data for both levels of education in 2008. This gender goal is therefore still being missed in over 63 per cent of countries and is at risk of not being attained by 2015 for 46 per cent of countries. Regions in which the majority of countries are at risk of not achieving the goal include sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Arab States and East Asia and the Pacific.

In the long term, the increased outputs of education systems will eventually lead to higher levels of educational attainment and literacy skills among the adult population as a whole. At the same time, disparities in educational attainment and literacy rates today reflect patterns shaped by the social and education policies of the past. In 2008, an estimated 796 million adults lacked basic literacy skills. More than half of the world's adult illiterates are found in South and West Asia, notably in India (283 million), Pakistan (51 million) and Bangladesh (49 million). Women account for twothirds of the global illiterate population.

The severity of this disparity becomes even more apparent when considering trends over time. The share of illiterate women has remained virtually the same over the past 20 years (63 to 64 per cent) even though the size of the global illiterate population has been decreasing. Almost three in four female illiterates in the world are found in only 11 countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Nigeria and Pakistan.

GENDER AND SCHOOLING TRAJECTORIES IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Gender-specific indicators of school participation provide a good summary measure to help monitor disparities in education. Nonetheless, to better understand the possible origins of disparities, it is important to examine the different schooling trajectories of boys and girls – from entry into primary through to secondary education. To effectively target education policies, it is crucial to understand how gender differences are shaped at different points as girls and boys progress through school. Thus, to what extent do boys and girls enter school late? Do they differ in terms of repeating grades or leaving school early? How do they compare in completing primary education and transitioning to secondary education?

The patterns of gender differences in school progression highlight the importance of moving beyond simple measures of enrolment. While many countries have achieved

gender parity in primary enrolment, gender disparities are prevalent within the schooling process in rich and poor countries alike. Virtually all countries must address the gender disparities that shape how boys and girls progress through school. In many countries, girls continue to face barriers that effectively exclude them from education. It is crucial to address the specific needs of boys and girls in order to keep all children in school until they have completed their education. This is the only way to achieve and maintain gender equality in education.

Globally in 2008, 137 million children entered primary school, of whom 122 million were at the official age to start school. In both cases, 48 per cent of these children were girls. However, it is important to use the gender parity index of gross intake ratios for boys and girls when judging disparities in order to take into account population differences between boys and girls.

The gross intake ratio for boys in 2008 (114 per cent) was just slightly higher than that for girls (110 per cent). The GPI for this ratio is 0.97, which falls within the range of parity. However, this global average masks significant gender disparities between regions and countries. Intake ratios for girls are substantially lower than those for boys in two regions: South Asia, where the gross intake ratio for girls is 118 per cent and for boys 126 per cent; and sub-Saharan Africa, where the ratio is 112 per cent for girls and 119 per cent for boys. The GPI, which is adjusted for population differences, is 0.94 for both regions.

In sub-Saharan Africa, 93 girls start school for every 100 boys. In absolute numbers in South and West Asia, the difference is even bigger because of the greater number of boys of school-starting age in the population. In South and West Asia, only 87 girls start school for every 100 boys. It should also be noted that girls are slightly less likely to enter school than boys in the Arab States. However, the difference in ratios is so small (0.96 GPI) that the region is considered close to gender parity.

Country-level disparities

The nature and extent of gender disparities in intake ratios are more apparent at the country level. Overall, most countries have reached gender parity in terms of entry to primary education. However, girls have more limited access to school in the remaining countries. Although boys are at a disadvantage in some countries, the disparities against girls are typically more extreme. Of the 161 countries reporting intake ratios, 96 have reached gender parity, while 65 still face gender disparities in access to primary education. In three quarters of countries, disparities are against girls. The greatest disparities against girls are found in countries where access to school is more limited.

In almost every country in the world – regardless of its economic development – gender is a significant factor in school survival. Only 12 out of 125 countries meet gender parity in terms of both drop-out and survival rates. Among the countries with disparities in drop-out rates, boys tend to drop out more than girls. This is the case in 76 countries. In contrast, drop-out rates for girls are higher than for boys in 37 countries. However, the 22 countries with the most severe disparities can be almost equally divided between those favouring girls and those favouring boys. Severe disparities refer to an adjusted GPI that is either below 0.5 or above 1.5. Both indicate that one sex is twice as likely to drop out as the other.

Boys are twice as likely to drop out from primary school as girls in the following 12 countries: Argentina, Austria, Bhutan, Fiji, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mauritius, Montserrat, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Sudan, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates. Drop-out rates for girls are double those for boys in a group of 10 countries/territories: Cayman Islands, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Grenada, Jordan, Maldives, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Saudi Arabia, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

The same general tendencies found in school progression indicators are confirmed by repetition rates for primary education. Almost all countries face gender disparities in timely progression through primary school, with girls tending to progress in a more timely manner than boys. Among the 113 countries with repetition rates greater than 2 per cent, only 17 countries have roughly the same percentage of boys and girls repeating grades. Overall, boys are more likely to repeat primary grades than girls in 90 out of 113 countries with data.

Girls are more likely to repeat than boys in only six countries, yet the disparities in repetition are relatively small. This group includes Turkey and five sub-Saharan African countries: Chad, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. The repetition patterns found in primary education are similar at the secondary level. In 100 out of 136 countries, repetition rates for boys are substantially higher than those for girls.

While these figures highlight differences in repetition between girls and boys, the data must be interpreted cautiously. Higher repetition rates for boys reflect poor academic performance. But they may also suggest that boys receive greater attention than girls in the school system, as they may be more visible and thus singled out to repeat a grade.

Gender differences in school progression

Gender differences have cumulative effects at each level of education: entry to primary education, expected entry to the last grade of primary education (a proxy for completion) and entry to secondary education. The 79 countries with available data can be divided

into 5 groups based on the disparities that evolve over the primary education cycle.

In a small group of countries, girls are disadvantaged at all stages of school progression – fewer girls enter school than boys, more drop out and fewer make the transition to secondary education. The gender differences that build up during entry and survival result in high levels of disparity for entry to lower secondary education. This first group of countries includes Chad, Eritrea, Guinea, Iraq, Mali, Niger and Togo. At base, inequalities facing girls intensify as disparities accumulate in the process of entering school, staying in the system and making the transition to secondary education.

In a second group of countries, including Burkina Faso and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, girls are less likely than boys to enter primary and secondary education, but girls who do enter primary school tend to complete it. Boys have greater opportunities than girls to begin secondary education.

A third group of countries has gender parity, but it results from disadvantages for girls in access to the first grade of primary education, which is then balanced by boys dropping out more frequently than girls. Though girls have lower rates of access to primary education, they are more likely to complete it once enrolled. However, they are less likely to pursue their studies in secondary education. Once again, the origin of the gender disparities affecting girls is related to barriers to entry and not to their progression in school.

A similar pattern is found in the fourth group of countries, where boys have a higher chance of both starting primary school and dropping out, while girls who manage to enter primary school tend to progress well and make the transition to secondary education. This geographically diverse group includes the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Sudan and Suriname.

In the fifth group of countries, girls and boys have virtually the same chances of entering primary school. However, girls outperform boys, who are far more likely to repeat grades and drop out. As a result, more girls complete primary school and make the transition to secondary education. This situation is found in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Mauritius, Namibia and Uruguay.

Some countries do not fit into any of these five groups. For example, girls are more likely than boys to begin primary school but have greater chances of dropping out in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Mauritania and Senegal.

This analysis of school progression leads to two main conclusions. First, access is the single most important cause of disparities against girls in the pursuit of primary and secondary education. For many different reasons, girls are being excluded from primary or lower secondary school and denied their right to education. Those who are able to access education tend to progress very well, but they are disadvantaged in the complicated selection process whereby certain children are given the chance to enter primary or secondary education while others are denied this right. In contrast, boys are not more likely to be excluded from education based on their gender. This does not mean that boys do not face gender-specific disadvantages in the education system, but these disparities originate from within schools and relate to higher repetition and drop-out rates.

Second, gender disparities can take many different forms across countries. As a result, countries need a range of policies to address the specific inequalities arising in school intake, within classrooms and in the transition to higher levels of education. Most countries require initiatives to ensure that girls have access to school. They also need policies to address the different disadvantages facing boys and girls that arise at different stages of schooling.

GENDER, TEACHERS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Measuring the quality of learning opportunities across countries presents a number of challenges. First and foremost, the concept of quality is often contested and takes on certain normative or cultural perspectives. However, limited measures of quality are available across a range of countries and development contexts.

By focusing on organized learning, one can consider three dimensions of quality: where learning takes place (the learning environment), the content/experience of learning (the curriculum) and those who directly guide and facilitate learning (the teachers). This also provides a way to judge education quality from a gender perspective. Investigating how the three dimensions influence education for boys and girls can help build a clearer picture of what is required to improve its quality.

First, where does learning take place? In general, the learning environment should be child-friendly, welcoming and secure. Other needs, such as nutrition and basic health checks, should be accessible where relevant. From a gender perspective, the learning environment should also be sensitive to the specific needs of girls, which implies that it should be located close to girls' homes, gender-sensitive (e.g., providing separate toilets for girls and boys) and be free of threats as well as from physical and sexual abuse by other students or teachers.

Second, what is taught and learned, and how? To provide good quality learning opportunities, the curriculum should be relevant to the needs of pupils, families and societies and sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences. It should also be gendersensitive, meaning that girls and women should not be portrayed stereotypically or in a demeaning manner that misrepresents the diversity among girls and women in society.

Finally, who guides and facilitates learning? Teachers should be well trained and motivated to teach. In addition, they should be trained to be gender sensitive in their actions.

To achieve good learning outcomes, countries need to ensure that sufficient school places are provided, that school systems function effectively and that there are enough teachers to ensure quality instruction. Some countries face the challenge of rapid population growth, which adds pressure to expand teaching forces. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2009) estimates that 10.3 million primary teachers need to be recruited globally by 2015 to ensure that all primary school-age children have access to a good quality education.

Increasing gender balance in the teaching workforce

In light of the many teachers needed, policies that successfully balance gender in teaching workforces should be considered, as they appear to improve access to education and completion, especially for girls and young women (UNESCO 2000). For example, the proportion of female teachers at the primary level roughly correlates with girls' gross enrolment ratios in secondary education (UNESCO 2010). This correlation is the result of many factors but could be interpreted as reflecting the positive role that female primary teachers play in making the classroom a safer and more inviting space for girls and young women, thus encouraging them to continue their education. In fact, countries that have the lowest secondary enrolment rates among girls typically have the lowest proportions of female teachers in primary education. Studies (e.g., in Tunisia) have suggested that the percentage of female teachers is one of the strongest school characteristics associated with girls' school performance (Lockheed and Mete 2007).

Low participation rates for girls may reinforce the low representation of women teachers, as fewer females will complete teacher-training programmes. Moreover, structural constraints contribute to the problem. For example, there is a tendency to deploy male rather than female teachers in rural areas, even though these may be the same areas where school participation is lowest for girls. Reasons for this are numerous and include the reticence to post young women in remote areas, which are often perceived as unsafe or difficult to live in. Just the same, young female teachers may avoid rural postings believing that they are unlikely to find a partner of similar education, and married women may avoid rural areas if they are unable to bring their husbands (Mulkeen 2010).

To some extent, the gender balance in teaching varies between more and less developed countries due to different economic contexts and cultural traditions. In more developed countries, the education sector is traditionally an important source of employment for women looking to have both a family and a career (Wylie 2000). For example, in 2008, 83 per cent of primary teachers in North America and Western Europe were women. The proportion of women in primary teaching posts remained relatively stable over the past two decades (1990–-2008) in regions with already high levels, including Central Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Western Europe. However, there was also little change in sub-Saharan Africa, which had the lowest proportion of female teachers at the primary level in 2008.

Between 1990 and 2008, the global proportion of female primary teachers increased from 55 per cent to 62 per cent. Growth was strongest in South and West Asia, where the proportion of women teachers in primary education increased from 30 per cent to 46 per cent, and in East Asia and the Pacific, where it increased from 48 per cent to 60 per cent. Particularly for South and West Asia, where girls are less likely to be enrolled in school, this change in the gender composition of teachers could in certain contexts result in changes that may facilitate progression and completion of education among girls.

The presence of female teachers is, however, insufficient to ensure that girls enrol in school. Research in China suggests that teachers' expectations are one of the strongest predictors of secondary school enrolment for girls (Lewis and Lockheed 2007). There is also a growing body of literature on boys' underachievement and teacher expectations in different regions, including the Caribbean, where boys are more likely to repeat grades and less likely to complete their education than girls. However, research has argued that both female and male teachers have been guilty of gender stereotyping, and that their low expectations of boys' behaviour and academic effectiveness contribute to boys' underachievement (Jha and Kelleher 2006, Kutnick 2000, Martino and Berrill 2003). Training teachers to be gender sensitive is therefore important.

Learning outcomes and gender

Several studies have looked at patterns of gender differences in student achievement in reading, mathematics and sciences, as measured by cross-national studies at different stages of basic education (including fourth, sixth and eighth grade) as well as among upper secondary students (Ma 2007, UNESCO 2008 and OECD 2009). Research has also addressed gender differences in learning outcomes based on the results of individual studies in both more and less developed countries (Saito 1998, Mullis et al. 2000, OECD 2001 and 2004, and OECD/UIS 2003). The results of these reviews, as summarized by Ma, have generated key findings related to gender differences and

the relative underperformance of girls or boys in reading and language, mathematics and science literacy.

First, the advantage of girls in reading achievement compared to boys is widespread, considerable and found across many achievement studies. Second, in many countries, girls are narrowing the gaps in achievement where boys have historically held an advantage, namely in mathematics and science. However, more recent data from the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SAC-MEQ) suggest that these gender differences persist in Southern and Eastern Africa.

The factors underlying gender differences in performance are thought to relate to physiological and social causes. A growing body of research on the differences in neural and cognitive development among girls and boys suggests that girls seem to have an advantage in verbal cognitive skills (e.g., verbal fluency, grammar and complex language) and boys in non-verbal cognitive skills (e.g., spatial tasks and mathematical reasoning) (Weiss et al. 2003).

Other research examines schools as social institutions and their role alongside families and communities in transmitting attitudes, values and behaviours regarding gender roles through teachers, staff and peers and through the organization of schooling (Ma 2007). Gender differences are also found to be related to school organization and curricula, (Eurydice 2009) or the general learning environment (OECD 2001), which may promote separate roles for girls and boys.

New findings on the gender gap in developing countries based on assessments of student achievement have recently become available. These include results of early grade reading assessments and the assessment of skills at the end of primary education (i.e., SACMEQ). Early measurement of reading skills is critical as it allows for timely intervention to ensure that all children learn to read, and eventually, read to learn in other subject areas. Students who do not master reading – a prerequisite for successful performance in school – are more likely to become frustrated and drop out, resulting in losses in human and financial resources and perpetuation of the cycle of poverty.

Since 2007, early grade reading assessments have been conducted in 40 countries and 52 languages. The assessment is an individually administered oral diagnostic of students' foundation skills in reading (e.g., letter naming, familiar word reading, connected text passage reading and comprehension). It is designed to capture reading skills in the early grades of primary school.

Results from individually administered early reading assessments in 10 countries and 20 languages indicate no significant differences between the performance of girls and boys as measured by the percentage of students classified as non-readers (i.e., students unable to read a single word of connected text in a simple passage) for 11 of 20 language assessments. Where there is a significant difference, girls tend to outperform boys, with fewer girls classified as 'non-readers'. More worrisome is the high proportion of non-readers, regardless of gender. In some languages, upwards of 80 per cent to 90 per cent of surveyed students with at least two years of schooling were unable to read a single word of text.

Comparing results across countries should be approached with caution due to differences in how local assessors interpret individual student results as well as differences in language structure (word length and spelling). Explanations for this gender gap in favour of girls are still being explored. Some local officials hypothesize that boys are more likely to work outside the home or have other responsibilities, which can lead to lower performance in school. Additionally, research shows that boys are more likely than girls to hold negative attitudes towards reading. To mitigate these effects, countries need to develop strategies to ensure that all children become successful readers, regardless of their gender, social background or origin.

Assessments of reading and mathematics literacy at the end of primary education help measure the level of skills imparted by the education system. Concerns about indicators that reflect only participation in schooling have led to a renewed focus on the direct measurement of acquired skills. While most of these studies are conducted in high- and middle-income countries, the last decade has seen an increase in student assessments undertaken in low-income countries. One example is the SACMEQ assessment administered among 14 countries in Southern and Eastern Africa.

The assessments of learning achievement across countries can help illustrate how different social and economic contexts condition gender differences in learning achievement. Both at the beginning and at the end of primary education, assessments conducted in developing countries point to dismal outcomes that fall far short of the desired or even minimum mastery of the intended reading or mathematics curriculum for both girls and boys. At the end of primary schooling, there seem to be more significant gender gaps in terms of both reading (favouring girls) and mathematics (favouring boys). These have been persistent during the last decade in countries in Southern and Eastern Africa.

Following its mandate to improve overall educational quality, the SACMEQ has compared educational achievement among girls and boys at the end of primary schooling in 14 sub-Saharan African countries since 1995. The most recent waves of the learning assessment took place in 2000 and 2007. The results reflect differences in the performance of girls and boys and how they have changed over time,

with two striking features related to gender differences in reading and mathematics achievement.

First, the set of countries in which girls outperformed boys in reading and mathematics in 2000 – including Botswana, Mauritius and Seychelles – were almost exactly the same set of countries in 2007. Similarly, the set of countries where boys outperformed girls in 2000 – including Malawi, Mozambique and United Republic of Tanzania – were almost exactly the same set of countries in 2007. Second, not only were the directions in gender differences consistent for countries across 2000 and 2007, but so were the magnitudes of these differences.

CHALLENGES TO MONITORING PROGRESS OF GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Comparative indicators produced by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics that aim to describe current disparities in educational access, participation, progression and completion focus on the level of the national education system. Cross-nationally comparable sex-disaggregated data provide an important starting point that leads to more detailed policy analysis and the crafting of policy responses. In particular, the GPI is a useful indicator of the relationship between males and females in educational access and participation at a given moment in time. The analysis of trends in gender parity over time can serve as an important signal that wider changes are taking place.

However, gender parity indicators are only the first step towards better understanding the processes of change underlying education equality. More focused data are necessary to investigate the reasons for inequalities in order to identify appropriate policy measures for reducing disparities. Data and research are needed to identify the reasons behind drop-out rates, for example, or low school attendance and low participation by sex in certain subjects or fields of study.

Assessing steps towards gender equality requires measuring meaningful progress towards fulfilment of the right to education. It also calls for assessing both quantitative and qualitative information on a wide range of phenomena that underpin the rights of men and women, to, within and through education (UNESCO 2006).

National education indicators reveal prevailing patterns in schooling participation but do not reflect a wide range of social forces. These include the condition of girls in poor households, the situation of minorities in rural areas and norms and practices related to marriage, access to land, and inheritance that construct gender relations in particular national contexts. Other forms of discrimination that influence social opportunity – such as poverty, ethnicity, language or place of residence – can also be considered in conjunction with gender to illuminate how multiple forms of disadvantage intersect to affect the education of girls and women (UNESCO 2010).

More in-depth information is needed to give context to and interpret educational statistics. Policymakers and researchers alike must creatively combine the descriptive information provided at the global level (by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and others) with more detailed information on a specific country's or region's history and culture. This is essential in producing a comprehensive understanding of gender equality in education.

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4

Human Rights, Gender Violence and Education

UNICEF*

"No violence against children is justifiable; all violence against children is preventable." – United Nations Report on Violence against Children 2006

INTRODUCTION

Violence affects the lives of millions of women and girls worldwide, undermining efforts to achieve human rights, security and development. Research shows sexual, physical and psychological violence cause as much ill health and death as cancer among women aged 15–44, and more than malaria and traffic accidents combined (World Bank 1993). Violence against women is increasingly viewed as a human rights violation, a large-scale public health problem and a development concern (Panos Institute 2003).

The relationship between gender and violence is complex: tackling violence against girls and women is critical to empowering women and promoting gender equality, while promoting gender equality is integral to preventing violence (UNFPA 2009). Given the unique role of education as an enabling right, expanding girls' education is a key strategy to prevent gender violence and promote gender equality.

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Studies exploring the association between violence and women's educational attainment often indicate a significant protective association. When compared with no education, significantly lower physical violence was found for women with secondary or more education, but not primary, in Egypt and India. In South Africa, post-school education was associated with significantly lower physical violence and physical violence and threat (Vyas & Watts 2009). Girls pursuing an education are also considered less likely to be involved in crime or youth violence or to become a victim of either (Rihani et al. 2006).

However, in many developing country contexts there is growing evidence that parents are reluctant to send their daughters to school lest they risk violence, exploitation or sexual assault on their way to and from school or at the school. The experience or threat of gender-based violence often results in poor performance, irregular attendance, dropout, truancy and low self-esteem among both boys and girls. Other factors – such as child marriage, risk of sexual harassment, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS, and sexual exploitation of children and adults – also limit the achievement of equality in education.

Elaine Unterhalter (2009), in the background paper for the E4 conference, observes that "violence against women and girls, often unremarked upon and taken for granted, is known to be a vital factor in difficulties girls have in accessing or continuing school. Education, however, can give girls and women particular resources to challenge gender-based violence".

The general perception of violence as normative contributes to the silence around its occurrence, irrespective of the context, and in turn affects the availability and use of systems to report it. Furthermore, the conventional discourse on violence mostly focuses on what takes places between domestic and intimate partners, often rendering other forms of violence invisible. The Education for All and Millennium Development Goals, while credited with putting the global spotlight on education, also paradoxically may have contributed to the initial invisibility of violence in schools. Early on, the focus on quantitative targets of enrolment and gender parity (which persist) discouraged reflection on the possibility that factors at school – bullying, corporal punishment and other forms of violence – might deter children, especially girls, from attending. Somehow, the rhetoric of education as an enabling right actually precluded a focus on the possibility that education, if done 'wrong', can actually be the problem rather than the solution.

It was only in the mid-1990s that policymakers began acknowledging schools as potential sites of gender violence. The AIDS pandemic and the gendered dimension of the disease were a major impetus for the focus on gender violence in schools in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1990s. Statistics indicate that girls in the 15–25 year age group are the most vulnerable to HIV infection; this discovery was instrumental in focusing attention on schools – both as a site for teaching about HIV prevention and, contradictorily, as a potential site of sexual violence (Leach, Dunne and Humphreys 2003).

In the last decade more attention has been paid to the issue of gender violence in education in developing countries. It has been accompanied by growing acknowledgement that violence takes place in schools, comes in different forms and affects learners, teachers, parents and the schools themselves. The United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children (2006) was a significant global effort to paint a detailed picture of the nature, extent and causes of violence against children, including in schools, and to propose clear recommendations for action to prevent and respond to it. This was related to a growing concern about the children and girls who are 'missing' from schools and the shift towards viewing education as a human right rather than merely an economic and social investment. It also accompanied the acknowledgment of violence against women as a violation of human rights.

It is quite self-evident that gender violence cannot be reduced unless it is better understood (Leach and Humphreys 2007). Although the effect of gender violence on education is evident across most cultures, there is not yet a complete picture of its nature and incidence across the globe, due partly to the lack of comprehensive and safe reporting processes. The emerging research in the area is also grappling with methodological and ethical challenges in working with children and adolescents on issues of violence and sexuality (Leach n.d).

This chapter provides a brief analytical overview of the emerging scholarship on gender violence and education. Taking its cue from the E4 discussions and other secondary sources, this text attempts to: (1) conceptualize violence in education and reflect on existing evidence and (2) provide a framework for understanding the issues faced by adolescents, especially girls, relating to their emerging sexuality and gender identity, gender violence and its impact on their educational experience.

Lessons from emerging evidence on gender, violence and schooling

The selective evidence reviewed here, limited to developing countries, is based on reports, briefs and background and research papers that were accessible and available in English on the Internet, hence is not exhaustive. Most of the work reviewed is focused on identifying and understanding the issues around gender violence linked to schools. It includes some related materials on interventions to address the issue in specific country contexts.

Box 1. School violence by region

Although violence in schools is clearly a global problem, its scale is nationally and regionally specific.

Sub-Saharan Africa: Violence is pervasive, affecting the majority of students at some point in their school life, and is entrenched in authoritarian and highly gendered school management systems and curricula. Due to alarmingly high rates of HIV/AIDS infection among school-age girls in Africa, the problem of school-based sexual harassment and violence is receiving more public and scholarly attention. Sexual violence is largely perpetrated by older male pupils and male teachers against female students. It is likely to occur in or near toilets, empty classrooms or dormitories, on the perimeter of the school grounds or en route to school. Survey data suggest that bullying also affects very high numbers of children in African schools, reinforced by a broader culture of violence in the family and community. Broader factors in the political context shape the pattern of school-based violence on the continent, including poverty and inequality, the risk of HIV/AIDS, high levels of orphanhood (owing to disease and conflict) and the particular vulnerabilities of children in post-emergency and post-conflict contexts owing to increased military presence.

Latin America and the Caribbean: Studies on violence against children in the region have tended to focus on family abuse and neglect, as well as abuse against children who have dropped out of school and/or are involved in child labour or living on the streets. School-based violence tends to be much less visible, especially in poor rural areas. Analysts argue, however, that a culture that sanctions physical discipline and violence within the family and community contributes to school-based violence in Latin America and the Caribbean. Other important factors include the spillover effects of criminal gang violence, the decline in public resources invested in education in the region and the stigma attached to victims of sexual violence.

Asia: The evidence is mostly from South and East Asia. While government and NGO bodies recognize that school-based bullying and sexual violence are significant problems, media attention and public awareness tend to focus on extreme cases. An authoritarian and hierarchal model of teaching and social relations predominates throughout the region, and both social and educational realms are highly influenced by differences of caste, ethnicity and religion. Dealing with sexual violence and bullying in school environments in Asia faces three key challenges. First, more research is required in the great majority of Asian countries to better understand school-based violence and the results of interventions against it. Second, more effective strategies are needed to raise awareness about child rights. These would help to undermine the shame often experienced by victims of violence, which increases their vulnerability to violence and limits their capacity to report it. Third, networks of like-minded institutions and individuals need to be built at the national level to initiate and invigorate an inclusive approach to school-based violence.

Source: Excerpted from Jones et al. 2008.

The evidence, while fragmentary, shows that violence against children in and around schools is a matter of grave concern (*see Box 1*). In many countries, physical, sexual, emotional and social violence is committed by teachers, school staff and other students. This has significant negative effects on children's health and safety, enrolment, educational achievement, dignity, self-esteem and social relationships. While the violence cuts across boundaries of culture, class, gender, ethnic origin, age, and education and income level, some children are especially vulnerable to specific forms of violence.

The United Nations Study on Violence against Children (2006) observes that schools have an important role in protecting children from violence. For many children, though, educational settings expose them to violence and may teach them violence. They are subjected to corporal punishment, cruel and humiliating forms of psychological punishment, sexual and gender-based violence, and bullying. Although 102 countries have banned corporal punishment in schools, often this ban is not adequately enforced. Fighting and bullying are also examples of violence against children in schools. Often bullying is associated with discrimination against students from poor families or marginalized groups, or those with particular personal characteristics to do with appearance or disability. Schools are also affected by events in the wider community – for example, gang culture or gang-related criminal activity associated with drugs.

Gender is a significant variable and "... girls and boys are at different risk for different kinds of violence" (United Nations Study on Violence against Children 2006). Girls and young women experience much higher levels of violence, reflecting broader gender inequalities in society, which has a significant effect on their attendance at school, especially in rural areas. The lack of schools, particularly secondary schools, increases the distance students must travel in rural areas. While ostensibly an obstacle for both boys and girls, it is a greater obstacle for girls, as many parents are unwilling to send their daughters to school because of the risk of violence along the way.

A recent survey in the United Republic of Tanzania (2011) indicates that almost one in four girls who experienced sexual violence reported the incident occurred while travelling to or from school. In addition, nearly 17 per cent of girls reported that at least one incident occurred at school or on school grounds. For adolescent girls the lack of adequate sanitation facilities and privacy can also make them vulnerable to violence. For example, in Bangladesh separate sanitation facilities for girls were found to reduce the risk of sexual harassment and violence in schools and increase girls' attendance ('Girls Grow: A Vital Force in Rural Economies' 2011). These safety concerns may lead families to restrict their daughters' freedom of movement, remove them from school and/or marry them during childhood. According the United Nations study on Violence against Children (2006), almost all violence in schools promotes gender inequality and stereotyping. For instance, boys taunt each other about their lack of masculinity and harass girls with verbal and physical gestures that are sexual in nature. Corporal punishment of boys is more frequent and harsher than corporal punishment of girls. Sexual aggression by male teachers and boys is often dismissed as 'just boys being boys', while girls are blamed for 'asking for it'. These stereotypes often make schools unsafe and uncomfortable for girls and are prominent among the reasons why, in some countries, girls are less likely to attend school than adolescent boys, particularly during adolescence.

A study in Malawi (2009) on gender violence and schools indicates that girls and young women acknowledge violence as an everyday aspect of their lives. They experience it through being beaten, punitive labour, food withholding, sexual assault/rape, forced marriage, parental neglect, verbal abuse, enforced isolation, social ostracism and denial of access to education. The girls involved in the study identified the types of violence they experienced at school: inappropriate touching, discriminatory classroom practices and – perpetrated by both boys and teachers – corporal punishment, beatings, verbal abuse, sexual assault and rape.

Victims of sexual violence suffer physical and psychological trauma and are at risk of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. Other repercussions facing girls include the consequences of unwanted pregnancy, including unsafe abortions, social stigma, forced school-leaving and even death. For girls and young women, sexual violence is a major barrier not only to access to education but also to their ability to benefit from it. It is a powerful influence in parents' decisions to keep girls out of school, in girls' avoidance of school and in girls' underperformance in the classroom.

Violence involving students

A study by Dunne et al. (2010) of senior high school students in Ghana provides insights into how bullying affects school attendance and emotional security. The study found that being bullied was associated with a higher likelihood of school absenteeism for boys and girls, and the likelihood of absenteeism increased as the frequency of bullying increased.

For boys, the difference in effects between psychological and physical bullying was greater than for girls. Boys who were psychologically bullied had 2.5 times higher odds of school absenteeism than boys who were not bullied, but for boys who were physically bullied the odds were 1.9 times higher than for boys who were not bullied. For girls, the rates of school absenteeism were much closer -2.1 times higher odds

for psychological bullying versus 2.0 times higher for physical bullying. The findings regarding the boys resonate with qualitative research findings in Ghana, where male students reported deeper and more damaging effects from verbal abuse from teachers and expressed a preference for discipline through corporal punishment.

The study also tried to understand the effects of self-reported events of loneliness, sadness and anxiety, which could have been the result of being bullied at school, separately for boys and for girls. It suggested that bullying and emotional problems are more closely related for girls than for boys, and that serious emotional problems could more directly affect school absenteeism in girls regardless of their experiences of being bullied.

The study further explored whether friends could mediate the relationship between bullying and school absenteeism. It found that for both boys and girls, friend support was associated with reduced school absenteeism regardless of the experience of bullying, except for girls who were psychologically bullied. These girls were more likely to miss school if they received support from their friends than if they did not.⁴ The study suggests that among girls it might be more difficult to pinpoint bullying in peer friendships, which may be defined more by non-physical, social and verbal interaction. The possible mixture of support and bullying in peer interactions could explain the strong influence on girls' emotional well-being and hence their school attendance.

Bhanaa (2005) contends that primary schools are important sites in the formation of gender power relations, moulding different forms of masculinity and femininity. Her study of selected primary schools in South Africa illustrates how young boys and girls negotiate bullying and other manifestations of violence against the backdrop of school lunches in particular, and hunger and food insecurity in general (*see Box 2*). Not all girls emerge as victims, although they remain disadvantaged within the school system; and neither are all boys violent. The bigger and stronger boys use violence to bully other children into giving up their share of food. Some girls also display violence; they are referred to as 'gladiator' girls who use their bodies to harm others and control food. Not all girls bully, but Bhanaa suggests that groups of girlfriends establish a pecking order through alliance building with 'gladiator' girls.

Although research is still very limited, violence in educational settings also appears to be directed against children who do not conform to heterosexual behaviour or appearance codes. 'Softer' masculinities are under constant threat. Children with

⁴ Recent research suggests that bullying is often part of the complex dynamics of friendships between girls, though this is not specific to Ghana.

Box 2. Corporal punishment and bullying in schools

One of the most visible forms of school violence is corporal punishment. It takes many forms, ranging from teachers hitting children with a hand, to forcing children to sit in uncomfortable positions for lengthy periods of time, to burning or scalding. Boys typically suffer greater violence at the hands of their teachers than girls. A study in Egypt, for example, found that 80 per cent of boys have suffered corporal punishment at school, compared to 67 per cent of girls. One-quarter of the children said the punishment resulted in injuries. Children already facing discrimination – on the basis, for example, of disability, poverty, caste, class, ethnicity or sexuality – are more likely to suffer corporal punishment than their peers.

Bullying is another practice that is common in schools across the world. Surveys conducted in a wide range of countries found that one-fifth (China) to two-thirds (Zambia) of children reported being verbally or physically bullied in the past 30 days. In a survey of 1,000 students in Nairobi public schools, 63 per cent to 82 per cent reported various types of bullying. In one district in Benin 82 per cent of teachers and 92 per cent of pupils confirmed incidence of bullying. A study involving more than 1,000 participants in Bogotá found that 30 per cent of boys and 17 per cent of girls had been involved in a fight. One-fifth of respondents had been victims of bullying every day.

Source: Plan International 2008

disabilities and children suffering from stigmatized illnesses (including HIV/AIDS) also tend to face discrimination from both teachers and students. They may also be more vulnerable to bullying and sexual violence in school and other educational and care settings (Jones et al. 2008).

Leach and Humphreys (2006) also observe that another largely unexplored form of gender violence is violence by girls, possibly because girls are generally perceived as victims, and dominant understandings of femininity do not associate girls with violence. Violence by girls is often less overt and physical than that by boys, and hence less easily recognized. Yet there is anecdotal evidence that some girls complain about the negative impact of other girls 'gossiping'; when this involves spreading false rumours or ostracizing girls, it may constitute a subtle form of aggression.

Violence involving teachers

Although evidence tells us that fellow students perpetrate most of the violence against girls, the prevalence of violence involving male teachers against girls demonstrates an alarming pervasiveness and acceptance of such abuses. In one of the poor urban schools

in Kenya, girls claimed that an incident such as getting to school late was enough for some of the male teachers to disrupt a class in order to objectify the girls sexually, thus humiliating them and making them vulnerable to further sexual abuse by their male peers within and outside class. Some of the girls narrated their ordeals when they arrived late at school – as many did because of their domestic chores – saying that the teachers were not only unsympathetic but also humiliated them sexually in front of the class by demanding to know whether their lateness was the result of nocturnal activities such as attending discos and having sex (Mannathoko 2011).

One form of this violence is also sexual exploitation, which includes any abuse of a position of authority or trust for sexual ends, for remuneration in cash or kind, or for social or political gain. It consists mainly of transactional encounters, such as awarding of good reports or good marks in exchange for sexual acts, or sexual relations as payment for school fees or supplies.

In a 2003 study in Ghana, 6 per cent of the girls surveyed had been victims of sexual blackmail over their class grades ('Report on school-based violence in Western and Central Africa' 2010). Such abuse is often seen as an inevitable part of school life, and education authorities are often reluctant to tackle the problem or bring perpetrators to justice. Teachers whose identities are vested in power and hierarchy contribute to violence by being violent (e.g., inflicting corporal punishment), condoning violence (e.g., turning a blind eye to bullying and sexual harassment) and supporting a school ethos intolerant of difference and insistent on conformity. Patriarchal norms of masculinity, silence and male domination together work to maintain the practice of sexual violence (Mannathoko 2011). Students and teachers are often complicit in maintaining the "silence" around violence and do not take the risk to report violence – either as victims or as observers of others students who are victimized. The lack of mechanisms and institutional support for students and teachers to report known acts of violence against students by teachers or peers further render gender violence in schools invisible.⁵

A 2009 study by Bhanaa et al. explores how male teachers in a rural context justify gender-based violence in school based on their own social contexts, whose values affirm gender inequalities and permit the use of violence to maintain male authority. The analysis of focus-group statements by rural male African teachers reveals rigid notions of masculinity, which they defend by invoking the patriarchal content of Zulu culture and reliance on violent practices. In the focus-group discussion, male teachers spoke about how Zulu males are brought up in a way that

⁵ Personal conversation with Ms. Theresa Kilbane, Senior Advisor Child Protection, UNICEF, New York

positions women as being "always under, and the men are always above". This, they say, influences how learners interact with each other in school as well as how male teachers interpret these interactions. It appears to be difficult for male learners to position themselves differently, for fear of being seen as weak and facing ridicule by the community for not living up to the male behaviour expected of them.⁶

Violence in conflict settings

Evidence indicates that the worst violence is experienced in societies facing extreme resource limitations, civic upheaval or war. In these societies the predominant form of violence is physical – killing, assaults, rapes – and it is on a scale that overshadows the violence affecting schools in well-resourced and stable countries or communities. The Global Monitoring Report (GMR) 2011 asserts that, within the broader sphere of children's rights, fulfillment of education rights is particularly important for societies making a transition from violence to peace. It further argues that insufficient attention has been paid to the devastating effects of violence on education. Violent conflict can interrupt the education of children through the destruction of schools, the targeting of teachers, the increase in fear and insecurity, changes in family structures and changes in household asset holdings and income.

Conflict and its aftermath often affect women differently than men. While the direct impact of physical violence falls primarily on young males, who comprise the majority of fighting forces, women and children tend to comprise the majority of refugees and internally displaced people. Emerging evidence also indicates a significant increase in gender-based violence following a major war. In some cases this is seen as resulting from a breakdown in social and moral order. In others, women viewed as symbols of community and/or ethnic identity become the targets of sexual violence during the course of conflict (World Bank 2011).

According to the GMR 2011, gender emerges as a major concern for education in conflict and post-conflict situations. It points out that conflict exacerbates wealth and gender inequalities. In analyzing the impact of rape and sexual violence on girls' education, the report asserts that girls subjected to rape often experience grave physical injury, with long-term consequences for school attendance. Sexual violence also creates a wider atmosphere of insecurity, leading to a decline in the number of girls attending school.

⁶ The other side of sexual exploitation in schools is teachers as victims. Teachers can be subject to sexual harassment by girls who use sex as a survival or education success strategy. Some studies, such as in Burkina Faso and Senegal, explain how girls get social kudos for being friends with or flirting with teachers ('Report on School-Based Violence in Western and Central Africa' 2010).

Box 3. Incidence and reasons for not reporting gender violence occurring in schools

In a study by Bisikaa et al. (2007) the major reason cited by the nearly 1,500 respondents for not reporting incidents of violence at school in Malawi was fear of further violence, since no systems are in place to guarantee that the perpetrator will be punished and deterred from offending again or that the victim will be protected. Slightly less than half of the respondents who experienced gender violence in school (47.8 per cent) stated that they had reported the assault, leaving a majority who did not. This clearly demonstrates that many acts of gender violence go unreported.

The majority of those who had reported acts of violence informed teachers (35.7 per cent) or parents (35 per cent). Of the total national sample, only two respondents reported their assaults to the police. Of those that experienced this form of gender violence but did not report it (52.2 per cent), the major-ity failed to report because they did not realize such incidents were offences. However, 15.4 per cent said that they were intimidated into not reporting the incident, and a further 11.4 per cent did not do so because they were afraid. When these two categories are combined (26.8 per cent), it is apparent that fear is second only to ignorance of the law in stopping girls and young women from reporting such assaults.

Source: Bisikaa et al. 2007.

Safety of girls becomes a major concern and continues to act as a barrier long after the conflict ends. The family breakdown that often accompanies sexual violence undermines the nurturing environment children need. The report highlights the underreporting of rape and other forms of sexual violence, noting that "cultural taboos, limited access to legal processes, unresponsive institutions and a culture of impunity are at the heart of the under-reporting problem" (*see Box 3*).

Based on the Palestinian experience, Shahloub-Kevorkian (2008) observed that in conflict zones the education front is closely related to the conflict front. The school in times of war or political conflict is not a neutral site, but rather a contested one. The research describes how the constant killing and injury of people and the attacks on schools, universities, homes, workplaces, hospitals and roads deprived girls of the possibility of acquiring education the way they had hoped and planned. The violence imposed new restrictions on their physical mobility, limiting their access to educational institutions and eroding their chances for applying to good schools and universities.

It also led parents and family members to conclude that acquiring an education within militarized spaces was unsafe. Consequently girls themselves often lost interest in challenging the hardships facing them. This led them either to quit school or university or to change their area of interest. Women and girls often also used coping strategies to regain at least a minimal feeling of safety. These included child marriage (to cope with their fears about future hazards or the possible loss of their loved ones), delayed education or both.

While girls in areas affected by conflict face extra challenges, the main challenge remains meeting the requirements of education in such difficult settings, as Lloyd (2010) emphasizes. The basic requirements are unchanging, and they include easy access to schools teaching all grades of basic education and a girl-friendly learning environment. Girls need to be treated with respect, protected from violence and abuse, and provided with equal opportunities to participate in the classroom. They also need support to acquire not just the same knowledge and skills as boys, but all the knowledge, skills and confidence necessary to overcome women's historical social and economic disadvantages.

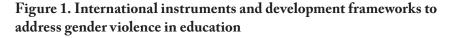
HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER VIOLENCE AND EDUCATION: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK⁷

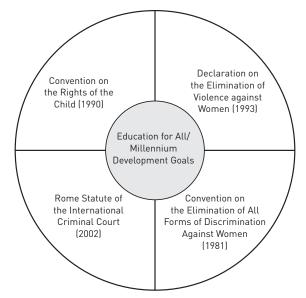
Human rights instruments

The emergence of gender and violence as a subject of international human rights and public policy is embedded in several international human rights instruments (*see Figure 1*). It has its origins in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Article 10 of the Convention specifically pledges that women shall have equal rights with men in the field of education. It charges States with the duty of reducing female student drop-out rates and of organizing programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely. The Convention came into force in 1981, but did not originally address gender violence; in 1992 the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women issued General Recommendation 19, which recommended that States parties report on violence against women in addition to their other reporting requirements.

Adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women came in 1993. It defined violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of

⁷ The overview of the international instruments was informed by the resources available at <www. endvawnow.org/en>.





such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life". With this Declaration, violence against women became an international issue. No longer was it subject to arguments about cultural relativism, and its definition now incorporated a variety of what have been termed harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation, rape, torture, domestic battery and female sexual slavery. Related aspects of the Declaration include its recognition of the need to rethink the boundaries between public and private and its prohibition on both state violence and private violence against women.

The Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court, which entered into force in 2002, represented a significant step in overcoming the discriminatory and inadequate treatment of sexual violence crimes under international law. The Rome Statute includes gender crimes as both war crimes and as crimes against humanity. It also codifies the Court's mandate to adopt specific investigative, procedural and evidentiary mechanisms that are essential to ensuring gender justice.

The emerging discourse on gender violence and education is framed by the articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, which entered into force in 1990, enshrined "the right of the child to education ... with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity." Violence at school would interfere with fulfillment of this right, and various articles of the Convention have been interpreted as protecting children from violence at school.

For instance, article 28 (2) says that: "States parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention." The Convention on the Rights of the Child also requires children to be protected against "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse" (article 19) and from "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (article 37).

Article 29, in addressing the aims of the child's education, calls for "development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" and for "preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin".

In 2001, the Committee on the Rights of the Child issued General Comment No. 1, which elaborated on the aims of education as pledged in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Comment emphasized that States' parties should take measures to ensure that all schools respect, for example, the child's rights to non-discrimination (article 2), to freedom of expression (article 13) and to protection from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation (article 34). States must also ensure that children are fully protected from exposure to bullying and other forms of violence by other students. The Committee has noted that failure to protect students from such forms of violence could deny children their right to education (articles 28 and 29).

According to Professor Jeffrey Sachs, former director of the United Nations Millennium Project, "human rights are and should be instruments for the empowerment of the MDG agenda". The targets of EFA and the MDGs are expected to provide the broader development framework and strategy for realizing the higher standards of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other human rights treaties that States may have ratified. In light of emerging evidence, efforts are under way to shift the MDG discussion beyond the quantitative paradigm and towards examining conditions within the school that might undermine participation, especially of girls.

The United Nations Report on Violence against Children in 2006 was extremely critical in holding the spotlight on issues of safety, self-esteem, peer support, violence and bullying and how they influence demand for education and are implicated in poor attendance and achievement.

The gendered nature of violence

According to Leach (2006) violence is gendered in all its aspects, not least because it is invariably bound up with issues of power. Violence is used to enforce power, to shift power and to resist power. Generally speaking, men have more power than women, and relationships between men and women are lived within the confines of gender power relations. Morrell (2001) further qualifies that "instances and patterns of violence are inevitably gendered – they bear the imprint of gender in every respect: who commits and who receives the violence; the type of violence; the weapon; the place of the violence; the reason for the violence".

Researchers also make a useful distinction between explicit and implicit forms of gender violence in schools. 'Explicit' gender violence is overtly sexual in nature. It may involve aggressive or unsolicited sexual advances, other forms of sexual harassment such as touching, pinching, groping and verbal abuse, and acts of intimidation, assault, forced sex and rape. 'Implicit' or symbolic gender violence covers actions that are less visibly and directly gendered, and that emanate from everyday school practices that reinforce gender differentiation. These practices may in themselves be violent, as in the case of corporal punishment, or they may indirectly encourage violent acts.

This categorization of violence also includes the subtleties and effects of both physical and psychological violence. Although physical violence is more easily identified and understood, psychological violence is subtle and often perpetuated through institutional sanctions. And because violence is often hidden, it is often impossible to identify how it is linked to school disengagement or dropout. As a result, academic failure is more commonly attributed to individual shortcomings.

In order to address gender violence in education and prevent it before it begins, it is crucial to understand the multiple factors that frame and influence violence, both directly and indirectly. The emerging evidence indicates the complexity of the issue and identifies the efforts being made – and those needed – to address it.

Applying the socio-ecological model of violence prevention

The socio-ecological model, one of the earliest models to comprehensively map and understand and inform prevention strategies (Dahlberg and Krug 2002), is a good starting point to understand the factors that influence violence and weigh the evidence and the effect of potential prevention strategies. The model proposes that the factors associated with violence are multifaceted, and that it is an interplay of individual, family and community factors that influences the likelihood of whether violence may occur or not.

Box 4. The United Nations Report on Violence against Children

"Where the social and physical environment of the community is hostile, the school environment is unlikely to be spared. The levels and patterns of violence in schools often reflect the levels and patterns of violence in countries, communities and families. These, in turn, reflect prevailing political and socio-economic conditions, social attitudes, cultural traditions and values, and laws and law enforcement. Where it is legal, considered acceptable and perhaps even commendable for men to control women, and the wealthy or privileged to control the poor and disadvantaged, and parents to control children through violence and the threat of violence, then it is likely to be legal, considered acceptable and perhaps even commendable for both adults and children to use similar methods in schools. By being victims, perpetrators and witnesses of violence, children learn that violence is an acceptable way for the strong and aggressive to get what they want from the comparatively weak, passive or peaceful."

Source: UN Report on Violence against Children, 2006, pg. 111.

The United Nations Report on Violence against Children (2006) also builds on the ecological model to understand violence in schools as the product of multiple factors that influence the practise of violence (*see Box 4*). A socio-ecological framework attempts to provide a holistic lens on the issue of gender and violence and includes a focus on the following:

- *Individual*: Personal attributes including age, gender, intellectual and physical traits and impairments, ethnicity, sexuality, culture, religion, economic status, and social class influence an individual's behavior. At this level, the model looks at the characteristics that may increase the likelihood of an individual being a victim or a perpetrator of violence. For example, evidence indicates that age and gender are major risk factors for experiencing sexual violence. Adolescence is a time of particular vulnerability, especially for young women as they begin to form intimate relationships and are exposed to approaches from older men. Sexual abuse affects children of all ages, but tends to increase after the onset of puberty, although with different consequences for girls and boys (Leach and Mitchell, Parkes et al. 2009).
- *Relationship*: This level explores how relations with peers, intimate partners, teachers, caregivers or family members may increase the risk of violence. These relationships have the potential to shape the behaviour of both victim and

aggressor. Research suggests that most incidents of sexual violence take place within this network.

• *Community*: Relationships are embedded within the larger community context. This consists of the neighbourhood and its sub-communities along with community activities, such as education, leisure, employment and day care. This level of the model seeks to identify the characteristics of these settings that may be associated with being a victim or perpetrator of violence.

Schools can be viewed as being located in the 'community' domain and gender violence in school needs to be understood within the context of the school's culture, structures and processes. According to Dunne, Humphreys and Leach (2003), the school as a social arena is marked by asymmetrical power relations that are enacted not only through gender but also through age and authority; additional social indicators may be ethnicity, language and disability. Within the school culture, there are norms of interaction and explicit and implicit rules and codes that guide behaviour, which are reinforced in the daily life of the school. The 'gender regime' is constructed through routine practices that are taken for granted. For example, in many schools girls have primary responsibility for cleaning and boys for digging the school grounds; in the classroom girls may sit at the front of the class and boys at the back (where it is easier to misbehave).

The gender regime is critical to students as they come of age. The age/authority relations between teachers and students are a fundamental structure of schooling that interacts with the gender regime. The school as an institution officially condones teachers' regulation and control of appropriate student behaviour through, for example, allocation of rewards and sanctions, distribution of teacher time and attention in class, and corporal punishment. By using their age/authority power position, teachers 'normalize' certain aspects of male and female behaviour.

 Societal/cultural: Social norms and attitudes that create an acceptable climate for violence are addressed at this level, with attempts made to uncover social structures of inequality that are part of the normative fabric of social and political life. The structural element consists of social forces and socio-political dimensions: for instance the construction of 'gender' that views girls as victims but also blames them for the violence they experience. The absence and presence of law and social policies to address gender violence are also located at this level. This framework considers the interplay between factors at the individual/ family relationship, community and societal levels and makes it possible to address the factors that put children, especially girls, at risk for experiencing or perpetrating violence in and around schools (*see Figure 2*). The fundamental strength of the framework is its ability to move beyond individualistic conceptualizations and focus on understanding and eliminating conditions that create risk.

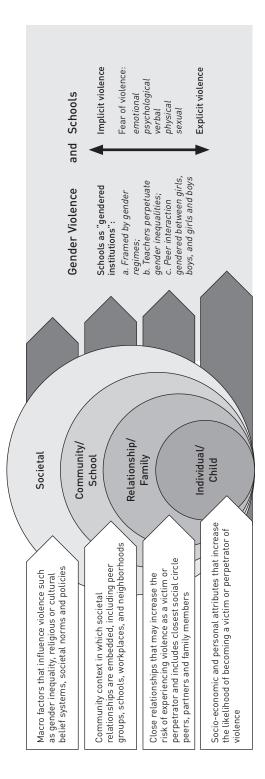
Addressing gender violence in schools

Clearly, addressing and preventing sexual violence in the secondary and primary educational sectors is complex. Girls and boys need to develop a core set of 'life skills' that will equip and empower them to handle life's challenges, including gender-based violence. They need to develop social awareness, which helps in anticipating and recognizing violent and violating situations. They need self-awareness and self-esteem, which help in effectively resisting unwanted sexual advances. They need the ability to make reasoned decisions and to feel control over their lives. They need to know they have the right to resist violent and sexual contact, and they need to know how to report it.

As awareness of violence in schools has grown, researchers have begun to focus on prevention programs to address the issue. Over the years, United Nations agencies like UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund together with other partners have been supporting governments, education systems and schools to address gender violence in education settings. UNICEF's Child-friendly Schools (CFS) approach embraces a multi-dimensional concept of quality and builds on the CRC principles of child-centeredness, inclusiveness, protectiveness and democratic participation. Quality goes beyond pedagogical excellence and performance outcomes to include considerations of health, nutrition, availability of adequate facilities, services and supplies to ensure safety and protection of children (UNICEF 2009).

A rich array of interventions to address gender violence have been used in countries like Brazil, Cameroon, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Tunisia, India and in the Caribbean. Interventions are being introduced in several countries to challenge the 'business as usual' paradigm, based on international and national legislative frameworks. Pilot projects are emerging to develop curriculum materials (on life skills and HIV prevention), teachers' manuals, and participatory projects (theatre, film, art and video). Systems are being put in place to provide more information for parents and pupils, such as anti-bullying websites. There have been some national initiatives on tightening of teacher codes of conduct, and disciplinary procedures have been instituted. Public awareness-raising campaigns and education initiatives in schools are increasingly be-





ing used to challenge the stereotypical perceptions of male and female sexuality and status that underlie gender-specific discrimination and violence.

Youth groups are being mobilized to help in developing life skills for girls. The Population Council's 'safe spaces' programmes work on community health services with girl-only groups led by a young woman from the community with whom the girls can identify. Initiatives include literacy training, education on health behaviours, discussions of gender-based violence and, when appropriate, strengthening girls to delay child marriage. The groups also strive to develop life skills such as interpersonal negotiation, goal setting and leadership. For example, in Bangladesh, adolescent girls clubs in rural areas are the vehicle to promote financial literacy through mentoring among girls aged 15 to 19 (Baldwin 2011). In India, the International Centre for Research on Women is working with adolescent boys and girls in urban schools to 'rescript' traditional understanding and expectations of gender roles and behaviours (Achyut et al 2011).

A review of successful interventions by Leach and Humphreys (2006) indicates that most share a common set of methodological principles. These include a commitment to influence behaviour change through participatory methodologies; to seek out and value children's knowledge, opinions and perspectives; and to engage adults in an open and democratic partnership, minimizing the traditional power imbalance between adults and children. Interventions work when they take place in a safe environment in which young people can openly discuss sensitive topics, question traditional views, express fears and seek advice. This encourages and facilitates self-reflection and provides opportunities to learn and rehearse new behaviours.

Halsall (2010) makes a case for human rights learning in a war zone through formal and informal mechanisms. She argues that human rights learning needs to move beyond school-based rote learning "... (to) an alternate, contextualized and empowering human rights learning framework which enhances a girl's capacity to communicate and exercise her rights ... Such a framework needs to explore contextual values and attitudes, be responsive to participants' experiences, and provide an opportunity to critically examine both rights and responsibilities." The key elements in forming such a framework include gender sensitivity, awareness of social relationships and roles in the local culture, acknowledgement of participants' differing needs for knowledge and life skills, a focus on responsibility rather than breaches of rights, and incorporation and/or acknowledgement of indigenous practices.

Parkes (2010) reiterates the three critical "Ps" – power, participation and partnerships – which are essential to understand and address gender based violence in the today's world: a) "Power" is essential to understand how violence serves to maintain and increase inequalities; and simultaneously understand how power can be exercised in new ways, through strengthening girls' capabilities to identify and contest violence and for boys and girls to learn to complement each other in challenging violence; b) "Participation" of girls' in actions to contest violence is crucial, but must be combined with building relational programmes involving boys as girl's allies, along with their communities; c) "Partnerships" as a way forward, building links between women's movements and children's rights/education movements, between stakeholders across different spheres of health, education, justice and social welfare to strengthen local systems of support.

Clearly strategies to address and prevent violence should include a continuum of developmental activities that address multiple levels of the ecological framework: individual, family/relationship, community and societal. The United Nations Study on Violence against Children (2006) outlines recommendations to address the issue of gender based violence in schools relating to three areas - prioritizing prevention, building capacity to address the issue; and building information systems. These remain valid today and include:

- Ensure universal access to violence free learning environments, where the rights of all children are respected and promoted. Governments must ensure that primary and secondary schools are rights-based, and offer safe and healthy, gender sensitive, inclusive, and effective learning environments for girls and boys.
- Uphold governments' obligation to explicitly prohibit violence against children by law, and to ensure the implementation of related policies and procedures at the school level – specifically putting a stop to corporal punishment and other humiliating or degrading treatment, bullying and other sexual and gender-based violence.
- Implement violence prevention programmes comprehensively across the education setting for all staff and students, while being sensitive to the special needs of vulnerable children.
- Implement specific strategies to ensure that the special needs of vulnerable children are addressed, and that discrimination in particular is stopped. Put in place mechanisms and protocols to ensure that schools have trained and trusted adults, within or independent of the school, to whom students can safely and confidentially report incidents of violence and receive advice.

- Establish clear codes of conduct reflecting child rights principles, which are harmonized with the law and promoted widely among all staff, students and their families and communities. All school staff should be trained and supported in the use of non-violent and respectful classroom management strategies, as well as specific skills to prevent patterns of bullying and other gender-based violence and to respond to it effectively.
- Actively promote and support the involvement of students in the design, development, implementation, and monitoring of policies and programmes, including through access to confidential complaints or reporting mechanisms. Participatory, gender-sensitive, and inclusive school management structures should be promoted and students should be equipped with the necessary skills and given opportunities to be involved, with special attention given to the participation of vulnerable children.
- Promote school–community partnerships and present schools as a resource to the community. Governments should acknowledge the school as a community resource and facilitate closer school–community linkages to address violence in and around schools, involving students, staff, parents and other partners such as police, health services, social services, faith-based groups, community recreation groups, and cultural groups.
- Women and men need to work together to challenge definitions of masculinity that often provide the foundation for violence. Male students, staff and community members, must be actively encouraged as strategic partners and allies; and along with female students, staff and community members, must be provided with opportunities to increase their understanding of how to stop gender discrimination and its violent manifestations.
- Address educational curriculum as a critical tool for catalysing violence prevention and social justice: For students, issues framing violence need to be addressed in a way that is appropriate for their cognitive and emotional level. Concepts such as equality and rights can be raised within the context of promoting respectful, loving relationships, and within conflict-resolution and anti-bullying strategies.
- Strengthen data collection systems on all forms of violence against girls and boys. Data collected should ensure that the views of students and potential

students are considered along with those of teachers, parents, and the wider community, with a special focus on the experiences of vulnerable children. Governments should ensure that the information yielded should be disaggregated by age and sex at a minimum, and should be incorporated into existing education management information systems established at local, district and national levels.

• Develop cross-national and national research agenda on violence in and around schools to supplement data collection systems (with in-depth qualitative and quantitative research that is ethical and child-centred). Given the cloak of invisibility that often surrounds violence, the act of identifying it as an issue can in itself constitute an intervention (Leach and Humphreys, 2007); more research is needed that is large scale and cross-national in scope and can identify common definitions and appropriate methodologies.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, educational environments that perpetuate implicit or explicit violence are extremely disempowering and constrain development of positive educational identities among students, especially girls. Violence against girls can cause long-term and often irreversible physical and psychological harm. It suppresses their voices, constrains their choices and denies them control over their physical integrity. It also increases the risk that girls will engage in risky behaviour and slide into and remain in poverty. Gender violence in school and the policy vacuum surrounding the issue must be addressed urgently if we are serious about fulfilling the right of all children, especially girls, to basic education.

As stated in the United Nations Study on Violence against Children: "the most effective approaches to countering violence in schools are tailored to the unique circumstances of the schools in question, but that they also have key elements in common. Specifically, they are based on recognition that all children have equal rights to education in settings that are free of violence, and that one of the functions of education is to produce adults imbued with the non-violent values and practises. This approach is more likely to sustain prevention efforts over time than any single intervention".

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5

Conference Report

In collaboration with the Institute of Education, University of London

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The EFA flagship for girls' education, UNGEI, is a partnership that includes the United Nations system, governments, donor countries, NGOs, civil society and the private sector, as well as communities and families, and works at global, regional and country levels. The UNGEI goal is to narrow the gender gap in primary and secondary education and to ensure that all children complete primary schooling, with girls and boys having equal access to all levels of education.

In conjunction with the tenth anniversary of the partnership, launched by former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, UNGEI held a global conference on 'Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equality' (E4) during 12 April to20 May 2010. The conference consisted of an electronic discussion held online between April and May 2010 and a face-to-face meeting in Dakar from 17 to 20 May 2010. This report provides a summary account of the deliberations of the e-discussion as well as the Dakar conference, and is collectively referred to as the 'E4 conferences report'.

The overarching goal of the E4 conference was to harness the power of partnerships to improve girls' access to quality education globally and address the gender inequalities

that prevent initiatives from reaching their full potential to transform societies. To this end, the Dakar conference brought together diverse stakeholders – activists and practitioners on the ground, national and international policymakers, and researchers in order to:

- recommit to the acceleration of gender equity-related actions agreed to at the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar; and
- deepen public-policy advocacy and debate on girls' education in order to accelerate action towards the attainment of MDGs 2 and 3 and inform a broader understanding of gender equity, girls' education and the strategic actions necessary to support this.

The E4 conference came at a critical time, when much was at stake. As noted in the UNESCO *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the marginalized*, "On current trends, some 56 million children [over half of whom would be girls] could still be out of school in 2015. Changing this scenario will require a far stronger commitment by governments to reach girls and marginalized groups." Had prior EFA targets related to gender and education been met by the original deadlines of 2000 and 2005, global development efforts would have received a tremendous boost – and progress on the attainment of the MDGs related to survival and poverty reduction would be much more easily within reach. Current discussions concerning aid for education and the reform of the EFA Fast Track Initiative, together with the calls for a global education fund and more ambitious global initiatives for education, highlight the urgency for making a stronger case for education and for increasing efforts to maintain it high on the international development agenda.

The E4 conference was organized by UNGEI at the behest of the UNGEI Global Advisory Committee (GAC). GAC members believed that the tenth anniversary of the partnership should be utilized to draw attention to the challenges relating to girls' education and encourage partnerships that will promote girls' access to quality education. The UNGEI secretariat then entered into collaboration with the Beyond Access project, coordinated by the Institute of Education at the University of London, to organize the conference. Beyond Access is a project that brings together a wide network of practitioners, policymakers and academics working in many different contexts to explore critical issues that affect the achievement of gender equality in education.⁸ This collaboration facilitated UNGEI to leverage the latest academic and scholarly perspectives on gender equality in education, a range of links with practitioners and local organizations and the institutional knowledge, networks and technical expertise of UNGEI to the benefit of the electronic and Dakar conferences.

Specifically, a situation analysis entitled 'Partnership, Participation and Power for Gender Equality in Education'⁹ and commissioned by UNGEI in February 2010, reviewed the achievements since the World Education Forum in 2000 and the challenges that remain for gender equality in education. The document provided the analytical backdrop for the E4 conference and reiterated that while many countries have achieved significant achievements in gender parity in enrolment and attendance and in expanding access to schooling, challenges still remain. Improvements in enrolments need to be viewed in the context of intersecting inequalities associated with wealth, rural life or membership in a particular social group, which have been shown, among others, to affect girls in particular.

Further, the analysis reiterated that greater attention should be given to the impact of violence against girls on their education and stressed the challenge of understanding the complexity of gendered power in local settings as well as the educational conditions that can support change and provide quality schooling. The analysis also paid special attention to the role of partnerships in promoting girls' education and indicated ways in which "inadequate attention to inequalities in power, and obstacles to participation, have meant the important partnerships established cannot yet fully reach their potential without additional mobilization of analysis and action".

Against this larger background, E4 brought together a vibrant mix of scholars, practitioners, government representatives and development partners to deepen the understanding of policies and practices in education that can support gender equality and the empowerment of women. Participants examined ways to transform the global partnership to accelerate the achievement of the gender- and education-related MDGs by their target date of 2015. They also addressed the major barriers to gender equality related to education, as well as the keys to girls' empowerment. In particular, the E4 workshop participants engaged with the three main sub-themes:

9 The full text of the document may be accessed from the conference website, <www.e4conference.org>.

⁸ Beyond Access was set up in 2003 by Oxfam Great Britain, the Institute of Education at the University of London and the UK Department for International Development. The project aims to contribute to achieving MDG 2 (universal primary education) and MDG 3 (gender equality and the empowerment of women) by generating and critically examining knowledge and practice regarding gender equality and education.

- Conceptualizing schooling beyond formal access or enrolment
- Addressing gender-based violence in and near schools
- Examining the roles of poverty and intersecting inequalities and their impact on schooling

In addition, a number of current cross-cutting issues were identified for discussion with reference to their impact on girls' education, including:

- the intersections of health and education;
- the effects of HIV and AIDS;
- the significance of nutrition for learning; and
- the effects of climate change.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF THE CONFERENCE

The E4 initiative was launched to bring together activists, practitioners, policymakers and scholars to build a common knowledge base from which to tackle the above issues, with the explicit goal of strengthening and expanding partnerships for girls' education.

Expected outcomes

- 1. Participants will share a common understanding of the principal barriers to girls' equal access to quality education and accelerating robust strategies to overcome them.
- 2. Country-specific action plans on gender equity and education will inform a global research and action agenda for eradicating poverty and violence, and for promoting quality education.
- 3. Participants will identify means to research, document, disseminate and advocate good practices relevant to girls' education and equal access to quality education.
- 4. Participants will identify partnerships at the country level and means to strengthen them, including communication strategies, action plans and capacity building.

Expected outputs

 Feedback on papers written for the conference that will serve as the basis for their revision and eventual publication through various channels in order to disseminate the content of the conference to a wider audience.

- Outlines of country-specific action plans to convene relevant actors in order to formalize a girls' education partnership or – where a formal partnership exists – to present a brief on the conference and action plan outline.
- 3. Commitment by each country delegation to finalize a country-level action plan leading up to 2015 and to report back to UNGEI through the UNICEF country office at the end of 2010.
- 4. South-South and North-South research and practice networks and partnerships identified for follow-up.
- 5. UNGEI Dakar Declaration that calls on political leaders, policymakers, education practitioners and communities to make a concerted effort in the next five years to reach every girl, and to provide a school experience that is not simply nominal enrolment but offers the possibility of empowerment. The declaration will identify areas of strategic engagement to help make this happen.

CONFERENCE STRUCTURE

The E4 conference featured a participatory and collaborative methodology oriented towards transformative action, which sought to break from traditional formats and encourage interaction, dialogue and new forms of engagement between the diverse set of participants. As indicated above, the conference consisted of two distinct, yet related, activities:

- 1. Electronic discussion held online between April and May 2010
- 2. Follow-up workshop in Dakar from 17 to 20 May 2010.

The **e-conference** was designed to galvanize public debate among as wide a population as possible – academics, practitioners and policymakers from diverse geographic regions – and also to generate input into the conference in Dakar as well as output into one specific framework, the Dakar Declaration. The e-conference was held on a specially constructed website established for the E4 conferences between 12 April and 14 May 2010. It was structured into four themed weeks:

- Week 1: 'Poverty, Intersecting Inequalities and Girls' Rights to Education'
- Week 2: 'Quality Education and Gender Equality'
- Week 3: 'Breaking the Silence: Contesting violence and promoting girls' education'
- Week 4: 'Connecting Social Policy: Climate change, health, AIDS and girls' education'

In Week 5, the final week of the e-conference, thematic discussions were drawn together to reinforce linkages across issues framing girls' education. Participants contributed ideas towards the Dakar Declaration on girls' education and gender equality. The conference moderators were able to take these ideas directly to the discussions in Dakar. Internet-based interactive software was used to broadcast the keynote presentations and to enable participants who were listening to the live transmission to ask questions.

The Government of Senegal hosted the **in-person conference** in Dakar, which took place on 17 to 20 May 2010. In keeping with the e-discussion, the Dakar conference was divided into three inter-related streams – poverty, violence and quality education – which examined key opportunities to strengthen partnerships working to achieve gender equality through education. The format of the conference combined author presentations with structured discussions in participatory working-group sessions organized around each of the three streams. Each stream comprised a plenary and five working-group sessions, designed to encourage participants to consider existing situations and problems, as well as discuss potential solutions, particularly in terms of how deeper forms of participation could be generated (*see Box 1*).

Box 1. Working-group sessions at the Dakar conference

Session 1: 'Reviewing Literature and Refining Definitions'

Session 2: 'Addressing Hierarchies of Power'

Session 3: 'What can we do? Interventions and partnerships'

Session 4: 'Making Connections: Processes for change'

Session 5: 'Reporting and Reviewing'

To bring into sharper focus the overarching theme of partnerships, a special partnership forum was held. The forum brought together bilateral and multilateral donors, foundations, private-sector partners and multiple agencies to dialogue on effective and viable partnerships for girls' education. In addition, two sessions were allocated for delegates to meet in their national groupings to discuss the formation of country action plans. The documentary film *To Educate a Girl*, commissioned by UNGEI, was also premiered at the conference.

To optimize the possibilities for discussion in the conference, the number of con-

ference participants at Dakar was limited to 200 people. The UNGEI GAC attended the conference, and GAC members performed key roles such as chairing plenaries and contributing to the facilitation of the working-group sessions (*see Appendices 5 and 6*).

In terms of papers, 23 papers were prepared for the Dakar conference, which were either commissioned directly or chosen from among the approximately 70 papers submitted as a result of an open call. In line with the overall goal of fostering partnerships, organizers requested that proposed papers be developed through collaborations, such as campaigning alliances, partnerships between policymakers and practitioners/ activists, academics working collaboratively in the global south, or south-north, and collaborations between academics and policymakers/practitioners/activists. Commissioned papers and papers from the open call were requested to be in either French or English (with a balance actively sought), and all selected paper abstracts were made available in both languages.

A SUMMARY OF THE ELECTRONIC DISCUSSION

An exciting feature of the E4 conference was the use of the Internet to expand access to discussion. An online conference took place from 12 April to 14 May 2010 as part of the build-up to the Dakar conference. Five weeks of in-depth discussions on the E4 website opened up participation in E4 well beyond the 200 delegates who could be accommodated at Dakar. The e-forum allowed for additional high-quality contributions, with valuable insights, experiences and ideas given a public platform. The format allowed for exchanges free from the constraints of limited speaking opportunity and time.

During the e-conference, 16 teams and individuals presented their work and more than 80 participants contributed at least once in the discussion forums, generating a total of more than 25,000 words of text – an indicator of the depth of the discussion. The discussion was fully public, using current Web technology to remove as many barriers as possible. While active e-conference participants represented about 5 per cent of all visitors to the e-conference web pages, between 100 and 300 people engaged in the contributions every day.

Overall, more than 2,800 people from 140 countries visited the E4 web pages, most of them multiple times to follow the progress of the discussion, exemplifying the level of worldwide interest. The Eastern Africa, Southern Asia and Western Africa regions were particularly prominent among visitors to the web pages. The top 10 contributing countries outside the United Kingdom and the United States were Burkina Faso, Canada, France, India, Kenya, Israel, Peru, Senegal, South Africa and United Republic of Tanzania. Week 1: Poverty, Intersecting Inequalities and Girls' Rights to Education What are the links between poverty, social division and discrimination against girls with regard to schooling in contexts you know well?

- Two of the people who commented drew on examples from Nigeria and the Sudan; both highlighted interlinked sites in which poverty and social division generate discrimination against girls.
- In the Nigerian context, where education is still "far from being free", families view girls' education as a "double loss", both because of the opportunity cost and the cost of schooling, while income-generating activities also affect participation in school. Also mentioned were findings from an ActionAid project in Nigeria, which showed that girls' education is viewed as a "waste of resources". This is linked to negative stereotypes that view women as subaltern and education as a negative influence towards achieving the prescribed role of a submissive wife, in a society where marriages are often contracted as early as 10 years old.
- The positive impact of mothers' education in determining whether children are sent to school was highlighted, and it was suggested that African governments should put more resources into women's literacy programmes, particularly in rural areas. Another person who commented suggested that microcredit schemes could be given on the condition that children from the family of the recipient are sent to school.
- Elaine Unterhalter, from the Institute of Education at the University of London, also highlighted that government policies (e.g. a lack of free education, or high costs for basic food) exacerbate the tensions on poor families, forcing them to choose between boys' and girls' futures. The comments point to the importance of working on particular policies free education, possible subsidies for basic foods, and improving teaching and learning in the poorest communities so that poverty and social division do not limit girls' opportunities and force poor families to make tragic choices.

What avenues exist to hear the voices of poor girls with regard to schooling and what actions result?

• Many of the comments discussed the importance of empowering children themselves, either through the participation of children's organizations, such

as committees, youth parliaments and clubs, or as representatives in school management committees. Many positive results of this empowerment were discussed, particularly in relation to ways of challenging gender-based violence in schools, opening discussion about HIV and AIDS, or creating additional school feeding programmes. In one of the examples given, a girls' club was able to campaign for and receive an additional budgetary allocation for girls' education.

How are partnerships across social sectors working with regard to girls' rights to schooling?

- Elaine Unterhalter highlighted that the replies confirmed themes she had seen in research literature. Partnerships appear to work on particular projects, like a girls' dormitories initiative in Morocco or a girls' education summit in Nigeria, but long-term initiatives across social sectors, particularly those that deal with the multidimensionality of poverty and girls' rights to schooling, are difficult to put in place and sustain.
- The difficulties of partnerships dealing with highly politicized issues, such as violence, were emphasized, although some interesting examples of how to overcome them were also given. Partnerships in health might also provide examples of good practice.

What intergenerational strategies to address gender inequalities in education exist in contexts you know well and what do evaluations show?

• As stated above, literacy programmes for mothers were highlighted as having very positive results, empowering women to be involved in school management committees and further support girls' education.

What advocacy for girls' rights in education is taking place and with what outcomes?

- The impact of international conventions for human rights was cited as a useful framework for identifying where obstacles and violations occur, as well as rights holders and duty bearers, which can give solid ground for action to demand remedies and accountability. The success of using rights to fight for education for Roma children or against the discrimination of girls of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic were highlighted as good examples.
- The limitations of laws were also highlighted through an example from India,

where compulsory elementary education must be supported with incentives for poorer households.

What more could be done to enhance policy and practice?

• One of the key points emanating from the comments was that a more holistic understanding of the barriers to girls' education must be reached, so that more work at the community level can take place and more deliberative approaches can be used. A good example was given of the multiple intersecting causes affecting education attainment and conversion in the slums in Kampala.

Week 2: Quality Education and Gender Equality

In what different ways do policymakers, teachers and learners link quality education with gender equality?

- The discussion highlighted that to achieve real change and quality education for girls, with gender equality as a priority, the work of policymakers must be contextualized within the community, taking into account the expectations and aspirations of parents themselves for their own daughters. It was suggested that the key to success is ownership, with understanding at the local level, of education programmes and schools, particularly through a meaningful engagement of girls themselves. This can be a slow process, but it is not instructive to think in terms of quick fixes for entrenched views; there is no 'silver bullet' for equality.
- Another discussant, while agreeing that work should be holistic and integrated, suggested that it was also necessary to work with power brokers to tackle the underlying gender discrimination that keeps girls' education undervalued. There is a need to work with management structures to combat negative gender stereotyping, as well as with local and national governments to ensure that appropriate curricula, services, resources and commitments for girls' rights and gender equality at the national level are implemented and upheld.

What methods are helpful in overcoming different perceptions about the problems for girls?

• The discussion highlighted that there is still a lack of differentiation in some nationwide education policies, and that it is still necessary to target the needs of adolescent girls in particular. The fact that in Ghana, pregnancy accounted for 70 per cent of junior secondary-school dropouts between 1997 and 2002, highlights the importance of policies that focus specifically on the needs of girls.

What new methods and approaches are proving useful for understanding gendered issues and problems in the classroom?

- The discussion stressed that continued support was needed for teacher training on gender equality, as well as for ensuring gender parity of teachers, even though this is not a 'new method'. Female role models and sensitivity to gender issues are known to have a positive impact on girls' enrolment, retention and achievement within school, as well as positive overall outcomes for attendance.
- As in other discussions, the need to increase the consciousness of whole communities and families about issues such as sexual harassment was highlighted as being a very important aspect of the resolution of gendered problems.

How do teachers see their role in terms of promoting gender equality?

• The discussion (in French) focused on the role of teachers as not just imparting lessons, but as being part of social formation and transformation, aiming to contribute to an equal society.

What kind of training do teachers receive – or should receive – to help combat the fact that gender inequalities experienced in schools are symptomatic of wider social inequalities?

- One of the discussants highlighted the focus of the keynote address on the fact that schools and classrooms do not exist in vacuums, but are embedded in wider environments of social and gender relations and historical contexts. Teacher training offers a space to discuss the attitudes and values of future teachers, and could focus on inclusive pedagogical approaches and safe learning environments, as well as challenging gender stereotypes and bias in curricula.
- One of the discussants also suggested that gender codes of conducts could be developed and introduced to teachers during training, to ensure that teachers are aware of their own gendered power and responsibilities.
- Another discussant was less convinced about the effectiveness of teacher training, but did highlight the impact that a teacher's own expectations will have on results. Sheila Aikman also stressed that teacher training curricula should place emphasis on developing the individuals' capabilities rather than being authoritarian or hierarchical.

What are some examples of transformative teachers and training?

- An example was given of a child-friendly schools concept in pre-service training, as is being done in Malawi. This helps teachers to find creative ways of addressing girls' attendance, such as mobilizing the community to fund separate toilets and changing rooms for girls.
- The breaking down of stereotypes is also a central aspect of transformative training. One example provided in the discussion was of a camp where girls and boys were treated equally, encouraged to attempt the same tasks that they would not have done at home. A positive moment was seen to be when the boys won the cooking competition!
- While many of these examples were inspiring, there are implementation issues in that often training funds are being cut, and inexperienced teachers hired.

Week 3: Breaking the Silence: Contesting violence and promoting girls' education

Summary of general comments:

- In this strand of the discussion, as with many other aspects of gender and education, the importance of involving the wider community was stressed. This involvement is particularly relevant in politically sensitive issues such as female genital mutilation, where opening a dialogue with mothers and grandmothers is the key to building consensus to address the issue. The importance of a holistic approach and of bringing together a variety of stakeholders was also emphasized in this context, so that civil society can work together with governments to keep laws up to date and talk openly with those most affected by violence. There is a clear need to involve not just duty bearers, or those in power, but the rights holders themselves, so that marginalized voices are heard. Models that allow girls to integrate their experiences and become part of civil and political society, promote an inclusive and more democratic culture.
- The fact that there is an insufficient focus on the empowering qualities of adult education for women who suffer domestic abuse was criticized. Such a focus is necessary both so that women can improve their self-esteem, but also so that their participation in social and national building activities is enhanced.

Can you provide an example of a strong policy framework or legislation that addresses gender-based violence in education? What makes it a good policy? What is lacking? Is it enforceable?

- Some of the discussion here focused on the fact that, in many countries, pregnant girls are forced to drop out of school. One discussant suggested that legal frameworks need to be just, as well as take the best interest of girls into consideration.
- The need for broad measures to support laws by enabling communities to change the view that sexual relationships between teachers and students are normal or justified was also highlighted.

How do you engage teachers and teachers' unions in combating violence against girls in education? What happens if a teacher has exploited, abused or sexually violated a female student? What policies does the teachers' union have to address this violation? How can you work together with the union on this important issue?

- The work of the UK government on violence and gender equality was introduced as an example of possible good practice, because it integrates lessons in the personal, social, health and economic curricula of schools.
- It was agreed by some discussants that teachers' unions were key agents for stopping gender-based violence in schools. Sometimes, however, they can be part of the problem, especially when teachers can protect other teachers who have committed abuse, and/or aim to influence parents of victims to ensure that cases are not being brought to justice.
- Codes of conducts, with specific clear penalties, or locally adapted guidelines for members of unions, can go some way to help with this problem. Targeted training that assists unions in addressing gender dynamics within their own unions can also help.
- In some countries, there are no laws specifying age of sexual consent, which has clear implications for protecting young female students.
- One discussant suggested that in some countries, the teachers' unions are mostly there to protect the interest of teachers, and that in many communities the parents or community teacher associations can be more influential.

Can you share examples of child participation, particularly of girls at national and international levels? Do you have examples of participation by other actors – parents, teachers, etc.? What was the goal of the activity, and what was the outcome? How do you address issues of protection? What are the challenges?

- In the United Republic of Tanzania, the NGO Plan International supported a child-led media project that transmitted 26 video magazines on TVT, the national television broadcaster in the country. The project aimed to mitigate harassment of schoolchildren by teachers, parents and other adults. It proved to be an eye-opener for school and local authorities, but especially for the 30,000 individuals reached directly by community screenings. The project aimed to give a voice to children to advocate for their rights in 25 schools, particularly those aspects related to violence. Children are now involved in the decision-making process of some schools and communities. For example, some districts have added more primary teachers to their schools after receiving special requests from children.
- Discussions on this project reflected on the capacity of children to be active participants in advocacy strategies, as well as the difficulties that children must face in voicing their experiences, particularly publicly. In an example given by another discussant, the risks of youth-led advocacy, and therefore the need for adequate support and negotiation, were stressed.

Week 4: Connecting Social Policy: Climate change, health, AIDS and girls' education

What are the effects of the HIV and AIDS epidemic on girls' education?

• Those commenting on this question highlighted (in French) that there are many different levels on which the stigma and effects of AIDS operate, and that one of the biggest concerns is the ever-rising numbers of people suffering from HIV and AIDS. There are immediate effects on the health of the family, both in terms of possibly carrying the infection but also in terms of nutrition, since one or both parents is no longer able to work. Girls tend to carry the greater burden of care; some are even driven to prostitution to generate money for food.

In what ways has climate change impacted girls' lives and their participation and success in education?

- One discussant noted that "climate change is no different than other structural factors that affect social equity and development issues". The view that the survival of the family often falls on the shoulders of girls was supported by other discussants in both French and English.
- With unpredictable rainy seasons, girls are often pulled from school to help with erratic harvests, or to help with other labour if crops fail. Fetching water is also often a gendered activity, which negatively impacts girls' attendance if they are forced to travel farther. As in other discussions, comments in both French and English discussed the preferences of many families for educating sons, which becomes particularly relevant in times of hardship, when already-existent inequities are accentuated.
- The experience of NGOs such as Plan International has been that decentralized support, such as through village development committees, is a critical flexible response mechanism in situations of political or climate-related instability. Ensuring girls' participation in the decisions that impact climate change was also stressed.

What kinds of interventions are needed to successfully intervene against the negative impacts of HIV and AIDS, as well as of climate change, on gender equality in education, and particularly on girls' education?

- The discussion highlighted that there are still too many barriers to girls getting the health care and protection that they need.
- One suggestion was to strengthen and promote centres for sexual and reproductive health, which could provide adolescent-friendly information, and other services such as counselling or confidential testing. The need to have properly enforced comprehensive and ubiquitous child-protection policies so that teachers are unable to sexually exploit vulnerable female students is also pressing.

Report on the Dakar conference

This section presents a summary of the discussions at the Dakar conference, comprising the plenary sessions, the working-group sessions in each of the three themes (poverty, quality and violence), the keynote speeches in the opening and closing ceremonies, and the partnership forum.

Opening events and ceremony

The opening ceremony was moderated by international journalist and broadcaster, **Femi Oke**.

Senegal's Minister of Preschool, Primary and Lower Secondary Education and National Languages, **Kalidou Diallo**, delivered the opening remarks. He stated that Senegal was honoured to host the conference and noted that the country has taken strides in girls' education since 2000, such as the achievement of gender parity in primary enrolments with the assistance of UNGEI. Despite progress, however, he said that many inequalities remained, in response to which Senegal launched a programme in 2007 to monitor gender equality in all levels of education.

The next speaker was **Graça Machel**, activist and former Minister of Education of Mozambique, who gave a presentation by video. She celebrated the huge advances made since the World Conference on EFA held in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand, which called for the universalization of basic education in all countries, but reminded participants that many girls around the world still remain out of school. Reflecting that "the last mile can be the hardest", she advised participants that to reach the remaining girls, it may be necessary to tailor specific solutions for each constraining situation that holds girls back from attaining quality education.

Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta, Director of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Africa, hailed the successes achieved by both UNGEI and the Forum for African Women Educationalists, particularly related to access to education. She identified one outstanding lesson of the last 10 years: With the right level of commitment from governments, civil society and other organizations, gender equality is achievable. While noting that many countries had achieved major progress in access to education, she stressed that there has been stagnation and, in some cases, even reversals in terms of quality. As a result, it is now more important than ever to pay attention to outcomes, not just in terms of gains to the community but in terms of the services and resources available to women themselves, such as how many women get top jobs and how many go on to higher education. She concluded by calling for a "new humanism", where men and women join together to eliminate injustices.

The acclaimed Senegalese singer **Coumba Gawlo** described how girls' education was central to her work as an ambassador against poverty and through her own organization, Light for a Child, she helps girls enrol in school. Ms. Gawlo called for a strong commitment from governments to help African girls to become empowered.

Anthony Lake, Executive Director of UNICEF, thanked the Government of Senegal for making education a policy priority, and noted advances in girls' education

in Senegal since 2000 as proof that progress can be achieved. He noted, however, that at the current pace, many of the world's poorest children will still not be in school by 2015, and stressed that the global economic crisis is likely to worsen this trend. Mr. Lake said that it is morally reprehensible to ignore the right to education of these 'hardest-to-reach' children. Moreover, he observed that girls' education is a key opportunity to produce a more equitable society through a ripple effect: Educated women are more able to protect themselves (e.g., against HIV and AIDS, sexual harassment and the dangers of childbirth). Strategies such as free education, re-entry into the education system for young mothers and interventions to reduce violence in schools have increased the number of girls in schools. Despite this, a broader agenda is required because gender equality in education alone does not necessarily lead to women's empowerment and gender equality in wider society. He urged the conference participants to explore these issues further.

Following this address, a video message from Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan, Honorary Global Chairperson of UNGEI, was shown. The message is part of the trailer for the documentary film *To Educate a Girl*. Queen Rania emphasized that girls are more likely to be affected by poverty and disease than boys but noted that due to the efforts of UNGEI, many more girls are likely to receive a quality education.

The Prime Minister of Senegal, **Souleymane Ndéné Ndiaye**, delivered the closing remarks. He observed that governments and international organizations have unstintingly worked towards the goals identified 10 years ago. But despite the significant budgetary commitment made by the Government of Senegal, gender disparities continue to persist. The Prime Minister noted that the three themes of the conference – quality, violence and poverty – are particularly relevant, and also observed that the basic truth is that societies must ensure that girls and women are actively engaged in economic and social life for the country but that it cannot be done without the provision of equitable education. He outlined that Senegal had responded to this challenge by setting up a national framework for gender equity and adopting pertinent legislation. In addition, 11 November has been dedicated as a national day for girls and is celebrated throughout the country. He concluded with a vibrant appeal to the international community to increase mobilization to support girls' education.

Overview of thematic discussions

1. POVERTY STREAM

Plenary

The plenary for the poverty stream was chaired by **David Wiking**, co-chair of the UNGEI GAC and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency Team Director for Knowledge, Education, and Information and Communications Technologies. **Cheryl Gregory Faye**, Head of the UNGEI Secretariat, outlined the process leading up to the conference and described its aims, objectives, outcomes and outputs, explaining that half of the countries with UNGEI partnership were present – those either with persistent gender gaps, or those which have made large strides in recent years.

Elizabeth King, World Bank Sector Director for Education in the Human Development Network, described the challenges facing girls' education, the predominant patterns of gender gaps and how national averages can mask disparities at subnational levels. Another particular challenge is the transition from primary to secondary school, the stage at which many girls drop out of schools. Ms. King outlined the "virtuous circle" of instrumental and intrinsic benefits to girls' education, with more equitable education resulting in more economic power, better health and more political power, which in turn improve children's well-being, affecting poverty reduction in the country and overall prospects for economic growth.

As a means to achieve this, Ms. King highlighted measures taken by countries to overcome barriers to education: increasing the number of schools, improving safety in schools, changing pricing policies and improving the quality of service delivery in education. One example is the private, community-managed schools in Pakistan, built by rural education committees and staffed with a teacher trained and paid for by the Government. In conclusion, Ms. King outlined four areas that are still unaddressed: early childhood development, family support policies to relieve girls of household tasks, labour policies to increase girls' chances of securing jobs after schooling, and political participation.

Elaine Unterhalter linked the issue of poverty with the themes of the other plenaries – violence and quality. She noted the lack of a universally accepted and representative definition for poverty, and asked the delegates to question how poverty intersects with gender to keep girls out of school or give them negative perception of schooling, and of similar problems regarding violence. Ms. Unterhalter emphasized how talking about poverty can also be a challenge, as there is a lack of language that covers all its dimensions: It is believed that school is essential for the "virtuous circle", but the content and form of that schooling must constantly be investigated. Finally, she spoke of a "coercive challenge": Girls are most likely to be out of school in conflict areas and gender-based violence may compromise girls' experiences with school. It is imperative to consider the coercive effects of girls living in poverty.

The floor was then opened up for questions. Several questions and comments centred on the need for more classrooms and scholarships. In response, Ms. King noted that the economic crisis will affect many countries, as well as flows of international aid, which will bring challenges to investment in infrastructure. She recommended that the situation be monitored closely through up-to-date statistics. Other participants questioned whether mitigation interventions were sufficient to bring about change, and whether privatization reinforced gender imbalances, since parents could be more willing to spend fees on boys than on girls. In response, Ms. King stressed that getting women teachers into rural areas was the key to transformation, and that while privatization can exclude girls, abolishing fees can help. Ms. Unterhalter emphasized that it is important to work against schools being the site of educational poverty. Another delegate offered evidence that the EFA Fast Track Initiative is making a significant difference in gender equality, aiming to improve monitoring and pushing forward on a multimillion-dollar programme to support civil society organizations in developing countries.

Working group: Session 1

This session reviewed the implications of recent work on poverty, gender and schooling. The first paper in this session was authored by **Elaine Unterhalter, Veerle Dieltiens, Jenni Karlsson, Setungoane Letsatsi, Herbert Makinda, Amy North, Jane On-songo** and **Chris Yates** and was entitled 'Girls, Gender and Intersecting Inequalities in Education: A reflection from case studies in South Africa and Kenya'. Focusing on the implications of these case studies for gender equality at a global level, the paper outlined that research has revealed that those in the poorest sectors, as well as ethnic minorities and racial groups, are most vulnerable to not attending school. It raised issues about the multidimensionality of poverty and suggests that the concept of intersectionality may be useful in considering the ways in which inequalities form and are formed by each other.

Angela Melchoirre authored and presented the next paper, 'The Missing Link: Using the dynamics of human rights advocacy to enhance gender equality in education for girls and women in situations of extreme poverty'. Employing the lens of a human rights advocate, she argued that emphasis on human rights must remain central to work on gender equality in education: the law can be used not just to define violation, but also to influence society and bring about social transformation, as was the case in Nigeria's recognition of education as a human right.

Working group: Session 2

Alice Akunga presented the first paper, co-authored with Ian Attfield and entitled 'Northern Nigeria: Approaches to enrolling girls in school and providing a meaningful education to empower change'. This paper analysed different aspects of the UK Department for International Development education programme in Nigeria. These included the setting up of school-based management committees for community participation, school grants, the involvement of religious leaders, and scholarships to girls from rural areas, where they later return to teach. The paper also asked how we can influence Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and concluded that power relations and sociocultural reasons account for many of the barriers encountered.

The next paper, by **Patricia Ames** and **Rita Carrillo**, was 'Gender, Schooling and Poverty in Peru'. While gender parity in enrolment rates has been achieved in Peru, poverty and emergent issues relating to climate change have created barriers for indigenous girls. Enrolment rates are much lower for indigenous girls than for other girls, and indigenous girls are much less likely to transition to secondary school. As resources become scarcer due to the effects of climate change, and floods occur more frequently, the household burdens on girls increase, threatening their educational participation. During the discussion, a participant from Chad offered an example of an initiative that has attempted to tackle the issue of climate change. Another pointed out that while the North generates climate change, the South suffers from it, and moreover that multilateral donors may come in with limited-duration programmes that are not sustainable. In addition, an awareness of climate change can put girls into a leadership position so they can promote change. A delegate from Kenya suggested that the challenge of climate change will make us more innovative; rather than blaming, we must look to find solutions.

The next paper was 'Engendering Rural Eye Care for Access to Education', and was written by **Ajita Vidyarthi** and **Rajat Chabba**. The paper revealed the hierarchies of power affecting eye care. The findings indicate that in India, women suffer disproportionately from visual problems but are less able to access and afford eye-care services compared to men, affecting their access to education. The paper offers the example of an innovative scheme that trains rural women as vision-care specialists, resulting in improved access to eye care, particularly for women and children, as well as greater empowerment of women and a positive impact on girls' educational access and school achievement.

The session ended with a role-play activity on partnerships, which explored time constraints, budgetary allocations, the difficulties of working with different departments that have different cultures, the lack of capacity and human and material resources, proper communication and commitment. In particular, participants were asked to consider: Who is accountable for how the money is spent?

Working group: Session 3

The third session focused on interventions and partnerships in practice, with the intention that during discussions participants would be able to share their experiences.

The first paper was by Amy Maglio, Adji Senghor and Aniceta Kiriga, and was entitled 'Gender Equality in Rural Education: Best practices and lessons learned from Senegal and Kenya'. The paper described the Women's Global Education Project, a programme in Senegal and Kenya which has succeeded in getting girls from disadvantaged backgrounds into school through scholarships, as a result of partnerships with local organizations. Problems with retention, however, remained. A closer look at other barriers resulted in a more comprehensive approach, including clubs, exam tuition, medical treatment and mentors in the communities aiming for 360-degree programmes looking at poverty, health, counselling, housing, and joining up every aspect of service provision. This also involved the creation of an alternative rite of passage: keeping girls in school. Following the presentation of the paper, other participants shared their experiences with partnerships, stressing the need to avoid duplication across projects and the importance of good communication with the department or ministry of education. One participant from Yemen offered an example of building up a system of committees as a good model for partnership. Many participants reiterated that community involvement and participation was important for sustainability.

The second paper, by **Grace Chisamya, Joan DeJaeghere, Nancy Kendall** and **Marufa Aziz Khan**, was entitled 'Challenging Gender, Poverty and Inequalities in Schooling through Collaborative, Cross-National Partnerships: Evidence from CARE Bangladesh and CARE Malawi'. Both countries have been successful in achieving or moving towards gender parity in primary enrolments, but this has not necessarily translated into gender equality within the school or in wider society. In response, CARE has designed interventions and an indicator framework that will aim to build awareness between the community and teachers to enhance a gender focus in class-

rooms and build an enabling environment for girls' education.

The third paper was entitled 'Poverty, Gender and Education: Participation and knowledge-building in the schools of Porto Alegre, Brazil', by **Moira Wilkinson** and **Luis Armando Gandin**, and explored the role of school governance structures in the reproduction of social inequalities. The study questioned the education being provided for girls and argued that schools themselves need to change in order to promote a more nuanced understanding of what it means to be a girl, thus challenging whose knowledge is in the curriculum and whose knowledge has been silenced. An innovative project in Porto Alegre uses community knowledge as a pedagogical tool and ensures that the school is structured within the community itself. The authors caution, however, that changing structures is only a first step: Although spaces for participation might have been created, it does not mean they will be occupied (e.g., poor women may not participate in school counsels because they do not believe they have the technical language or knowledge to ask questions). Discussion focused around how to broaden female roles in educational structures, rather than, for example, always taking specific roles such as treasurers.

In closing, linkages were made with the discussions in Session 2 about the different ways in which hierarchies of power can manifest themselves. For example, poverty can operate financially, but also by distancing girls, both in terms of geographical remoteness and through social distance. It also operates by making things invisible, which in turn makes it difficult to bring the concerns of the poor higher up the administrative structure.

Working group: Session 4

The aim of the fourth session was to discuss the connections that can be leveraged to promote change. The group members noted that defining poverty involves confronting inequalities of power, and described the different ways in which poverty can prevent girls from attending school, as well as how it can negatively affect their ability to participate if they do attend school. Power inequalities can be both visible and invisible – for example, they are invisible when someone silently feels they do not have the right skills or knowledge to put forward their opinion. They may be visible in household relations but invisible in the ideas, feelings and emotions that women carry their entire lives. There is a need to examine whether current interventions are doing enough to reach the poorest girls, or whether they work on girls' schooling, but leave other areas of gender and other power inequalities untouched. To what extent have partnerships (e.g., those with trade unions and civil society) thus far taken up the issue of poverty?

There are many challenges to addressing such intersecting inequalities, including time, resources, communication, trust, conflicting priorities and a lack of appropriate data. There has been innovative, cross-sectoral work on violence, but little research and critique has been conducted on poverty, especially in the gathering statistics disaggregated by gender and poverty. Points outlined by participants in the ensuing discussion included that the World Education Forum held in Dakar in 2000 did not address power relations but that now the focus is on women's voices and how unequal power relations can be rebalanced, and that schooling is just one arena where this can be realized.

A more comprehensive approach is now needed. At the moment, poverty is being sustained because we are not transforming power relations. In addition to gender mainstreaming, there is also a need for sustainable policies, as well as a need to address the 'culture of silence' against factors that disempower girls.

Participants also read through the draft declaration and, working in groups on different sections, drew on discussions over the previous sessions to make suggestions for the declaration working group.

Working group: Session 5

Alice Akunga presented a summary of the working-group discussions. This covered the importance of defining poverty, the need to confront power inequalities, and strategies to bring about effective change. It also focused on the need for improved data, gender budgeting, staff training and sustainable measures.

It is vital to recognize that the poor have a voice, rather than them needing to be given a voice, and to this end, there is a need to identify participatory spaces and opportunities for them to express that voice, and to work with them rather than for them. We need to create participatory spaces to look at and act upon poverty, quality and violence together.

2. QUALITY STREAM

Plenary

Gianfranco Rotigliano, UNICEF Regional Director for West and Central Africa, chaired the plenary. He noted that although it has been possible to increase the number of children enrolled in school and reduce the gap between boys and girls attending schools, challenges persist in the provision of quality education.

Albert Motivans, Head of Educational Indicators and Data Analysis at the UNES-CO Institute of Statistics, presented a paper entitled 'Measuring Education Quality

through a Gender Lens: Challenges and opportunities'. He noted that quality education is a complex concept that can be challenging to define at the country level. He outlined the Deprivation and Marginalization in Education index as a useful tool that measures educational poverty in terms of children who have attended school for less than four years, and said that the tool has revealed that in many countries, it is the girls from the poorest households who are living in education poverty. The data show interesting patterns: Disproportionate numbers of girls are out of school; in sub-Saharan Africa, it is more frequent that children of school age do not enter school, while in South and West Asia, children enter schools in higher numbers but subsequently drop out. To provide high quality, all factors must be considered together in a comprehensive manner (such as the learning environment, teacher training, curricula, out of school support, etc.) and targeted interventions should be employed to reach the most vulnerable girls. Other issues for discussion included whether there is an illusion of equality in public systems where despite parity of enrolment, there is weak governance or no large-scale policy effort; and that there is need to explore why some poor countries are more successful on gender equality than others.

Codou Diaw, UNGEI GAC member and Executive Director of the Forum for African Women Educationalists, offered a number of points in response. First, she noted that while the data showed some encouraging signs, they also reveal that there is little progress in sub-Saharan Africa, and South and West Asia, and that we now need to focus on allowing girls access to higher levels of education. In particular, we need to examine different levels: the micro-level to see what types of girls are in school; the community level to see the impact on ethnic and linguistic minorities; and the country level, including rural and remote areas. Some significant issues to consider are: why girls do better in reading rather than mathematics; why they underperform later on in school despite early potential; the boundaries of education beyond the conventional classroom; and making teachers, communities and administrators more gender sensitive and competent.

When discussion was opened to the floor, a number of participants highlighted the importance of the presence of women teachers, the need for gender training of teachers, the need to invest more specifically in the marginalized, and the importance of financial data and measuring quality in non-formal schooling.

Working group session 1

Sheila Aikman explained that the goal of this working group was to go beyond the concept of parity as defined by 'gender gaps', and address the issue of equality in a

holistic manner. The group looked at in-school as well as out-of-school factors to understand quality in its fullest sense, which means not only learning outcomes and achievements, but the value girls place on education and learning opportunities offered to them, and the nature of the educational experience for them.

The first paper, 'Quality Education for Gender Equality', by **Sheila Aikman** and **Nitya Rao**, was presented by Nitya Rao. While noting a great emphasis on gender equality in the MDGs and the EFA campaign, the quality of education has so far been ignored, including factors such as respect for diversity, and the right to actively participate in education. It is therefore important to look at what kinds of materials are delivered to students. Ultimately this is an issue of the processes of participation and decision-making – community involvement has been recognized as crucial in mobilization, but teachers are often not consulted on textbook design, and parents also need to be engaged in the development of educational materials, even when they are illiterate. In the discussion, participants spoke of factors for raising the quality of education for girls, such as synchronizing the resources which governments and parents offer, the need for teachers to be involved in the development of gender-sensitive materials, raising parents' awareness despite poverty and illiteracy, and the importance of water and separate toilets in schools.

The second paper, 'Literacy and Gender-Focused School Management in Northern Tanzania and Northern Nigeria', was authored by Rebecca Ingram, Dunstan Kishekya and Andrew Mamedu. The paper centred on the Transforming Education for Girls in Nigeria and Tanzania project, which is working to retain girls in 132 schools in the two countries. The presentation outlined two analytical tools, developed by researchers working with the project, which were devised to examine the quality of girls' schooling in the project: (i) school gender profiles, a series of variables that included gender parity in enrolment, retention and progression, and exam success; and (ii) a school gender management profile, including training and information for teachers, pupils and parents on issues such as gender, HIV and AIDS, and reproductive health; involvement with political campaigning organizations; outreach activities to help the most disadvantaged families; and the mobilization of students and staff to promote community development. Analysis so far has revealed that in schools with high gender profiles, girls' voices were better heard in relation to the barriers stopping them from getting a quality education. This reiterated the need to address girls' education in a holistic manner.

Discussion focused on barriers to improving quality, such as the lack of political commitment to the issue, the resources and incentives given to head teachers and teach-

ers, and the need for policies for early childhood. After the discussion, participants talked in groups about what defined quality to them.

Working group: Session 2

The aim of the second session was to examine hierarchies of power and how these have an impact on the quality of education. The first paper presented was by Ron Watt, entitled 'Evidence-Based Practice in Girls' Education in Cambodia: Lessons from work in progress'. The paper was based on the education component of the Highland Communities programme implemented by CARE Cambodia, which aimed to address the educational needs of disadvantaged indigenous children, especially girls, through the establishment of six community bilingual schools. The hypothesis was that ethnic minority children who receive a bilingual education in their mother tongue and the national language in early grades, master the national language and mathematics better than ethnic minorities, whose education is in the national language only. The Government of Cambodia is now replicating the model in a number of schools. In the ensuing discussion, participants suggested that this might be a problematic scheme in countries where there are many different languages, and that the strategy may hamper integration. On the other hand, it is positive and empowering to teach children in their mother tongue. Questions were also raised about integrating this approach into national curricula.

The second paper, by **Patricia Ames** and **Rita Carillo**, was 'Gender, Schooling and Poverty in Peru'. The first part of the paper outlined how poverty affected girls' enrolments and retention rates in Peru, and how climate change exacerbates many of these existing issues. Increasing levels of poverty (e.g., as a result of floods damaging infrastructure and disrupting agricultural production) can put an additional and disproportionate strain on girls, because they may have to work harder to provide for their siblings and families, making schooling a secondary priority. Moreover, if there are health effects, this will also disproportionately affect girls, who may have to take care of family members. Participants discussed how schools are often called on to house displaced people when crises such as flooding occur and that new technologies might be considered as a way to take education closer to affected populations.

The third paper in the session was by **Anita Rampal** and **Harsh Mandar**, and was presented by **Raka Rashid**, UNGEI focal point and UNGEI regional secretariat for South Asia. Entitled 'Lessons on Food and Hunger: In search of transformative education', the paper examined food and hunger in relation to children's access to quality education using the case of India's Mid-Day Meal Scheme. In India, activists lobbied and took legal action for the government to provide a cooked meal at midday to every child in primary school. The Mid-Day Meal Scheme can help mitigate the effect of short-term hunger on immediate learning among children and on quality education in the long run. The model has the potential to be replicated in other countries and provides a good practice example of partnership. Participants reported back on their own experiences, including the need to pay particular attention to the urban poor, and provided examples of using public-private partnerships to run school canteens.

Many participants talked about a need for cross-sectoral partnerships, as also evidenced by all of the papers, which draw in a range of different actors: government, NGOs, parents, communities and the private sector.

Working group: Session 3

The aim of this session was to explore types of interventions and partnerships that could be employed to improve the quality of girls' education. Recapping the previous day's discussions, **Sheila Aikman** suggested that quality should be framed in terms of three gears that are interconnected and that must move in tandem:

- Enabling environment both the physical and social environment and how they presented opportunities for girls
- Education that is meaningful and relevant, including looking at teacher education and learning outcomes
- Democratic processes What are the forms of school management and community participation, and are girls' voices heard?

Quality must be maintained through changing contexts, and the dimensions of empowerment that are important to quality girls' education must be examined fully. In addition, initiatives aimed at changing boys' behaviour and actions are very important for girls' quality education, as gender equality is achieved through strategies that are targeted at both boys and girls.

The first paper presented during this session was by **Bridget McElroy, Kether Hayden** and **Yanick Douyon**, and entitled 'Teacher Training: The superhighway to gender equity in Senegal'. The paper examined the role that in-service teacher training for secondary schoolteachers plays in creating a gender-responsive educational system in Senegal. The study observed that the gender-equity dialogue is currently limited in teacher training. Since 1992, teacher training has not been mandatory and many teachers are hired straight out of university. The study found that the remaining teacher training programmes were jeopardized by limited budgets, poor road systems and a lack of transportation. Teachers themselves, however, asserted that they needed more gender training and that there were high levels of inappropriate teacher-student relationships. Recommendations included that adequate funding should be secured for the purpose; there should be collaboration with local actors to implement gender-sensitive trainings; and there should be incentives for new teachers and engagement with men as change agents.

In the ensuing discussion, representatives from the Senegalese Ministry of Education challenged some of the findings, and emphasized that there was a gender bureau in the Ministry of Education. In addition, the representatives stated that gender training manuals existed for teachers and work was being done by the Government of Senegal to raise awareness among teachers.

The second paper, by **Dora Amoah Bentil, Wendwossen Kebede, Polly Kirby** and **Purna Shrestha**, was 'Working in Partnership to Address Gender Inequality in Education: Lessons from VSO Ghana and VSO Ethiopia'. The paper, presented by **Dora Amoah Bentil**, offered an example of good practice in partnership and reported on how consulting with children, parents, teachers, head teachers, teacher training institutions and local education authorities in the planning, implementation and evaluation of education programmes is crucial in achieving gender equality in education. Specific outputs of Voluntary Service Overseas efforts from Ethiopia included 10,000 teachers who benefited from 50 hours of service training on gender issues, 37 schools that received separate toilets and small changing rooms for girls, and girls who received extra tuition to help their academic performance. The partnership provided evidence that quality teaching encourages parents to send their children to school, female teachers can act as role models, improved learning environments help to retain girls in schools, and leadership trainings are effective.

In the ensuing group work, participants discussed successes and challenges they had experienced in partnerships for quality.

Working group: Session 4

The aim of this session was to explore possible processes and strategies for change, drawing on the work of the previous session, and also to review the draft declaration. Four points were identified as the main themes of the stream's work:

- Gender equality is at the heart of all dimensions of quality education.
- Quality education that is gender equitable is empowering and transforming.
- Gender equality in quality education is about process as much as outcomes.

• Partnerships must involve effective participation and decision-making by women and girls as well as men and boys.

The discussions in the previous session had identified four key areas central to the provision of quality education:

- teachers and teacher training (in-service and pre-service, locally recruited teachers)
- curricula (textbooks, life skills, language and culture)
- local school environment (child-friendly schools, school clusters, and parent and teacher associations)
- education institution environment (organizational structure, gender units and gender budgets)

In the ensuing group work, each group focused on one key area, and discussed a strategy that would deliver quality education. Participants also discussed how such a strategy could empower girls and change the status quo, and what partnerships are required to implement such a strategy.

In the second part of the session, discussion turned to the draft declaration, and covered a range of points that participants felt should be taken into account in the formulation of the declaration.

Working group: Session 5

The final working group session was devoted to developing the report for the closing plenary session. Two sections were outlined: an overview and a description of the strategies identified as integral to quality education.

The principal strategies covered were: Gender equality must be at the heart of all dimensions of quality education and should not be viewed as an add-on; and education should be empowering and transformative, and needs to focus on processes as well as outcomes. Teachers should have a gender-responsive career development programme, with an emphasis on the recruitment of local teachers and with equal numbers of male and female teachers. They should acquire the skills to use a gender-responsive pedagogy, with skills development possibly using information and communication technologies. The local and national curriculum should be reviewed to ensure that it is relevant, gender responsive and inclusive of all the learning needs of disadvantaged girls and boys. The local school environment requires a multipronged strategy, which engages national

policy with school practice. In addition, educational institution environments can be strengthened by advocating to decision makers to strengthen existing structures and procedures in favour of a quality education for girls.

The report was presented to the closing plenary by Codou Diaw.

3. VIOLENCE STREAM

Plenary

The Plenary on Violence was chaired by **Sally Gear** from the UK Department for International Development, who described violence as the issue which is perhaps the most challenging to address within girls' and women's education.

Cynthia Lloyd, consultant and Senior Associate at the Population Council, made a presentation which drew on recent reports on schooling in Darfur. She stated that girls have the same educational requirements everywhere: complete educational access, a girl-friendly learning environment, and compensatory support to overcome past discrimination. However conflict can often exacerbate already adverse conditions that girls face in claiming an education. Darfur provides a stark illustration: non-availability of non-formal education options for primary school-aged children. Among the internally displaced person communities sampled in West Darfur, only 36 per cent and 65 per cent of the primary schools were single sex in West and North Darfur, respectively; and no secondary schools were located inside the sample communities even when the communities were very populous. She emphatically concluded that the main difference between Darfur and other geographical contexts was not their educational requirements, but rather the extra challenge of meeting those requirements in conflict-affected settings.

Safaa El-Kogali, from the Population Council (West Asia and North Africa Region), used qualitative data from Darfur to report on a research project that investigated the protective role of schools. Schools can offer physical protection for girls, both from physical attacks and sexual assaults, as well as protection from child marriage. It can also teach children about safety, both from HIV and AIDS, and about issues such as landmines. Moreover, schools provide psychosocial support. In these ways, education in conflict settings can constitute both relief as well as development.

This was followed by a presentation from **Susan Shepler**, from American University in Washington, D.C. Ms. Shepler reported on research from a teacher training project for refugee women in West Africa provided by the International Red Cross. The project explored whether refugee female teachers continue to use their skills after repatriation, which would also contribute to the reconstruction of post-conflict countries. Approximately half of the teachers were still teaching, and they said they enjoyed their work and were empowered by their training. Those who had not continued to teach spoke of sexual harassment as a reason for not continuing. There were also lower employment rates for female teachers despite the fact that many had higher levels of training.

The final presentation was by **Martha Laverde**, Senior Education Specialist at the World Bank. Ms. Laverde spoke of the impact on girls of violence – including armed conflict and other forms – in her native Colombia. The direct support that has been offered to girls and women can be seen as focusing on empowerment in three ways: personal empowerment (recognition of the body and how it is constructed), social empowerment (emotional and communicational competence through dance and sport) and economic empowerment (flexible education increasing employability). These efforts have also been supported by a communication strategy to encourage community support, such as road signs that say, 'Stop! Machismo kills!'. She also spoke of the importance of a supportive legal and political framework, reliable data and monitoring and evaluation to address the gendered nature of violence in societies.

During the discussion, participants called for more political support to address violence against girls and women, as well as the central role of psychosocial support and teacher training in mitigating the impact of violence. Informal schooling was highlighted as a particularly effective stepping point for post-conflict situations, and participants stressed that more attention is required regarding the role of education on peacebuilding.

In conclusion, **Akanksha Marphatia** identified cross-cutting issues across the three conference themes. She called for explicit attention to the four elements that drive inequalities between the genders: power, justice, rights and silence. She called for recognition that regardless of definitions, violence against women is a universal occurrence, but that rights against violence are also universal. Genuine participation and voice from women can only come about through changing the existing structures – particularly economic structures – in order to bring about equitable gender relations both within schools and in the wider community.

Working group: Session 1

Jenny Parkes and Fatuma Chege presented 'Girls' Education and Violence: Reflections on the first decade of the twenty-first century'. Three key areas emerged from the paper: (i) work that has highlighted the prevalence of sexual violence against girls in school; (ii) studies that challenge the notion of schools as safe havens, both in terms of sexual violence and also in terms of corporal punishment, bullying, armed conflict and social upheaval; and (iii) research into the frequency of incidents and breaking silences and taboos.

The paper also stressed that there are gaps in knowledge. 'Everyday' inequalities and violence may be missed, as the focus is only on extreme actions. Similarly, little is known about homosexuality and boys' experiences of sexual violence. The connections between policy and school-level processes are weak with regard to violence. When we think about how to combat violence, it may be helpful to consider: (i) the underlying gender power relations; (ii) the possibility of dismantling barriers through participation; and (iii) building partnerships to combat violence.

During the discussion, participants talked about the elusiveness of a working definition for violence, which takes into account the different perspectives across cultures. Participants felt that research evaluations of successful interventions have so far been weak and it is currently easier to identify programmes that have not succeeded. The importance of links between researchers and academics, and between practitioners and government agencies, was emphasized – with the E4 conference being one example.

The second paper presented was authored by Laetitia Antonowicz, with an Editorial Committee of Vanya Berrouet, Stefanie Conrad, Catherine Flagothier, Victorine Djitrinou, Soumahoro Gbato, Joachim Theis and Yumiko Yokozeki, and was entitled 'Too Often in Silence: A report on gender-based violence in schools in West and Central Africa'. The study found that violence in schools tends to occur when the weakness of the school intersects with the broader sociocultural context, because school is first and foremost a social space in which dominant power relations and discriminatory practices are reproduced.

In the ensuing discussion, participants spoke of how violence also occurs outside of school walls, which is particularly pertinent for out-of-school children and those who travel long distances to schools. The community has an important role to play in addressing violence out of school, but schools can also educate children about how to deal with violence. Initiatives that so far have proven to be effective are those that focus on developing children's capacities to deal with violence, such as children's clubs that work with communities. There was also discussion of which factors enable violence to exist and continue, such as lack of social understanding, a cycle of silence and traditional cultural practices. The task of changing masculinities is also critical, and involving boys, men and teachers in reducing violence and 'victim-friendly' reporting mechanisms can be effective.

The session concluded with a group exercise in which participants discussed specific policies and practices where different interpretations of 'violence' have made the delivery of gender, equality and education problematic.

Working group: Session 2

The objective of the second working-group session was to hear research findings on challenges associated with hierarchies of power, and reflect on the effects of climate change and aspects of health and hunger. Seema Vyas began the session by presenting a paper entitled 'Contested Development?: Women's economic empowerment and intimate partner violence in urban and rural Tanzania', which she co-authored with Jessie Mbwambo and Charlotte Watts. The paper explored the relationship between levels of domestic violence and status within households in two Tanzanian settings, focusing on educational attainment, employment status and access to income. High levels of violence against women were reported overall, with some evidence of correlation with lower levels of poverty. The relationship with education levels was not straightforward, although women with higher levels of education than their husbands were more likely to experience violence. Access to income did not appear to be related to the risk of partner violence: Women who do not work perhaps risk experiencing violence if having to ask for resources, and women who do work risk perhaps being mistrusted by their partners.

The next presentation was by **Madeleine Arnot**, jointly authored with **Georgina Oduro, Sharlene Swartz, Leslie Casely-Hayford, Fatuma Chege** and **Paul Wainaina**, and entitled 'Gender Security, Gendered Violence and Social Justice: The rights of protection through education of urban youth in sub-Saharan African cities'. The paper placed the promotion of girls' schooling and the struggle to achieve gender equality within the environmental concerns of urbanization and slum life, as well as the effects of the associated rise in crime and violence, particularly among youth living in such settings. The study focused on gendered experiences of urbanization and presented qualitative data from the girls and women living in Accra, Cape Town and Nairobi. Tackling violence against girls, as the study's research shows, means addressing the relationship between gender identities and power relations, as well as the lack of power young people experience within marginalized, degraded environments. By listening to the voices of both young men and women, we can begin to understand the connections between poverty, gender and violence, and begin to perceive the types and levels of work that schooling needs to achieve in shaping a secure environment.

The final presentation in this session was of a paper by **Relebohile Moletsane**, **Claudia Mitchell** and **Thandi Lewin**, 'A Critical Analysis of Gender Violence and Inequality in and around Schools in South Africa in the Age of AIDS: Progress or retreat?'. The paper reflected on policymaking in South Africa in the 16 years since the end of apartheid. High levels of poverty and inequalities by gender, class and race remain, including high levels of HIV and AIDS and violence, particularly among girls and women. There is no silence about the incidence of violence against women, but there is silence about the requirements that will promote change. More specially targeted programmes are needed, as well as political will.

Discussion afterwards focused on how cycles of violence can be effectively addressed, especially as teachers themselves may have gone through such cycles, and – along with the broader community – may need time to critically reflect on their actions. Reasons for weak policy communication were also discussed, including discomfort with policy or the issues involved, as well as the fact that the scope for interpretation of existing policies may be too broad. Another important issue discussed was the quality of indicators, with participants stressing the need for surveys to have very clear definitions of violence to get quality data for analysis.

This was followed by group discussion about the limitations of empowerment in protecting against violence, the implications of gender-equality programmes for different contexts, and the forms of power that have been identified.

Working group: Session 3

The session began by regrouping the priorities identified in the previous day's group discussions into two distinct categories: the 'enabling factors' for violence against girls; and strategies to counter violence and its impact. The task for this session was to discuss how specific interventions in the field can – and must – match these enabling factors and strategies.

A paper by **Asmara Figue, Akanksha Marphatia, Victorine Djitrinou** and **Jenny Parkes**, 'Girls at the Heart: A review of girls' participation in initiatives to combat violence in school', was presented by Asmara Figue. Participation in schooling is an enabling right, because it supports the realization of other rights for girls. The paper discussed the ways in which a wide range of collaborative interventions contributed to creating and opening up spaces for girls to voice their opinions and concerns. The girls' participation demonstrates that by engaging in local-level activities, girls can gain the confidence and skills to both assert ownership of previously 'invited spaces' and claim or gain access to other spaces that would normally be 'closed' to them.

The paper also highlighted that girls are situated in a wider, complex sphere of power and inequalities, which often keeps them disempowered, and that violence is a part of this larger reality. However, if we see power as multidimensional, then moments of empowerment can be transferred between different contexts. Working with children can involve unequal power relationships, but it is crucial for them to participate at national and global levels in discussions and decisions. The question was raised that despite broad-based participation at the conference, where were the girls in this conference?

The next presentation was of a paper by Anderson Kumpolota, Victoria Machakaire and Kaia Ambrose, entitled 'Turning the PAGE: Working collaboratively to reduce GBV in Malawi schools'. The paper was presented by Anderson Kumpolota and revealed the prevalence of gender-based violence within schools, on the way to school, and sometimes at home. The study revealed high levels of under-reporting by girls, hence rendering the issue invisible. Power inequalities were a central reason for not reporting incidents, which raises the issue of how much fear of violence prevents some children from coming to school entirely. Some interventions, based on the results of the study, were aimed at building girls' assertiveness to increase levels of reporting, and also raising boys' self-esteem.

The final presentation was of a paper by Lucy Lake, Laurie Zivetz and Angeline Murimirwa, entitled 'Prioritising Gender Equality in Education in the Midst of Crisis'. The presentation was by Sinikiwe Makove, an activist from Zimbabwe, and Lucy Lake from Camfed International. The paper explored how partnerships can work and be sustained, even during a political crisis. Where partnerships with the community were well established, fewer schools closed, despite crises. The study revealed that cases of abuse lessened in schools where there were such partnerships, as there was greater responsiveness to tackling abuse. Mothers frequently stood up to protect vulnerable children, and in turn gained status, thus redefining traditional power structures. Girls were also present on decision-making bodies, ensuring that actions were informed by the perspectives of young women and girls.

During the time for questions, one participant asked whether such initiatives increased the likelihood of backlash against girls. The presenters responded that they try to include men and boys as well. Lucy Lake stated that Camfed's strategies have focused on bringing a critical mass of girls to schools and on fostering support networks, broadening the intervention to tackle the issue in the community.

In response to another question about the outcomes of adolescent participation, the presenters said that they had developed indicators that revealed increasing levels of confidence in girls in particular.

Working group: Session 4

Following the discussion, the stream was divided into groups by table, to consider two main questions:

- What kind of strategic partnerships need to be established to ensure that girls' participation is meaningful and effective, and how can we assess if they lead to the empowerment of girls at all levels (local, national and global)?
- What key issues should be on the action-research agenda going forward, and why? What kind of partnerships need to be developed to deliver on this agenda?

Feeding back on the discussions, groups identified a number of potential strategic partners: parents, local and religious leaders, women's organizations, teachers' unions, government agencies, school principals and committees, and boys and girls themselves. To work effectively against violence, all collaborators must share an understanding of their priorities. Advocacy is a key strategy to bring synergy within partnerships, along with social mobilization and alliance building. Schools should have codes of conduct and child protection policies, and in-service training for teachers. It is also important to collaborate with paralegal institutions as well as police, in order for them to gain an understanding of the issue. Capacity, especially in terms of reporting mechanisms, must be built and strengthened so that violence is properly documented and so that the success of such strategic partnerships can be measured. There should also be a dedicated budget line and integration across sectors.

In response to the second question, participants identified issues for the researchaction agenda that included the issue of trust and how to address the 'culture of silence'. One group also decided it was crucial to have a documentary review to harmonize good practices and bring them together. To move forward with such a research-action agenda, partnerships must be sought among as many groups as possible as well as developed with countries with similar experiences in order to capitalize on good practices. Another group highlighted the research potential of working with new technologies. Many pupils use the Internet and mobile phones, and many new partners could be involved in such research, such as telecommunication agencies and journalist networks, to ensure that issues such as rape are considered seriously and adequately dealt with in the media.

Participants then reviewed a one-page draft of the declaration that had been produced by the declaration committee, and provided feedback on the issues of importance, what needed to be changed and what was missing, particularly regarding the perspective of violence. The discussions were lively and many suggestions were made.

Working group: Session 5

The purpose of the final session was to review and synthesize the discussions of the previous four sessions, and to work on to the presentation for the final plenary session. **Marie Siby** presented an overview of the work in this stream in French. The discussions that followed were passionate, with different perspectives offered by participants from developing and income-rich countries, from academics and practitioners, and from large aid agencies and less powerful contexts. All points were synthesized into the final summary that was presented during the closing ceremony.

Partnership forum

Expanding Opportunities: Harnessing the power of partnerships

Nitya Rao, UNGEI GAC member representing the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education and the University of East Anglia, chaired the forum and introduced UNGEI as a partnership organization, as well as highlighted the complexities of fostering effective and viable partnerships. She noted that so far, UNGEI partnerships have been most successful at the global level. It was necessary to examine how to move forward with partnerships at the country level. The first question posed to the panel was: What is one major barrier for partnership, and how can we overcome it?

Alfie Hamid, UNGEI GAC member and Cisco Networking Academy Manager for sub-Saharan Africa, summarized what he saw as the crucial elements for developing effective partnerships. For partnerships to work, four actors must come together: government, NGOs, the education sector and business. To accomplish tasks, all actors must be aware of one another's: (i) aims, objectives and expectations; (ii) abilities and resources; (iii) individual and partnership goals; and (iv) means of measurement. Moreover, for proper governance, it is important to have full transparency and communication, a clear articulation of goals, a clear outline of responsibilities, and project implementation plans for the partnership.

Hege Hertzberg, Director for Development Policy Director in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, observed that today's generation is less concerned about the struggle for gender equality, but that some strategies clearly do work. For example, results have shown that when education is free for all, culture does not hinder school participation. She suggested that perhaps the main barrier to partnership is the thought of partnership itself for those involved: negotiations regarding funding can be problematic and there are often too many people around the table. There is therefore a need for a restructuring of the aid architecture, taking into account previous experiences. Awa N'Deye Ouedraogo, former member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and member of the Board of Directors of Plan International, stated that barriers to partnership could be either on the side of donors or local international partners. Some prominent barriers are exclusivity in interventions, the idea of competition among stakeholders and a lack of communication even when the objective is shared. Partnerships need to be strengthened through a systematic sharing of knowledge. Each side should know what the other is doing. Furthermore, the state should improve harmonization in line with the needs that emerge at the country level, and also monitor and follow up. Partners must honour their financial and technical commitments, particularly in light of the recent financial crisis.

Susan Durston, UNGEI GAC member and UNICEF Associate Director and Global Chief of Education, offered the comment that there was no real barrier to partnership at all, but that the problem generated from individuals and organizations preoccupied with their own concerns. Instead, a more collective approach was necessary, and the results themselves should be the incentive rather than any credit.

The second question posed to the panel was: If your organization had a dream that it would like to see come true, what would that be? How can we move together to achieve this dream?

Alfie Hamid stated that too many partnerships fail due to a lack of partnership management skills. The most important skill is open communication between all partners. Hege Hertzberg identified that current funding is insufficient, and climate change will take away much of the support that is available. The most important thing we can do is work together to empower governments to take responsibility, which would mean more aid at the country level.

The dream outlined by Awa N'Deye Ouedraogo was that all girls would go to school in a sustainable manner at all levels, which could be achieved by pulling together technical and financial resources with well-coordinated actions. She outlined how Plan International's work was aiming towards this end. Susan Durston spoke of a vision of progress in girls' education, which would also incorporate empowerment and broader human rights. Research has shown that countries with high gender parity indices in education do not always also have high gender empowerment measurements. UNGEI should employ such tracking methods for progress in empowerment and should start collecting viable data on these various areas. No single agency can do this alone, Ms. Durston stressed.

The floor was then opened to questions. One speaker from Africa said that many partnerships at the moment did not seem sincere because Africa was considered poor and left behind. Another asked why the African Union had not been mentioned, despite the fact that it has an action plan (2006–2015) on gender and education and a specialized agency for girls' and women's education, and asked for partnership with UNGEI to be recognized. Another comment was that partners need results that show the quality of education in order to keep investing in education interventions.

Alfie Hamid suggested using technology to take schooling to girls who live in remote areas, as well as to facilitate partnerships and cut budget spending on face-to-face meetings. Hege Hertzberg drew attention to the need for pressure for good governance within each country. Awa N'Deye Ouedraogo stated that we must improve what we already have and manage existing partnerships better. Susan Durston acknowledged that partnerships can be very difficult, but stressed that we must all keep in mind the ultimate end, which is to improve the lives of children.

Closing ceremony

May Rihani, Co-Chair of the UNGEI GAC and Senior Vice President and Director of the Global Learning Group at the Academy for Educational Development, chaired the closing ceremony. First, there were presentations from each of the three streams: Alice Akunga presented from the poverty stream, Marie Siby from the violence stream and Codou Diaw from the quality stream.

Elaine Unterhalter then discussed some of the key linkages among the three working groups. The work of all three streams had gone beyond notions of gender parity and equality of enrolments into a different landscape, marked by power inequalities that can work in both visible and invisible ways, silencing girls and portraying them as victims. She emphasized that more research and resources were needed to be attentive to these girls who are silenced, in order to work more closely with teachers and to develop women's literacy, as mothers and teachers are crucial partners.

During remarks from the floor, there was discussion about the declaration and the importance of making better links to civil society organizations and NGOs. Senegal's Minister of Preschool, Primary and Lower Secondary Education and National Languages, Kalidou Diallo, arrived at this point and the formal closing ceremony began. May Rihani thanked Mr. Diallo for showing his commitment to the conference, and presented a synthesis of the proceedings:

• Despite progress in primary education in the past 10 years, advances were weak at secondary and tertiary levels.

- Poverty and quality dimensions play a crucial role in girls' education, and are pertinent when examining education in families and communities.
- Poverty is visible and invisible.
- Poverty creates a fertile space for violence against girls, which is a significant limitation to girls' education.
- There is a great need for a multisectoral approach to girls' education.
- Capacity building for all actors in the education field is crucial.
- Education that integrates a gender-equality dimension becomes transformative education, which will enable the transformation of society.
- The Dakar Declaration has been produced and is a real call for action.
- The Dakar Declaration was then read in English and French by two of the conference delegates.

Following the reading, Cheryl Gregory Faye expressed thanks to the Government of Senegal, UNICEF and UNGEI teams, all other participating organizations and NGOs, and the Beyond Access team. She then appointed Kalidou Diallo as the third UNGEI global champion who will work to advocate on behalf of girls' education at national and global platforms.

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

This section reflects on the E4 proceedings at both the electronic and Dakar conferences, and analyses some of the key issues and challenges ahead.

1. Partnerships to improve girls' access to quality education globally

If gender equality in education is to be achieved globally, partnerships must be strengthened and new collaborations fostered. E4 explicitly sought to explore the central question of what kinds of partnership will help countries which still face substantial obstacles in girls' education. The conference deliberations revealed the current gaps in partnerships and provided the opportunity to strengthen existing partnerships and foster new ones.

In the running of the conference itself, various partnerships were mobilized. First, partnership was a requirement for all the papers selected for the conference in Dakar and most papers were authored collaboratively by international organizations, local NGOs, practitioners and academics. The E4 organizing team itself consisted of collaboration between the UNGEI secretariat in New York and a London University-led team, Beyond Access, with members in each region of the world (Africa, Asia and

Latin America). This enabled theoretical and scholarly perspectives on the topic to be combined with field experience, and feed directly into the planning of both the Dakar and the electronic conferences.

For logistical reasons, however, numbers attending the Dakar conference were limited, which restricted the range of groups that could be involved. There was proportionately less collaboration with civil society organizations in relation to UNICEF and government representatives, and relatively low representation from bilateral donors and the women's movement. As this was a regional conference, there was a strong representation from South and West Africa, and some of the countries with the largest populations (and significant numbers of girls out of school) were not represented at all. The electronic conference provided an opportunity for wider collaboration with actors not present in Dakar, and such links could further be strengthened at future face-to-face meetings.

Different forms of strategic partnerships to promote progress were directly considered in the third and fourth working-group sessions at the Dakar conference, and innovative partnerships were suggested. For example, partnerships are required between the education sector and local communities to address the root causes of violence in and around schools. To secure high-quality education, partnerships among schools, parents and the local community are crucial. Such collaborations can inform the design of relevant educational materials and textbooks, and also be crucial for bringing about effective parental engagement and mobilization. Effective partnerships are also important, if not crucial, for monitoring, as illustrated by Albert Motivans's keynote presentation. Discussion in the violence working group also highlighted the importance of accurate indicators and whether they picked up the occurrence of violence. Building cross links between countries with similar experiences was also suggested in order to leverage good practices.

Discussions at the Dakar conference explored how partnerships could work in practice. Partnerships need to exist within governments between different sectors and are also needed among different groups across society (e.g., in relation to violence against women, among schools, the police, legal services, social services and the community). There can be many challenges in working cross-departmentally and across organizations, such as different resources and priorities. Difficulties with communication and trust can be exacerbated by unconnected committee structures, tiers of government and monitoring frameworks. As outlined in the situation analysis, the current lack of discussion and engagement within existing partnerships can be an additional barrier to addressing the problems of girls' education. Difficulties can also arise when there are significant power differences between partners. These may be further exacerbated by external shocks such as the global financial crisis. Partnerships can only work if they allow for equitable dialogue. In the partnership forum at Dakar, speakers identified competitive elements and power struggles in the current donor system as a barrier to improving partnerships, and considered the possibility of harmonization and collective action to counter this dynamic. Local partners also expressed frustration at not being treated equally by, or gaining recognition from, global actors. Power differences may also affect partnerships at other levels, such as when working with children. In many instances, when a participatory space has been provided, actors may still not perceive that they are able to use such a space if they feel they lack the relevant knowledge or legitimate experience to participate.

Overall, however, by bringing together many diverse actors, the E4 conferences provided a platform for different groups to strengthen existing partnerships and explore potential avenues of cooperation.

2. Recommitting accountable partners

The E4 discussions emphasized that accountability is essential for guaranteeing commitment from global partners and, in this way, can be a lever for activists. While the conferences did not create any new accountability structures for UNGEI, the participatory structure allowed for the issue of accountability to be openly discussed between the actors who require commitment from one another.

The need for new levels of accountability is long-standing. The attendees of the World Education Forum in 2000 pledged to "develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management". The Fast Track Initiative was specifically designed to foster greater commitment and predictable levels of aid. It was evident during the E4 discussions that the greater levels of commitment and accountability agreed to were now required to move the agenda forward. In working-group discussions, participants produced examples of perceived shortcomings of the 2000 framework and called for greater commitment from the international community.

No new accountability structures were generated by the conference, and this remains a concern for UNGEI, as UNGEI currently functions without powers or mechanisms to require actions from its partners. This may constitute an argument for greater partnership with United Nations women's bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women and the recently formed United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (known as UN Women), as well as for leveraging the legal frameworks of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to a greater degree, as they do contain accountability mechanisms and legal requirements.¹⁰ E4, however, provided stakeholders an opportunity to think about and discuss the commitments they could make in the future, while the declaration was also a strong and valuable statement of commitment. Moreover, the conference was highly effective in terms of raising awareness through discussion and paper presentations, and stronger commitment may stem from these efforts in the future.

3. Acceleration from 2000

While substantial progress has been made in girls' primary enrolments since 2000, greater acceleration in other areas of girls' and women's education, particularly in terms of the poorest and most marginalized, is required. As Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta suggested in the opening ceremony at Dakar, there have also been reversals on the quality of girls' education, and many presentations indicated little has changed for the poorest and the hardest-to-reach girls. The desire of participants for accelerated change was evident in the move for a more strongly worded declaration in the final draft.

The conference laid the foundations for an increased pace of progress by generating a new knowledge base. The electronic and in-person discussions fostered greater awareness and understanding, and there were calls for more targeted statistics collection and research studies. E4 also produced a new body of studies and resources on the current challenges that are impeding the achievement of the goal of education for all girls. Examining examples of good practice in discussions (e.g., as seen in all streams in Sessions 3 and 4) gave participants a good foundation for working towards improved results in the future.

The global financial crisis is a potential barrier to acceleration, particularly if aid budgets are reduced. Anthony Lake referred to such constraints in his speech in the opening ceremony, and he also emphasized that it would be morally reprehensible to ignore the hardest-to-reach children at this time.

4. Linking with the MDGs

The MDGs have legitimized the cause of gender equality in education, but have not gone far enough in either articulating the goal or providing the structures by which to

¹⁰ States that have become party to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women are obliged to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the rights of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women are implemented. The Committee is also mandated to receive communications from individuals or groups submitting claims of violations of rights, and to initiate inquiries into situations of grave or systematic violations of women's rights.

achieve it. In the discussions at Dakar, the MDGs were frequently cited to underline the legitimacy and importance of the goal of gender equality in education. Taking the MDGs as the predominant global framework for development, participants sometimes questioned their effectiveness in addressing the problems of girls' education. They stressed, for example, that the MDGs contain little emphasis on the quality of education. However, there was less explicit discussion of the MDGs in relation to strategies, such as how they might be used in the coordination of monitoring, funding and organization. This was possibly a missed opportunity, although in the light of the large amount of material generated for the MDG summit, many openings for connection have become evident. In addition, it may be advantageous to consider linking with groups working for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

5. Broader understanding of gender equality, girls' education and strategic action

For progress to be achieved, all actors need to have a broader understanding of gender equality in education. The situation analysis identified an existing limitation in many governments' approaches to gender equality: Full educational enrolment may lead officials to think that they have addressed gender, but in fact many crucial issues remain unresolved.

During both the electronic and Dakar conferences, participants frequently stated that progress towards gender equality in education will be hampered if actors do not improve their understanding of the issues and familiarize themselves with the most recent research. Several participants highlighted that the achievement of gender equality in society is central to the realization of goals in girls' education. On the other hand, Anthony Lake and others warned that despite this achievement, gender equality in schools alone may not lead to gender equality in wider society. For instance, in the third working group of the poverty stream, Malawi was cited in discussions to demonstrate that gender equality in school may not lead to gender equality in wider society. During discussions in all three streams, power was identified as a crucial factor in ongoing work towards this broader definition of gender equality. Power imbalances can silence and marginalize girls and women, and must be addressed to bring an end to the 'culture of silence' surrounding violence.

The E4 conference provided an opportunity for a range of actors to explore more substantive definitions of gender equality in education. The working groups addressed the issue of 'defining' directly, as multiple definitions are a barrier to a shared understanding and thus hamper strategic action. The first session in each of the three streams encouraged participants to look at different definitions and interpretations in the particular theme of the stream. In challenging narrow and varied definitions, discussions in many cases led to the identification of areas in which further research and understanding is required.

E4 also actively fostered such an understanding in a number of ways. To some degree, this occurred through the diverse geographical and organizational positions of actors participating in the Dakar and e-conferences. E4 was also productive and generated new perspectives, which benefited both participants at the conference in Dakar as well as a wider audience. Such new perspectives were disseminated through a space for semi-structured discussion, both online at the e-conference and during the conference in Dakar; the creation of a declaration that pushes for a more substantive understanding of gender equality in education; and the production of a number of papers from partnerships.

Discussions on the final text of the Dakar Declaration demonstrated that participants had moved together towards an understanding of the power dynamics of gender equality. In the fourth sessions of the quality and poverty streams, for example, participants demanded that rights-based language be used in the declaration, along with more specific references to gender equality. The issue of power is very much present in the text of the declaration, which states that "powerless and poor girls make up the most disadvantaged group in education", as well as highlights the need to "transform power hierarchies in learning spaces, communities and policy structures".

6. Public policy advocacy

Public policy is one of the key areas in which change is required. While the right to education is recognized in principle by most governments, other supplementary policies are needed to guarantee this right in practice. Taking the example of violence against girls in school, legislation may be needed to report and prosecute abusers, to increase access to support services for survivors – such as counselling and free legal services – and to include anti-violence themes in school curricula. Using another example, additional policies may be required to make education accessible for marginalized groups.

Instances of good practice for advocacy were offered during both the electronic and Dakar conferences. The working groups reflected examples, both anecdotally in discussions and through the presented papers. For example, the paper by Anita Rampal and Harsh Mandar in the second session of the quality stream directly tackled the issue of influencing public policy and using legal action through the example in India of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme and public pressure for government action. In addition to advocacy at the national level, it is also important to think about public policy advocacy strategies for *global* policy. While international agencies may formally recognize the right to education, at times extra pressure to give substantial and committed support to gender equality in education is needed. Civil society has a role to play in this process. For example, the Global Campaign for Education has been an active member of the EFA campaign.

Public pressure is a crucial part of accountability. The Dakar Declaration will be significant for public policy advocacy at both national and global levels. Some changes to the declaration were made during the conference, with the specific aim that it could be used more effectively for leverage with governments.

7. Good practices relevant to girls' education and equal access to quality education

Sharing and disseminating good practices will speed up the movement towards gender equality. The E4 conferences provided an opportunity to share examples of good practice: The papers and discussions offered many pointers, and at the Dakar conference the third session in each stream was allocated for participants to discuss practical solutions and interventions. Some countries had successful overall national policy strategies, and during the sessions, evidence of such practices was collected and shared from around the world.

Many of the papers were helpful in contemplating contextualized interventions – the "specific solutions for specific problems" that Graça Machel had advocated in the opening ceremony at Dakar – to reach the most marginalized children. For example, in the paper by Rebecca Ingram, Dunstan Kishekya and Andrew Mamedu, evidence was presented that school management procedures were beneficial to girls' education and that girls were more able to articulate and analyse barriers to their education if they were from schools with higher levels of gender equality in student participation and progress. Similarly, the paper by Anita Rampal and Harsh Mandar outlined good practices on partnership by exploring the Right to Education Act in India, including considerations of food and hunger as central to the issue of education.

In the ensuing discussion, other good practices for school feeding were shared, including the use of public-private partnerships to run a school canteen in Burkina Faso. Other examples highlighted community education, such as road signs, as outlined by Martha Laverde in the violence plenary ('Stop! Machismo kills!'). Overall, however, participants noted that there have been few evaluations of anti-violence strategies and programmes, making it difficult to point to examples of good practice with regard to violence.

CONCLUSION: A GLOBAL RESEARCH AND ACTION AGENDA FOR EDUCATION, TO ERADICATE POVERTY AND VIOLENCE, AND TO PROMOTE QUALITY EDUCATION

The two related conferences, the Dakar conference and the electronic conference, were an opportunity to bring stakeholders together around the issue of gender equality in education, enabling them to explore pertinent issues and consider how they might work together more effectively. The conferences were particularly timely, taking place shortly after the Beijing +15 activities at the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and in the build-up to the MDG Summit at the United Nations headquarters in September 2010. The discussions reflected the rich variety of participants' experiences, as well as a strongly perceived need to address barriers to gender equality in education that had remained since 2000.

Wider engagement beyond the conference in Dakar was made possible through both the electronic conference and through the E4 and UNGEI websites, which featured constantly updated information about events at the conference and made use of new media, including blogging, Twitter and video posts. The country working groups and the formation of country action plans provided a format for making workable and realistic strategies to be taken forward at national levels.

The E4 conference represented an opportunity to learn how greater global participation might work in practice: how different groups on girls' education might collaborate, as well as how different agendas, working practices and expectations might be brought together to advance the goals in girls' education. The conferences presented a microcosm of the wider challenges and possibilities of creating global partnerships among groups with different perspectives.

Through reviewing the achievements and shortcomings of the past 10 years, and through discussions of the range of new materials prepared for the conferences based on research and field experiences, evidence suggests that subsequent research and action should focus on:

- Increased and improved partnerships, particularly with civil society and the women's movement. This entails awareness of the benefits of dialogue and partnership fostered through the collaboration generated through the conference, and stronger efforts to harmonize with global campaigns such as the MDGs.
- Increased accountability and commitment of actors from all groups: international agencies, national governments and civil society.

- Improved sharing of knowledge, information and good practices, particularly regarding violence, quality and poverty/inequality. A necessary part is to identify specific and contextualized interventions that take into account vulnerable children in general and girls in particular.
- The hardest-to-reach and poorest girls, and in particular the issue of power in sustaining or eliminating levels of marginalization.
- The specific research and action agenda points that emerged from each theme.
- The need to build capacity, especially in research and reporting mechanisms. New technologies may be employed (such as the Internet and mobile phones) in research, and new partners may also be drawn in (such as telecommunications companies and journalists).

E4 made abundantly clear that the achievement of gender equality in education rests on effective partnerships between all stakeholders involved. The challenge now is to harness the momentum at the global, national and local levels and channel it towards the achievement of quality of education for all children.

Annex 1

Complete List of Papers for Workshop Sessions

available at: www.e4conference.org/dakar/papers

Title	Authors	Туре	Stream
Girls, gender and intersecting inequalities in education: A reflection from case studies in South Africa and Kenya	Elaine Unterhalter, Jenni Karlsson, Amy North, Chris Yates, Veerle Dieltiens, Setungoane Letsatsi, Herbert Makinda, Jane Onsongo	Commissioned	Poverty
Gender, schooling and poverty in Peru	Patricia Ames, Rita Carrillo	Commissioned	Poverty
The missing link: Using the dynamics of human rights advocacy to enhance gender equality in education for girls and women in situations of extreme poverty	Angela Melchiorre	Open call	Poverty
Gender equality in rural education: Best practices and lessons learned from Senegal and Kenya	Amy Maglio, Adji Senghor, Aniceta Kiriga	Open call	Poverty
Challenging gender, poverty, and inequalities in schooling through collaborative, cross- national partnerships: Evidence from CARE Bangladesh and CARE Malawi	Grace Chisamya, Joan deJaeghere, Nancy Kendall, Marufa Aziz Khan	Open call	Poverty
Northern Nigeria: Approaches to enrolling girls in school and providing a meaningful education to empower change	Alice Bonareri Akunga, Ian Attfield	Open call	Poverty
Poverty, gender, and education: Participation and knowledge building in the schools of Porto Alegre, Brazil	Moira Wilkinson, Luis Armando Gandin	Open call	Poverty

Engendering rural eye care for access to education	Ajita Vidyarthi, Rajat Chabba	Open call	Poverty
Girls education and violence: Reflections on the first decade of the twenty-first century	Jenny Parkes, Fatuma Chege	Commissioned	Violence
A critical analysis of gender violence and inequality in and around schools in South Africa in the age of AIDS: Progress or retreat?	Relebohile Moletsane, Claudia Mitchell, Thandi Lewin	Commissioned	Violence
Girls at the heart: A review of girls' participation in initiatives to combat violence in school	Asmara Figue, Akanksha Marphatia, Victorine Djitrinou, Jenny Parkes	Commissioned	Violence
Gender security, gendered violence and social justice: The rights of protection through education of urban youth in Sub-Saharan African cities	Madeleine Arnot, Georgina Oduro	Commissioned	Violence
Contested development? Women's economic empowerment and intimate partner violence in urban and rural Tanzania	Seema Vyas, Jessie Mbwambo, Charlotte Watts	Open call	Violence
Too often in silence: A report on gender-based violence in schools in West and Central Africa	Laetitia Antonowicz, Catherine Flagothier, Vanya Berrouet, Joachim Theis, Yumiko Yokozeki, Stefanie Conrad, Victorine Kemonou Djitrinou, Soumahoro Gbato	Open call	Violence
Prioritizing gender equality in education in the midst of crisis	Lucy Lake, Laurie Zivetz, Angeline Murimirwa	Open call	Violence
Turning the page: Working collaboratively to reduce gender-based violence in Malawi schools	Anderson Kumpolota, Victoria Machakaire, Kaia Ambrose	Open call	Violence
Quality education for gender equality	Sheila Aikman, Nitya Rao	Commissioned	Quality
Lessons on food and hunger: In search of transformative education	Anita Rampal, Harsh Mandar	Commissioned	Quality
Providing scholarships and lodging to increase girls' junior secondary school enrolment in Morocco	Joshua A. Muskin, Aziza Chbani, Abdelhak Kamime, Abdellah Adlaoui	Open call	Quality
Evidence-based practice in girls' education in Cambodia: Lessons from work in progress	Ron Peter Watt	Open call	Quality

Literacy and gender-focused school management in Northern Tanzania and Northern Nigeria	Rebecca Ingram, Dunstan Kishekya, Andrew Mamedu	Open call	Quality
Working in partnership to address gender inequality in education: Lessons from VSO Ghana and VSO Ethiopia	Dora Amoah Bentil, Wendwossen Kebede, Polly Kirby, Purna Kumar Shrestha	Open call	Quality
Teacher training: The superhighway to gender equity in Senegal	Bridget McElroy, Kether Hayden, Yanick Douyon	Open call	Quality

Annex 2

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Annex 3 E4 Organizing Team

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To respond to a need for innovative thinking in the area of gender equality in education and to mark the 10th anniversary of the Education for All flagship for girls' education, the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative convened a global conference in Senegal in 2010. 'Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equality' brought together a vibrant mix of scholars, practitioners, government representatives and development partners to galvanize debate on the issues of poverty, quality of education, and violence as they frame the discourse on gender equality and girls' education. This volume captures the critical debates and issues that informed the conference – from its inception to the Dakar Declaration – and will serve as the analytical reference document for practitioners and academics working on innovative approaches and methodologies that aim to ensure an opportunity for all children to receive a quality education.

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