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# Young women and gender relations as policy focus

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# A long way from 2000- Some policy and practice achievements

- **Increasing enrolment, progression and the decrease in numbers of children out of school**
- **Enormous demand for education and high aspiration**
- **The high profile of gender and education in the MDGs; the Dakar Platform for Action; national education plans, and the work of large NGOs**
- **A Dakar declaration on accelerating girls' education and gender equality**

## But, a long way to go...

In 2008 only one country in three of 157 countries with data for primary & secondary education had reached gender parity in both levels.

The 2015 gender parity target in primary and secondary education is likely to be missed in 46% of countries (UIS, 2010, 21)

In countries with a youth literacy rate below 75%, young women (15-24) without literacy comprise more than 50% of youth who are illiterate in:  
Mauritania, Morocco, Papua new Guinea, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Zambia

# Measuring what is easy: some problems with gender parity

- The aggregation problem
- The multi-dimensionality problem
- The aspiration problem
- The implementation problem -measuring what is easy, rather than what is important
- The gaming problem

# Thinking about young women. education and gender relations: 4 projects

**GEGPRI –Kenya, South Africa, and selected global organizations (2007-2011)**

**TEGINT – Tanzania & Nigeria**

**TENI – Ghana**

**E4 conference – partnership with UNGEI**

# High aspirations: N. Ghana survey

Highest level of education you wish to attain	High SES %		Mid SES%		Low SES %	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Tertiary	96.6	89.0	94.5	93.5	93.6	90.2
Secondary	3.1	10.5	5.5	6.3	6.4	9.8
Primary	0	0.5	0	0.3	0	0
No response	0.3					

# Openings which are also closures

- Girls as a pre-defined problem or solution; essentialised and often embodying deficit or carrying exaggerated promise of change
- Particular groups as the locus of blame
- The limits of EMIS
- Knowing what works

# Girls as a pre-defined problem

***“..some people who are keen to have girls go to school... so that they become better housewives.... others who want girls to go to school so that they can actually transform society... (Global NGO policy analyst, 2009)***

**Our job is not to make sure that girls get it – we do it for everybody – but pushing the girls because they need that harder push than the others.” (National Education department official, South Africa, 2008)**

**‘And they [girls] don’t even talk to us [about sex, pregnancy and GBV]. We preach, we call the police, we call social workers and [they] come to our assembly and talk to the kids” (South African teacher, 2010)**



# Blame

- ‘... because of poverty. They start brewing funny liquor [...] and they give birth to children whom they cannot feed’ ( Kenya PED official, 2009)**
- ‘There is a slum near the school [..] the children go without food the whole day. The children come from very poor homes and this is affecting their performance’ (Kenya Teacher, 2008)**
- ‘This province is composed of many ethnic groups and .. cultural adherence is very strong ....especially among the Maasai, Pokot and Kalenjin. There is FGM, which is rampant.... These cultural practices affect girls and promote poverty... because the girls are not able to complete primary school education and ... without education it is very difficult to get employment (PED, 2009)***

# EMIS and its limits: gender relations remain unmeasured

- **The UNESCO GMR Deprivation & Marginalisation index – using national data**
- **The TEGINT Gender profile – using school data for weighted profiles of gender parity in enrolment, attendance, progression and attainment**
- **The TEGINT gender management profile – how proactive are SMCs in promoting gender equality?**

# Going beyond administrative data

- **Girls in Nigeria and Tanzania claim some rights more confidently in schools with higher gender profiles**

	Tanzania below av. GP	Tanzania above av. GP	Nigeria below av. GP	Nigeria above av GP
Lack of facilities	12	31	27	38
Pregnancy	41	69	30	36

# Get things done; but how much reflection and analysis?

- **Girls' clubs**
- **Women in management**
- **Women teachers**

# Findings in Ghana



# The complexity of local activism

- High gender management profiles translate into better gender profiles in Tanzania but not Nigeria

	Tanzania Above av. GP	Tanzania Below av. GP	Nigeria above av. GP	Nigeria below av GP
Low Gender man score	12	35	33	29
High gender man score	41	24	38	43

# The myth of the simple message

- **The complexity of social relations and interpretations – the multi-dimensionality of gender relations**
- **The promise of theoretical and methodological pluralism**
- **Which young women want what & why?**
- **Breaking silences – violence, poverty, social distance and normalising inequalities**
- **Strategic indicators on rights and equalities**
- **The importance of critique, participation, complementarity**