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Equity in Learning: The Gender Dimension

by Dorothy A.S. Mbilinyi

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Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)
International Institute for Educational Planning
7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix
75116 Paris, France
Tel.: +33(0)1 45 03 77 57
Fax: +33(0)1 45 03 39 65
adea@iiep.unesco.org
Web site: www.ADEAnet.org

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AACR	Alliance for Advocacy on Children Rights.
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
CBO	Community Based Organizations
COBET	Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania
COE	Centre of Excellence
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child
DFA	Dakar Framework of Action
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EFA	Education for All
FAPED	Forum for African Partners in Education
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FEMSA	Female Education in Mathematics Science Association.
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GPI	Gender Parity Index
NER	Net Enrollment Ratio
PSLE	Primary School Leaving Examination
NGO	Non Governmental Organizations
SMT	Science, Mathematics and Technology
UNGEI	United Nations Girls Education Initiatives
UPE	Universal Primary Education

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) states clearly that every child has the right to education, at least basic education. Although it is over 50 years since that declaration was adopted, 125 million children to date have no access to education, and many more adults, over 900 million, girls and women being the majority, remain illiterate (USAID Press – June 18, 2003).

2. The World Education Forum of the United Nations, that met in Dakar in year 2000,set a goal that all countries should aim at attaining Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015 as a strategy of meeting the millennium goal of Education For All children (EFA) . In that conference, it was noted that the Net Enrollment Rate (NER) in many developing countries is still very low. The situation is worse in the Sub-Sahara African countries where NER is almost halfway ranging from 59% male and 51% female. Furthermore, gender disparities in participation in primary education are quite evident, especially in South Asia and in Sub-Sahara Africa, where the male-female NER gap was found to be 14% and 8% respectively (UNESCO 2001,UNICEF in FAWE 2001)

3. To Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), the concern of gender disparity in the participation in education is paramount. Many more girls than boys are left out in the education system or are getting much poorer education compared to that of the boys. EFA goal will therefore not be attained if the trend is left to continue. Countries in the Region need to identify effective strategic interventions that will enhance the improvement of girls' participation in education.

4. Some interventions have been introduced in some countries as possible strategies. Some have worked effectively, but others have not worked well, however, there are lessons that are worth learning from them. This paper therefore: tries to:

i. give the current status of girls' performance in education ,

ii. point out possible causes the girl' poor participation,

iii. propose possible strategies for improving girls' access, retention and attainment in primary education

iv. narrate some case studies which give evidence of some gender responsive interventions that have worked in different countries showing a possibility of replicating them within or to other countries.

5. The information given in this study has been collected through reviewing different literature and through some field visits.

6. Among factors that have been identified for causing the low girls participation are: those related to socio economic status which accounts for inability to afford fees and other school requirements; Long walking distances due to in availability of schools or school space close to their homes ;Poor policies that are not gender specific; Socio-cultural attitudes and practices and school related factors which include irrelevant school curriculum and materials inadequately trained teachers, unfriendly approaches in teaching and lack of role models. Also low parental education and support. These is among many other factors have been obstacles and contribute to the gender imbalance in primary and secondary education. Girls have generally been lagging behind boys in terms of access performance retention and achievement.

7. Different governments in collaboration with partners and other stakeholders have employed different strategies aiming at decreasing the gender gap and at the same

time increase participation. by all children as a step towards attaining the EFA goal of attaining Universal Primary Education for all by year 2015.

8. The main strategies advocated in this paper are policy reforms that address a cross-section of the given factors. Such strategies are like waiving off school fees; involvement of the local communities in problem identification, planning for and implementing strategies and also policy review. Table 3 summarises some strategies that have been practiced in different countries. Results in each country have depended on several things, including policy orientation and the way the intervention was planned, implemented.

9. In the last section, some case studies from Kenya, Cameroon and Tanzania have been narrated, demonstrating some of the above gender responsive interventions. The Kenyan case depicts the FAWE Centre of Excellence (COE), an intervention whereby the school and community, after some empowerment activities, work together in rescuing young girls from forced marriages. They facilitate the creation of a conducive learning environment for the girls while reconciliation with their parents continues. The Cameroon case demonstrates strategies to improve girls participation in Science, Mathematics and Technological (SMT) subjects through a FAWE Female Education in Mathematics and Science (FEMSA) project. The last case demonstrates an intervention that enhance the access of quality primary education to the out of school children through a Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET) program A common feature in all the three case studies is the involvement of the community, stakeholders and partners in the whole process of carrying out the intervention.

10. FAWE is optimistic about the promotion of girls' participation in education with the objective of attaining gender equity in quality learning. It requires strong institutional linkages and firm commitments of all players from the grassroots, national level and international level to bring back the girls to a true complementary equal partnership with the boys in participation and achievements in education.

2. BACKGROUND

11. Provision of "Education For All"(EFA) by the year 2000 is a goal deliberated on in the Jomtien World Conference on Education that took place in 1990 in Thailand. Reports on the follow up on the implementation of the strategies set to achieve the goal revealed that very few countries would achieve it by year 2000.

12. In the conference that followed ten years later, 'the World Education Forum that met in Dakar Senegal in year 2000, all the participating countries made a firm commitment to the Framework for Action, that every government would adopt and implement in order to achieve the EFA goal of attaining Universal Primary Education (UPE) by year 2015.

13. Among the six goals put forward in the Dakar Framework of Action (DFA) two of them specifically focus on the elimination of gender disparities and inequality. These are:" *(ii) ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to the minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality" and (v) The Elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015 with focus on ensuring girls full and equal access and achievement in basic education in good quality"* (UNESCO – 2000 Page 8)

14. The member governments in that world forum made some pledges that were going to be used as strategies for attaining the EFA goals. Among them, two pledges directly refer to the above gender responsive goal. These include *implementing integrated strategies for gender equality in education, and create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitable resourced, education environments for learning* (UNESCO 2000 pg. 9)

15. Up until the late 1980s, the world population had fallen into an education trench whereby over 100 million children, most of them girls, had no access to primary education. Primary Education completion was very low and so was the attainment level . Also over 880 million adults, most of whom were women, were illiterate (UNESCO 1990).

16. This appalling situation brought together ministers of education and stake holders from 155 countries at Jomtien Thailand in 1990 to deliberate on how to improve the situation. The meeting set a vision of attaining Education for All (EFA) within the decade that followed- targeting year 2000. (UNESCO 2001).

17. The target reveals two main gender-related issues that have engulfed education system in most developing countries, and in the sub-Saharan countries. These are; gender disparity and gender inequality. Both factors have hit hard on the African continent so much that the race toward achieving "Education for all" leaves a big challenge to the member countries in the region and to the international community at large.

18. This paper, therefore, navigates the situation in sub-Saharan Africa, trying to propose that equitable provision of quality basic education

(i) is essential in achieving the goal of "Education For All"

(ii) cannot be limited to equity of access to schooling but has to include equity in learning opportunity and equity in results, and

(iii) gender responsiveness is a key element for any strategy aiming to ensure equitable results of basic education.

19. The paper has three main parts. Part one gives the status of girls' school retention and performance in the sub-Saharan Africa. The second part analyses the factors that have contributed to the status and short-lists some strategies that have been employed to demonstrate some options of providing a conducive environment for girls' participation in education in order to eliminate gender disparity. Some of the strategies are supported by FAWE in collaboration with governments and other partners.

20. Lastly, some case studies have been included to give a more detailed demonstration of the gender responsive intervention, highlighting on how each was carried out, its achievements, lessons learned-which include what worked and what didn't work. Finally, each case study gives suggestions on how the intervention can be replicated to benefit a wider majority.

3. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND RETENTION OF GIRLS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

21. The last two decades witnessed a series of International fora deliberating on the importance of basic education for every child. Such fora were: United Nations Girls Education Initiatives, (UNGEI); World Education Forum; Forum for Africa Partners in Education (FAPED) Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and many other movements. The main topic discussed in such fora has been the issue of poor participation of children in education which is their right as per the convention of the rights of the child (1949). Specifically in these meetings, the outcry of gender disparity in education has been given a special attention.

But why should the international community be so much concerned?

22. According to 1999 data collected from 154 countries in the world, 115.4 million school aged were not in school, and out of them 56% were girls. (UNESCO 2002) 94% of those children came from the developing world, while one third of them were in the sub-Saharan African. Furthermore, according to 1998 data (UNESCO 2001 b) half of the sub-Saharan Africa countries had a Net Enrolment Rate (NER) of less than 50%. Of these countries, some went as low as 30% (Niger, Burkina Faso). This means that more than 50% of the school age cohort do not participate in education . Recent studies have shown that 45% of children in Africa do not attend school, and on average, 57% of the boys compared to 54% of the girls attend school in the sub-Saharan Africa. (UNICEF 2003 adopted from Huebler & Loaiza 2003 Mingat, 2003).

23. The millennium goals state that by year 2005 gender disparities should be eliminated while gender equality in education is expected to be attained world wide by year 2015. (UNESCO 2002 a). The dream sounds sweet, but there are many huddles that impede many countries from achieving the goals. As per UNESCO EFA Monitoring Report of 2002, there was a significant overall increase of girls` enrolment in primary education in the 1990, thus, on average, increasing the girls Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) by 3% between 1990 and 1999 (UNESCO 2002 b).

24. The goal set for attaining gender parity is Gender Parity Index (GPI) of between 0.97 and 1.03. An analysis done on 128 countries world wide, showed that up until year 2000, 56% of the countries had achieved the targeted GPI. The other 12% were on track with a high likelihood of achieving the goal within the next 15 years. 32% of the countries most of them being in the sub-Saharan Africa and South West Asia seemed to be far from the track. With the given pace, it was quite unlikely that they would achieve it at the observed face of 3 percentage points per decade. By year 2000, sub-Saharan Africa stood at the average GPI of 0.89 while Centre Asia was to the tune of 0.84 (UNESCO 2002 (b) pg. 8)

25. As the figures below indicate, it is interesting to note that GER for girls in the sub-Saharan Africa has been increasing significantly between 1990 and 1999 (by 8%) while the one for boys has decreased (by 0.7%).

Table 1 GER for girls and boys in sub-Saharan Africa between 1990 and 1999

Year	Girls %	Boys %	Total %
1990	68.3	86.7	77.5
1999	76.3	86.0	81.2

Source- UNESCO 2002 b pg. 8

26. This suggests that girls are catching up in those areas where some interventions of improving schooling have been made. However, even with that pace, GER for girls is still much lower than that of boys by 10 percent.

27. Countries in sub-Saharan Africa, which have low enrolment rate (below 60%) also fall into the problem of leaving more girls un enrolled compared to boys. Even where the enrolment is satisfactorily high, the disparity is very glaring due to a high dropout rate especially for girls.

Table 2 Gender disparity in Net Enrolment Rate in selected countries in sub-Saharan Africa – 1998

Country	Niger	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Mali	Mozambique	Guinea	Chad	United Rep. Of Tanzania	Togo	Swaziland	Rwanda
NER% Male	32	40	42	49	46	54	68	48	98	76	90
NER% Female	22	28	28	30	33	37	43	51	78	77	91
Gender Gap%	10	12	12	16	9	17	25	3*	20	1*	1*

*Gender gap % in favour of females

Source: Adapted from UNESCO: EFA Monitoring Report 2001 and FAWE country profiles 2003.

28. Low enrolment rates and big gender gaps experienced in the Sub-Sahara Africa have a bearing on the performance and therefore achievement in education. Table 2 above shows clearly that most countries have a net enrollment ratio of less than 50%. This means that many children, both boys and girls are left out of the education system. These are some of the countries regarded as being "off track." One third of such countries are in sub-Saharan Africa. They are characterized by gross enrolment rates of below 70%, primary completion rate of less than 50%, gender parity index below 0.95 (UNESCO 2002 and world bank 2002b). A comparison of NER for boys and girls reveals that in general, the gender gap is quite big and is in favour of males except for Togo where the opposite is the case. The other three countries are within the range of more are less 100%. The gender gap in *access* is also reflected in the overall *participation* and *performance* of girls in education.

29. The issue of participation is directly related to performance and hence achievement. The above discussion revealed that 46% of girls compared to 43% of boys of school age in sub-Saharan Africa do not attend school. (Mingat A 2003). Therefore These cannot perform. The gender disparity still shows that more girls have been denied their rightful opportunity to participate in education. They are those who spearhead the transit to over 900 million illiterate adults whereby two thirds are women. (USAID 2003, UNESCO 2002b).

30. For those enrolled, the trend has been that the participation and performance of girls lags behind that of boys in sub-Saharan Africa. The trend can be verified by the repetition rate of girls as compared to that of boys and also, the transition rate to secondary school gender wise. Appendix 2 carries a table which compares the two factors for both boys and girls. More countries have a bigger number of girls repeating than boys which indicates a low performance rate on the side of girls. Repetition, more often, leads to dropping out, therefore even the retention rate is much lower for girls than it is for boys.

31. The column in Appendix II showing a transition rate to secondary school brings home the message on the performance and achievement rate for girls. Consistently, all countries have recorded the number of girls going to secondary schools being smaller than that of the boys, with the ratio ranging from 1:1.5 to 1:3. It is assumed that the determining factor was the level of achievement at the end of primary school level.

32. Studies carried out in 12 sub-Saharan African Countries through FEMSA projects have also confirmed that girls' performance, especially in mathematics and science is much lower than that of boys (O'connor 2002). Other studies conducted under the partnership for Strategic Resource Planning (SRP) between University of Sussex and Ministries of Education in Zambia, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Malawi, Kenya, Guinea and Ghana between 1995 and 1998 have revealed the same trend (Avotri et al 1999, Kadzamira E.C et al 1999, Kasonde – Ng'andu, S et al 1999, Tembon, m et al 1997).

33. A typical example is the analysis done on the national examination results for primary schools in Tanzania for year 1996 to 2000 (Appendix I). The level of passing for boys is twice that of girls for all the given years. This situation calls for the world's attention, especially if reference is made to the international community commitment in Dakar in 2000 on ensuring access to complete free and compulsory education of *good quality* for all children, particularly girls.

34. In this section, we have seen that more girls than boys in different sub-Saharan Africa continue to have little or no access to education. In the first place, many are not enrolled. In places where they can be enrolled, and for the few who are enrolled, the possibility of attending school for the whole school duration is quite slim. Furthermore, those girls who have the opportunity of staying in school for the whole duration, they are still likely to attain much lower grades compared to those of boys.

4. FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT AND RETENTION AMONG GIRLS IN DIFFERENT SETTINGS

35. The analysis of the current situation in relation to gender equity in education has revealed a significant existence of gender disparity in access, retention, attainment, performance and achievement in the provision of primary education. This problem calls for a serious and immediate action in order to improve education in the African sub-Saharan community and thereby attain the EFA goal in accordance with the Dakar Framework of Action.

36. In order to address the gaps effectively it is logical to look into the root causes for the situation and eventually, propose viable strategies that different countries can adopt in order to alleviate the situation. This will stem from studies and experiences already practiced on the ground. The major question in this section is *what are the causes of the existing gender imbalance in the participation in education in the sub-Saharan Africa?*

37. It has been established above, that the gender gaps exist in favour of boys. Therefore, specifically we are posing such questions like – "Why do girls in the sub region have less access to schooling than boys? Why is their performance so poor? Why do less girls than boys complete the primary school cycle? Why do girls achieve so poorly? Why is the transition rate for girls to secondary schools so low compared to that of boys? Why is girls' participation in secondary education so low and worse in sciences? Why do women count for two thirds of the illiterate adult cohort ? Why…why…?"

38. The questions posed have no direct answers or one to one correspondence with the factors that are being suggested here. This is because one problem may have several causes while one factor suggested may also apply to several problems and even go beyond the education sector. Following are some of those factors that have been thought to contribute to the existing gender disparities in education.

- **Social-economic factors**

39. Poverty keeps many children from gaining access to education, while, at the same time, education is the cornerstone for overcoming poverty and inequity. The above statement is supported by the MINEDAF background paper which poses, that "poverty cannot be overcome without specific, immediate and sustained attention to girls education" (UNESCO 2002 C).

40. Poverty is thus addressed in two avenues. The first one is inability to meet *direct costs* for schooling. Such costs are : school fees and materials, uniforms, transport to and from school and food. Several studies done in Malawi, Ghana, Zambia, Ethiopia, and Tanzania have shown that in many African countries, children, and in most cases, girls are hindered from effective participation in schooling due to inability to afford such costs (Kasonde – Ng`andu et al 1999, Kadzamira et al 1999, Tembon at al 1997, Avotri et al 1999, Lungwangwa et al 1999, Kelly 1999). Inability to afford the direct costs has a heavy bearing on girls education as it bars them from enrolling in school. Additionally, it contributes to high drop outs, child labour and low performance due to irregular attendance.

41. In conformity with this situation, Mingat (2003) reports his findings that "of the richest (20%) households, 76% of their children attend school compared to 40% of the poorest (20%) households. This means children from poor households have much lower

attendance than those from richer households. It is in those poor families that girls have a higher risk of not attending school. Mingat argues further that countries with low attendance rate overall tend to have high gender, regional and wealth disparities. (Mingat, adapted from Huebler and Loaiza 2003).This state of affairs is aggravated by the socio cultural attitudes of parents towards girls which is discussed in the next section.

42. The other side of poverty is the opportunity cost especially for girls. The need for *girls at home* more than sending them to school has been discussed in many studies, including the SRP studies carried out in several African countries. Due to a high demand for the girls service at home, parents become reluctant to send them to school, or just to give them enough time for school activities. A study done recently confirms that "Girls in Africa, and in fact, almost in every region, work (at home) more than boys, regardless of whether they are school going…" (World bank 2002 b) It is reported that in Zambia "girls spend four times more time than boys on direct productive work" Blackden & Bhanu, in World bank 2002b). What is more striking is that the outcome of the "productive work" is not spent on the girls' development.

43. The other domestic obligations that cost the girls time are : caring for their siblings while parents go out to work for the family income, taking care of the sick and attending to traditional rituals and funerals and other celebrations. The high demand of girls at home contributes to their low enrolment, poor participation, performance and, in many cases, dropout before completion.

- **Socio-cultural factors**

44. Socio-cultural attitudes and practices have a big influence on education, especially for girls. It is the culture and attitudes that mould the society. It is the culture that determines the way of life. However, some cultural beliefs and way, of life are so much out-dated in many sub-Sahara Africa that they call for drastic change. The only agent for that change is education for all boys and girls alike.

45. African communities largely have a male-preference attitude. Males are expected to be able to do wonders in the world of knowledge and technology while a woman's place is at home, keeping up with the livelihood of the family (Mushi 2002, World bank 2002b) . All family development efforts, including schooling are invested on the boys because they are the makers of clans while the girls are expected to be married off to husbands who will speak for them. As a result few efforts and resources are spent on girls' development in general.

46. This attitude is held by both men and women in communities and highly contributes to the low enrolment, low participation and performance of girls in schools. Drop outs due to early marriage and teenage pregnancies are a common feature. Over and above the opportunity cost already discussed, lack of vision and prospects for future life reduces girls` interest to participate, perform and achieve in education. Special efforts, therefore, need to be employed to cultivate girls interest to education and provide an environment that will ensure their full participation and achievement in education.

- **Community support**

47. Parents and other community members should give full support to their children's education. That requires a high level of awareness. However, parents in most cases lack such awareness as a result of not being exposed to education. Most mothers, who usually communicate closely with their daughters, are illiterate. Their support to their children's education, especially daughters, is minimal. Mingat (2003) argues that children of mothers with formal education have an attendance rate of 71% compared to 47% for children whose mothers did not attend primary school. Avotri et al (1999) and

Kasonde-Ng'andu (1999) strongly support the argument that parental education and support have a very positive influence on their children's participation in education.

48. The community as a whole has the responsibility of giving support to school programs, ,including the provision of adequate space, time and opportunities for learning. In places where involvement in education affairs has gained roots, then results are quite encouraging for both boys and girls.

- **School-related factors**

49. Issues considered under the school portfolio are such as school curriculum, physical environmental factors, teachers and teaching/learning materials.

50. Irrelevant, complex, rigid and congested *curriculum* normally puts learners off. The situation is even more serious for girls whose minds are already preoccupied by gender roles. If what is offered does not relate nor apply to normal life more girls are likely to perform poorly and/or drop out of school.

51. The *school environment* is another factor that causes gender inequity in learning. Poor environmental factors affect all learners. However, girls have special needs, especially during puberty period, which if not provided for, the girls' attendance will be poor. Such facilities are such as toilets/latrines with enough privacy. Also water and proper desks/benches are essential for girls' comfortable stay in school and for learning.

52. *Grounds* for school *sports and games* are another facility of attraction to girls who have hardly any other opportunity for recreation. Such facilities will increase their participation in school and therefore they will perform better.

53. *Teachers*: have a very big role to play in the teaching/learning process. They are the chief facilitators for learning to take place. Two main factors about the teacher whose bearing seriously affects the performance of the girls are *adequacy* and *quality*. Inadequacy of teachers in a school causes idleness, boredom to the learners and wastage of time. Overload for the few teachers results into a low delivery rate. In countries like Kenya and Tanzania, an uneven distribution of teachers is a factor which causes shortage, especially in rural areas where most girls are found. The shortage of teachers created contributes to low performance and dropouts.

54. *Quality of teachers* is another contributing factor in the African region. In most countries, in the sub-Saharan African countries, a situation exists in which teachers are not adequately trained. Retraining programs are not well established and teachers are not adequately motivated. As a result they under-perform. Teachers are not innovative and creative. They are not learner friendly and do not use gender responsive approaches in teaching. Remedial lessons are hardly given. Teachers have no interest and do not motivate learners. They are harsh, dictatorial and self-centred. Learners, especially girls, run away from school or just decide to lie low, with minimum learning. (FAWE Newsletter 2002).

- **Teaching/learning material**

55. In most cases books, charts, maps and other teaching/learning materials are not adequate. In some areas they are not available at all.

56. The issue of adequacy of materials is a serious one especially in countries where allocation of financial resources for education is very low. Such a situation usually co-exists with other related problems i.e. inadequacy of furniture, classrooms and other practical and visual equipment. Where such shortfalls prevail, learners have to stretch themselves to have access to a class reader shared by five learners. Also in a situation

where apparatus are inadequate thus demanding learners to struggle, girls will hesitate in fear of being harassed by their male counterparts. This situation paves way for girls' low participation and hence performance, particularly in Mathematics and Sciences.

57. The quality of learning materials is also an issue. In many cases materials are not attractive and learner friendly. They are full of stereo-typing and male gender biased, a fact that discourages girls from effective learning (Mbilinyi and Omari 1998).

- **Language and medium of Instruction**

58. Learning using a foreign language or another ethnic group language which one is not familiar with is not easy, especially in the early years of schooling. It is worse for girls, most of whom are in the rural area where only the mother tongue is spoken. (Avotri, et al 1999, Kadzamira et al 1997,)

59. It demands one to learn the language before learning the content. The double task discourages one from catching up with schooling. In this regard, girls are badly hit. They either perform poorly or repeat classes, a practice that usually leads to drop outs.

- **HIV/AIDS**

60. The coming of the deadly HIV/AIDS pandemic has had an adverse effect on girls' participation in education. In countries like Cameroon, Burundi, Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania girls drop-out rate has been accelerated by effects originating from the deadly disease (Kasonde-Ng'andu 1999 , Kadzamira 1999). Firstly, girls are victims of infection due to poverty, lack of awareness and sexual harassments such as rape. Others are cultural practices e.g. female genital mutilation (FGM) and many other traditional practices.

61. Secondly, girls are usually involved in taking care of the sick in the family with no proper protective precautions (Masanja 2001). Thirdly, if orphaned, girls are responsible for keeping the family going, either as family heads or as assistants where the old grandparents take charge of the family. As such, their active participation and performance in school becomes very questionable due to lack of proper support.

- **Regional setting**

62. The gender inequity in learning can be viewed with a different mirror taking into account the regional differences. The rural/ urban setting has an influence on the participation of boys and girls in schooling. Mingat (2003) has observed that of the urban children, 72% attend school compared to 51% of the rural children. The argument is supported by Tietjen (1997) Tembon et al 1997 and Kadzamira et al 1999).

63. This is because urban areas have a more favourable schooling environment than the rural areas. Distant schools are a common characteristic in rural areas. Long walking distance, especially in early years of schooling, discourages the young children, especially girls. Fatigue causes absenteeism and eventually dropout, as has been reported from Tanzania, Guinea and, Zambia (Lockeed and Vespoor 1990. Kasonde-Ng'andu et al;1999).

64. Other unfavourable conditions dominating in rural areas which cause poor participation are : poor economic status, high opportunity cost, poor schools, poor quality education, high rate of illiteracy and poor parental support. This situation has a bigger effect on girls' participation and performance in school since more girls than boys, live in the rural areas.

- **Policies**

65. All factors identified and discussed above hinge on policies. The country profiles of African South of Sahara countries indicate clearly that education policies in these countries are not gender specific, budgeting is not gender-focused, and at times policy is silent on very crucial issues that cause gender disparity in attaining education.

66. Table 3 below has tried to suggest a matrix of some of the factors that cause disparity in learning focusing the gender dimensions The matrix boundaries are not expected to be rigid because the factors interrelate .The list is also not exhaustive since there are still many others which feature out more prominently in different countries depending on the nature of the problems. However, it is believed that those mentioned above cut across all countries, and are quite basic for consideration of strategies to minimize the existing gender gaps.

4.1. Strategies to enhance girls' school performance

67. According to the Millennium Development Goals relating to education, goal 2 and 3 spell out strategies that aim at enhancing completion of primary schooling for both boys and girls alike by 2015 and elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 (UN General Assembly resolution A/56/326 of Sept. 2001). In order to achieve those goals, relevant strategies need to be adopted and adapted in different countries depending on the nature of the problem and situation.

68. Ever since 1990s when the intent of achieving UPE was adopted by the international community, there have been efforts by different country governments and their partners to address the factors with differing strategies. As a result up to the end of the decade the Gender Parity Index (GPI) has increased from 0.79 to 0.89 in Sub-Sahara Africa (UNESCO 2002). It is definitely a significant change, but still a big challenge of pushing it to 1.00, where an equal GER for boys and girls will be attained, remains ahead.

69. Factors discussed above that contribute to the problem of gender inequity in learning are common in most developing countries, and especially those in sub-Saharan Africa. However these factors may differ in weight depending on the nature and extent of the problems.

70. Table 3 below summarizes some of the factors that cause gender inequity in education. Some of the interventions are adopted to address the problem of gender imbalance in order to provide a basis for discussion on alternative strategies for the elimination of gender gaps.

Table 3 Summary of factors, their gender implication in education and suggested strategies/solutions

Factor	Major implications on schooling	Effect on girls education	Possible gender responsive options/strategies (interventions)
Social-economic	Direct costs on fees and materials	• Low enrolment rate • High dropout rate • Child labour • Low academic performance • Low achievement	• Policy review for gender mainstreaming • Free education • Midday meals in school • Bursaries for girls
	Opportunity Cost- • Girls are needed more at home • Less time for school	• Low enrolment rate • High Drop out rate • Low retention rate • Low academic performance and achievement • High repetition rate	• Parental/Adult Education • Community sensitization • Boarding facility • Alternative complementary education Programs focusing on girls • Girls` clubs
Social-cultural • Parental influence • Community Attitudes • Cultural practices	• Preference for boys • Parental influence and support • Community influence • Illiterate mothers • Early marriage • Teenage pregnancy	• Low enrolment rate. • Low parental support • High drop out rate • High repetition rate • Low academic performance especially in SMT • Low interest for schooling	• Community involvement in problem identification, planning and implementation of strategies to improve schooling welfare for all children • Mother and children, women programs. • Parental/Adult education • Adolescent programs • Community sensitization and empowerment • Policy review for gender mainstreaming. • Girls` clubs • Women-teachers as role models • Special SMT programs is • Retraining of teachers for gender awareness. • Lowering school starting age • Counseling desks in schools.

Factor	Major implications on schooling	Effect on girls education	Possible gender responsive options/strategies (interventions)
Policy	• Policies not gender specific • Gender disaggregate plans • Low budgeting on education and not gendered • Untrained or inadequately trained and poor supply of teachers. • Material supply • Lack of policy on materials development and supply • Very distant and unevenly distributed schools	• Girls not reached due to low budget in education • Lack of role models • Boring materials and do not encourage learning. • Fatigue due to long walking distance	• Policy reforms to mainstream gender at national-local level. • Gender budgeting at micro and macro level • Policy review on quality learner teachers and friendly teaching. • Policy on gender sensitive materials. • Policy review on school material supply especially in rural areas. • Institutional gender reforms • Train and employ more female teachers.
School related factors • Basic hygiene/sanitary facilities • School environment • Classroom building and furniture • Teachers-adequacy and quality • Quality and adequacy of teaching/ learning materials	• Environment not conducive • Lack of basic facilities and materials for learning • Congestion in classroom • Open-air classroom for lack of buildings • Squatting for inadequacy of furniture. • Inadequate play grounds and open	• Low performance, retention and achievement due to frequent absenteeism. • Low interest for schooling • Drop out • Very little learning due to harshness • Lack of role models • Low performance and achievement due to inadequate teachers and complex curriculum	• Provision of conducive environment for learning that will promote social and academic excellence. • Train and retraining of teachers on child/girl friendly approaches to teaching. • Capacity building on material development • Community involvement in planning and implementing

Factor	Major implications on schooling	Effect on girls education	Possible gender responsive options/strategies (interventions)
Language **Curriculum**	• Harsh treatment by teachers • Lack of health facility • Inadequate supply of teachers especially female teachers • Irrelevant and complex curriculum	• Absenteeism and drop out due to ill-health • High repetition rate • Low level of comprehending complex curriculum	• Implement strategies on school development and improvement • Out of school complementary education programs. • Use of mother tongue in teaching in early grades. • Multilingual application • Policy reforms • Multi grade teaching • Review of curricula for relevance and simplicity gender responsiveness. • Carry out SMT programs
Geographical setting: **Rural VS urban**	• Poorer schools in the rural • Poorer quality of education provision in rural • High illiteracy rate in rural • High classroom congestion in urban • Poor parental support in rural Distance to school	• Less access to quality education for more girls in rural. • Poor performance and achievement • High repetition rate • High drop out rate • Lack of interest for schooling. • High opportunity cost Walking fatigue	• Policy reform for development programs • More strategic to focus disadvantaged rural. • Literacy programs • Parental education programs • More supply of schools, teachers and materials • Community awareness programs • Satellite schools

71. Table 3 above suggests a list of possible solutions options and strategies. Some of these strategies are already on the ground and are working. Some have proved to be working better in certain environment and worse in a different setting. We need to review these strategic issues with an objective of knowing what possibilities there are, what can work, where, what are the lessons learnt and possibility of replication.

72. In analyzing the interventions suggested to bridge the gender gaps in education, several strategic patterns emerge. Some interventions are gender-focused while others are gender neutral. Some are independent intervention while others cut across some factors or even some sectors. Some interventions hinge on policy while others are mere practices at school level. Some intervention can only be introduced at national level only while others are a common application at local level.

73. A realization of these and other differences is essential. It is important to make such a distinction since it is basic during planning and if not well thought of, it may lead to program failure. Following is a brief narration of selected interventions representing different patterns, showing how each has worked, where, and a possibility of replication.

4.1.1. Abolition of school fees

74. Provision of free education is a strategy which requires policy review. It targets both boys and girls, but it focuses mainly the girls, since it addresses the factor of direct costs, a problem that affects girls most. Free and compulsory primary education is a strategy which has been adopted and is practiced in many countries now, such as Swaziland, South Africa, Benin, Chad, Gambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique and Several others (FAWE Country Profiles 2003 Kadzamira et all 1999. Kasonde-Ng'andu et al 1999, Hyde 1989, Avorti et al ;1999).

75. More girls have been enrolled in school but, at the same time, congestion in classrooms has been reported as one of the problems resulting from this strategy. This calls for school expansion measures to be planned alongside with the intervention. Otherwise all countries are advised to replicate this strategy; after all it is a commitment that was adopted in the Dakar Framework of Action.

4.1.2. Bursaries and scholarship schemes

76. Provision Bursary schemes and scholarships to needy girls at primary school level are strategies practiced mainly in countries where school fees have not been abolished, but more so at secondary schools. Bursaries work well in places where several stakeholders, including local and international organizations, NGOs and CBOs have been involved in putting up the fund. Its sustainability may not be very high since parents remain incapable, economically. Furthermore, the bursary schemes have a small coverage of the needy girls. However at least such schemes, directly benefit those girls reached. Bursary schemes have worked in Nigeria, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Malawi, Mali and several others (UNESCO 2001 FAWE 2003).

77. Bursary schemes for girls are gender focused, independent and possible to implement at local community level with involvement of communities, partners and local stakeholders. From the lessons learned, care should be taken in managing the intervention so that more resources benefit the girls and much less is left for administrative purpose.

4.1.3. Community involvement in creation of conducive environment for girls` education; establishing centres of excellence

78. A Center of Excellence (COE) is "*an institution that clearly and effectively demonstrates a holistic integrated approach towards addressing the problems in girls' education by creating an enabling learning and teaching environment in the school and ensuring community involvement in female education*" (FAWE 2001 Pg. 7). Centres of Excellence have been introduced in selected schools in four countries through FAWE and respective governments' support. The intervention integrated into the strategy is mainly the involvement of community in the whole process of identifying problems, planning and implementation of school programs with an objective of creating a friendly environment that facilitates the girls` full and comfortable participation in education. In this program, the school and the community are the main actors, with support from the government and partner institutions, agencies and NGOs at all levels. The school and community sensitization and empowerment are central in the implementation of the school program.

79. So far FAWE, with support from respective governments, has facilitated the introduction of four centres of excellence, one each in Kenya (for primary education) Rwanda, Senegal and Tanzania (for secondary education). Results have shown a very big

impact where girls can speak out confidently in public. Drop out cases have been minimized and girls' academic performance has improved (Kinyanjui 2001).

80. Governments and other stakeholders can replicate the strategy to many more such schools using the lessons learned so far. The main one is community empowerment and involvement so as to solicit for their full support and ownership. A case study of the Centre of Excellence is narrated in the next section.

4.1.4. Replicating SMT best practices

81. The false attitude that sciences, mathematics and technology are for boys only, has been proved wrong by intervention that have been carried out in Science, Mathematics and Technology (SMT) programs introduced in several schools in twelve different countries through Female Education in Mathematics and Science in Africa (FEMSA) project. Activities aimed at displaying best SMT practices for teachers, pupils and school community have been carried out mainly in rural areas where, usually performance is relatively low both in primary and secondary schools.

82. The FEMSA activities have proved that girls' participation in sciences can be improved. Scaling up to more schools and in all countries is quite possible to enhance girls participation and performance in SMT education. A case study on the SMT best practice is included in the next section as an example of a specific intervention that can be practiced within normal school routine.

4.1.5. Advocacy on policy review

83. Several interventions suggested in the table 3 hinge on policies. They demand policy review for gender responsiveness and training on gender analysis and mainstreaming. NGOs and other pressure groups like FAWE in different countries, have played a big role advocating for gender mainstreaming in policy and review of other policy documents for gender responsiveness. This involves working with policy makers to analyse policy documents and genderize them. A considerably amount of work policy advocacy has been done in Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mali and others. (FAWE country profiles 2003).

84. Strategies like school fee waiver, language of instruction, parental education, alternative youths' education programs, curriculum review for gender responsiveness just to mention a few, have resulted from policy review for gender responsiveness.

85. An example is a symposium organized by Alliance for Advocacy on Children's Rights (AACR) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and UNICEF Kenya. In that symposium, deliberations were made to Kenya education policy to more gender responsive by addressing friendly environment, low girls achievement, teachers environment as role models, out of school children and re-entry policy for pregnant school girls (Wambihu & Umbila 1994)

86. Policy reforms, as a strategy, have been recorded in several countries as having worked well, giving certain direction for the reform. In Malawi, for example, a goal was added in their education policy, relating to "improvement of girls' participation" (Tietjen 1997). Same with fee waiver reforms (Benin, Malawi) pregnancy policy (Guinea, Malawi) and equal intake policy (Tanzania, Mali (Tietjen 1997).

87. It should be noted as a lesson that policy review alone does not suffice. A more strategic plan for policy implementation demands more pressure from different stakeholders and partners at all levels.

88. Gathering from lessons learned in carrying out interventions conclusions can be made on basic prerequisites that need to be fulfilled to have an intervention work. World Bank (2002) strongly proposes that when designing intervention programs, it is important to consider building country ownership by "creating a guiding country plan, having an analytical framework, and taking a holistic approach to gender issues. Also strengthening gender awareness at community level, working with NGOs, monitoring results systematically and build capacity and supporting institution" These characteristics qualify the intervention to become "country specific" because it addresses the needs of that specific country. (World Bank 2002).

89. Finally, we need to focus on the planning of an intervention. It is important to note that the sustainability and success of interventions depend on how it is planned. The World Bank (2002) suggests the "Step by Step" model as a more sustainable approach. It entails: involvement of communities in identifying the problem and their causes, drawing appropriate strategies and planning together the design. With all these considerations, the chances are that the interventions will work better, will be more sustainable and will be easy to replicate.

90. The next section presents three case studies to demonstrate some gender responsive interventions. An account is also given on what worked, what didn't work and lessons learned.

5. CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1

Rescuing girls from arranged marriages: The AIC Kajiado girls primary school, Kenya. – A centre of excellence

1. Main features

91. *Very young girls given to husband instead of schooling are rescued. FAWE established a Centre of Excellence where the school and community, after being sensitized and empowered work together in establishing a conducive girl friendly environment for learning. Traditional leaders take up the role of reconciling the girls with their parents*.

92. Situated within the Maasailand township Kajiado in the southern part of Kenya towards Tanzanian border, is the AIC Girls Primary School Kajiado. It is both a boarding and a day school with a total number of 558 students, all girls.

93. The teaching team includes 18 female and 4 male teachers. The school head is a female with a deputy male teacher. The catchment area of AIC Girls Primary School Kajiado is mainly the Maasailand within Kajiado district, with fewer girls coming from the rest of Rift Valley province.

94. The Maasai area is an area where nomadic pastoral ethnic group occupying the southern part of Kenya extending to northern part of Tanzania. The Maasai have a very closed culture with very strict and clearly defined gender roles. For example, whereas men are responsible for care and protection of the livestock, women and children (as one group) are responsible for the family welfare, including housing and feeding.

95. Traditionally the Maasai community does not give much importance to girls' education. The Maasai hold the attitude that girls can be married off anytime. Arrangements for marriage can start as early as pregnancy time. Parents count on girls for the number of cow heads they will fetch from marrying them off more than the educational benefits from schooling. It is after several government campaigns on education for all children, and especially for girls in 1980s and 1990s that enrolment and especially of girls increased (Wamihu and Umbima 1994).

96. Despite the progress recorded on the enrolment of girls, attainment and performance rate, especially those in the Maasai land, continued to become a problem. Drop outs of girls from primary schools persisted due to the cultural practices whereby parents would arrange and marry off their girls who were still in schools.

2. The AIC girls primary school centre of excellence strategy

97. The school has established a home for the girls rescued from forced early marriages. The home receives girls from the school and from neighbouring schools. The cases range from girls who run away from their homes after hearing plans for their arranged marriages to those who had already been given off to husbands at a very tender age as low as 9 years (Jedida 2003).

98. The pioneer of the "home" was a girl (now at university) who in 1997, as a former student of that school, had passed to go to a secondary school. As arrangements

were being made for her marriage, the girl ran away back to the headmistress of her former AIC Girls School. The Headmistress kept her and facilitated her entry to secondary school. Later, other girls who experienced the same problem in other primary schools came for rescue into this home and they were accepted. Currently the population in the home is 86 girls; 55 girls attending primary schools, 27 girls attending secondary schools, 2 girls at the university, and 2 girls attending a vocational training institution.

3. Why a gender responsive initiative

99. As the number of girls seeking for refuge in the school increased in 1999, FAWE regional office was consulted for advice and technical assistance. FAWE, through the national chapter, studied the case to identify interventions within its mission and goal of increasing access, retention and improving quality of education for all girls.

100. FAWE facilitated the creation of a conducive environment for girls' participation in education. In so doing, several interventions that characterize a centre of excellence have been carried out in the school in a holistic integrated manner. These interventions include : provision of a boarding facility for a temporary "home" for rescued girls, empowerment activities for both school and local community, and capacity building activities for teachers and community leaders. A brief narration of these interventions is as follows :

- **Support for the boarding facility:**

101. Since the boarding capacity of the school could not cater for the increased number of rescued girls, FAWE with the assistance of its partners has supported the construction of a hostel for the girls. It has been pointed out earlier on that boarding facility enhances girls participation in education by providing more time and environment for studying (Hyde 1985, Kasonde – Ng'andu 1999). For Kajiado girls, it is even more, since it provides for a temporary "home". The hostel also includes other educational facilities such as the library, which girls can use for private study, and a hall that can be used for theatrical performances and other recreation activities. This gives them an opportunity for full concentration on studies and other school activities.

- **Community empowerment activities**

102. A very participatory approach through theatre for development was used to run a series of empowerment workshops for different stakeholders on gender responsiveness. These included pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, school committee members, traditional chiefs, local govt. leaders, lobby women group and religious leaders.

103. During the vision workshop in year 2000, the whole community in their different groups participated in identifying the underlying problems, their causes, possible solutions, strategies to implement the solutions who will be responsible, when it can be implemented and assessment mechanism. Finally, an action plan was drawn, whereby all actors made their commitment to its implementation.

104. Several activities have been carried out between 2000 and 2003 using this approach. Other specific group sensitization workshops followed like the chiefs' management workshop (July 2001), the planning workshop and the school management workshop (June 2001) and follow up chiefs` management workshop (May 2002). In all these workshops, the issue of outdated cultural practices of early marriages and pregnancies which hinder girls education were voiced. Other problems identified were lack of community awareness on the importance of education specifically, that of girls, and lack of community mobilization and participation in the process of educational planning, and implementation within their localities.

105. Among the resolutions and recommendations put forward and adopted by the whole community were:

- A full involvement of chiefs in the reconciliation of rescued girls with their parents.
- The community development plan to include community sensitization on the importance of education for girls.
- Chiefs, local leaders and lobby women groups to work together in educating parents on the importance of girls' education.

- **Empowerment of girls**

106. After the vision and the follow up planning workshops, girls in the centre have started "Girls Speak Out" clubs where they give varied theatrical performances airing their problems in education aspirations and life in general. During such performances some of the things the girls themselves prefer to talk about are such as:

- Girls being accumulated as wives for productive and reproductive purposes;
- Parents accumulating wealth by marrying off girls;
- Girl-students being regarded as misfits or outcasts
- The school making a difference in the education of girls: aiming at high performance;
- Formulation of policies in the local government level to support equal gender participation in education.

107. The performances attract audiences within and outside the school community. Such performances have even been staged at national and international events related to girls` education. (FAWE Annual Report 2002).

- **Holiday programs**

108. Some special programs have been designed to give the girls some skills, promote their performance in school and improve their educational outlook. These include computer lessons (for secondary school goers) bead work, cookery lessons and extra tuition on difficult areas in the school curriculum. Occasionally, trips are arranged to give them more exposure.

- **Capacity building for teachers**

109. During the vision workshop, and other planning workshops that followed, teachers learned how to effectively facilitate girls learning. In their presentations they mocked a teacher centred type of teaching and commended the interactive/participatory approaches. They also committed themselves in, from there-on, providing for a learner and girl friendly environment in and outside the classroom e.g. conducting remedial classes, giving attention to slow learners, mobilizing girls in extra curricular activities, giving audience and listening to girls.

110. Counseling workshop also empowered the teachers with counseling skills. As a result, a counseling desk was established. Group and individual counseling programs are in place.

111. Inter school workshops on science, mathematics and technology have strengthened the teaching of SMT and promoted inter school collaboration (Nkanserry 2001).

4. General achievement so far

112. Some significant achievements have been experienced in the following areas:

113. On Girls: Retention of the girls to complete their primary education has been achieved significantly. All the rescued girls have remained in school. Reported drop out cases due to early marriages and early pregnancies have been very much minimized (Tawuo, S and Gicharu, J, 2002).

114. Girls' participation and performance have increased. A report given at the planning workshop (Nkaiserry 2002) presented a significant improvement of the school performance from 1997 – 2001 in the national examination. (See table 4).

Table 4 Performance of the AIC Girls Primary School Centre of Excellence, in the national examinations, 1997-2001

Year	Mean Grade	Percentage of these who passed	No. of pupils attained places in Sec. School
1997	358.9	67	58
1998	384.4	78	65
1999	399.9	73	71
2000	372.1	61	70
2001	406.9	85	70

Source: Nkasserry H. 2003: Report on Planning Workshops for AIC Girls Primary School Kajiado

115. Teachers interviewed explained that girls are more assertive, confident and they actively take part in the classroom and clubs activities. Most rescued girls have been reconciled with their parents. Girls are very much inspired by their performances and are looking forward to joining higher education levels.

> *I don't want even to think of that husband, a man I never knew until that terrible day. My aim is to go to secondary school next year. After completion of higher education I want to come back and work with my people. I want to help those girls and women who have nobody to speak for them…the forgotten ones.*
>
> ***Testimony by Jedida**: Rescued from a husband at 9 years of age. She is now in her final primary school year.*

- **Teachers**

116. Teachers are now closer and interact with girls more freely and friendly. Girls also seek for academic assistance from teachers. The school atmosphere is more friendly and education oriented. Counseling workshop have conducted to other teachers in the district through partnership with JICA under the "Strengthening mathematics and Science Education (SMASE).

- **Community**

117. Through awareness raising and empowering process, the community leaders have realized their roles and responsibilities. They work closer with the school management than before and community support in school activities is much higher. The rescued girls have been reconciled with parents so they can go home during holidays. A system has been set up in the community to report to the chiefs and local leaders any plans to marry off school girls.

5. Lessons learned

118. Several experiences from the Centre of Excellence are worth mentioning as lessons emerging from the program.

(i) Community participation was a key to the success of the program which relates to socio-cultural attitudes.

(ii) With a sensitized community for gender responsiveness, the community can participate very well in solving deep-rooted cultural/traditional related problems. The chiefs in Kajiado have taken the responsibility of reconciling girls with their parents to resume community harmony and development.

(iii) The use of theatre for development is quite an effective way of community mobilization and sensitization.

(iv) Teachers, retrained on participatory methods and active learning, become more learner and girl friendly in teaching. Teachers need frequent retraining especially in this technological era where new innovations, approaches and knowledge keep on changing.

6. What worked, what didn't work

119. The above narrated achievements and lessons learned can be regarded as things which worked well.

120. The idea of a Centre of excellence has definitely worked. FAWE has demonstrated that a sensitized community can, with very little support, provide an environment that favours girls' learning. A common forum where the government, partners stakeholders and local communities work together should be sought, so that the Maasais' can change their attitudes towards their daughters' education. Moreover the Maasai community is quite rich (with cattle herds).

121. The sustainability of keeping rescued girls in the hostel hinged on the urgency of the matter. The opportunity cost of giving off schoolgirls for marriage was found to be greater than that of providing a temporary home while dialogue with parents continues and the girls continue attending school. In the case where such an intervention becomes the best option, the forum mentioned above should be sought to assist. At the same time, the government should be ready to spend a little bit more on education for such lifelong benefits.

7. Possibilities of replication

122. The AIC Kajiado Girls Primary School is just one case where the provision of a conducive environment for learning and teaching has been experimented and worked. The main problem addressed in this centre was the forced early marriages that hinder girls from completing primary education. The interventions identified are the involvement of the community to address the problem and create an environment that is conducive for girls learning.

123. It is very possible to replicate some or all the activities of the Centre of Excellence depending on the nature of the problem being addressed. For example, hostels for girls in areas with long walking distance; capacity building for teachers on the use of friendly approaches, individual and group counseling. Activities of a Centre of Excellence could, however, be quite different from those of the Kajiado. What matters is the collaborative role that the community assumes and its participation in the whole process of planning strategies and implementing them as a means of providing a quality opportunity for girls' learning.

Case Study 2

Promotion of girls' participation in mathematics, science and technology: female education for mathematics and science in africa (FEMSA)

1. Main features

124. *FEMSA – a project conducted in 12 African countries. The project facilitated activities that would encourage more girls to get interest and participate in Science subjects. The activities included sensitization of school community, capacity building for teachers and advocacy activities in girls clubs*.

125. UNESCO report on the World Conference on Science, held in Budapest in 1999, a forum on "Women, Science and Technology" organized by UNESCO in Latin America, Europe, Asia, the Mediterranean countries, Africa and Arab countries showed that participation of women in scientific and technological developments was still below that of men – but with varying degrees. This was especially in the field of research and decision-making on science and technology policies (UNESCO 1999).

126. Studies addressing girls' participation in the classroom have also shown that generally, girls lag behind boys in school performance mainly in the later years of primary education. Their performance in the early years of schooling is more or less the same as that of boys. Often times, girls in Grade one, two and three perform better than boys (MOEC – Tanzania, FEMSA 2002).

127. As the age advances towards adolescence and up into adulthood, interest and performance of girls in the academic field for different reasons decrease, especially in the scientific and technological fields. Some of the reasons have already been discussed in the earlier parts of this paper. However, it is mainly the traditional attitude held by the community globally including the girls and boys, that mathematics and sciences are essentially the responsibility of the big minds of the boys while girls are left with soft fields like arts, social sciences and languages (Masanja 2001; The UNESCO Conference 1999}.

> "*On a worldwide scale, science – and even more technology – is still a man's business. This situation is no longer acceptable. It is economically unacceptable because of the waste of human resources that it entails; it is humanly unacceptable since it prevents half the population from taking part in building the world; it is intellectually unacceptable as it deprives scientific and technological research of ideas and methods, in a world of creativity. Furthermore, it mortgages the future since it nullifies any prospect of a general mobilization in support of science in the service of a lasting peace and sustainable development"* (MOEC Tanzania – FEMSA 2002 pg. 1)

128. Poor performance of girls, especially in Mathematics and Science, was identified by UNESCO as an issue that needed an immediate intervention. The ADEA Working Group on Female Participation (WGFP) proposed a strategy that would promote girls performance in Science, Mathematics and Technology. This was the project on Female Education in Mathematics and Science (FEMSA). FEMSA was adopted by FAWE and carried out in four countries, namely Cameroon, Ghana, Tanzania and Uganda in 1996. Two years later it expanded to a total of twelve countries after eight more countries joined the group, to make a good representation mix of Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone countries. These were Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, Swaziland and Zambia. The six-year project came to an end in 2001. But FEMSA experiences have been mainstreamed in the National education plans and programs in the respective countries.

2. FEMSA Goal

129. The major goal of FEMSA was to improve the participation and performance of girls in Science, Mathematics and Technological subjects at primary and Secondary school levels.

130. Studies carried out in FEMSA countries revealed that "girls do not participate as much as boys in SMT disciplines, and the performance of those who do so is worse than for boys" (MOEC TZ and FEMSA TZ 2002). Major causes identified for the observed gender differences were emanating from socio-cultural factors, economic factors, curriculum examinations and pedagogical factors, limited employment opportunities and therefore lack of role models for SMT (MOEC TZ and FEMSA TZ 2002).

131. In all the twelve countries where FEMSA project has been running, similar activities have been implemented in selected primary and secondary schools. The activities varied in extent, level of participation and involvement of stakeholders, i.e. teachers, learners and parents. Following is a case study narrating specific FEMSA Activities as they were conducted in schools in Cameroon.

3. FEMSA, the Cameroon Case[1]

132. FEMSA project in Cameroon started in 1996. Cameroon was one of the Phase One countries. After establishing a National Centre, Cameroon launched a FEMSA Tribune (CFT) as one of the dialogue channels for sensitizing the general public on the issue of girls' poor participation in SMT subjects through the Tribune, proposals for solution of the problem would be collected targeting at :

- increasing the enrolment of girls in mathematics, science and Technological subjects.

[1] Adopted from Eboutou Mfou Rose 2003: "Improving the Quality of Education in Sub Sahara Africa: Case of the FEMSA Project in Cameroon". (originally in French).

- improving the performances of girls in SMT subjects.

133. FEMSA project took off in Cameroon with two major activities. One was a study to verify the status of girls' access to school and their performance in science subjects. The other was an experimentation of innovative ideas that would improve the participation and performance of girls in SMT. The verification study confirmed that Cameroon is facing the common challenges that other African countries face in promoting girls' participation in SMT courses. Specifically the challenges originate from the attitudinal beliefs that girls' active participation in SMT was;

- a waste of time: After all "she may" catch a fatherless pregnancy and be expelled from school.
- It's a waste of resources. Girls are just some other people's wives. They are not the heirs of the family wealth.
- SMT subjects are masculine in nature. Women are too feminine to manage them… (Eboutou Mfou Rose 2003).

134. The research still confirmed that as a result of such attitudes, the number of girls taking SMT is quite low, ranging from 6 percent to 26 percent. Secondly, the number of girls still decreases more rapidly than boys' as the schooling level increases. Also, the study proved that the performance of girls in SMT subjects is much poorer compared to boys performance. Reasons that accounted for that situation were: the socio-cultural barriers, economic and school related obstacles.

4. Interventions

135. In order to address the problems, FEMSA established 14 centres in primary and secondary school centres where activities in the grassroots could be carried out. In all the centres, existence of FEMSA was characterized by the following activities;

- **Sensitization and awareness creation**

136. The activities included were awareness raising seminars. The seminars involved the whole school community, teachers, students and parents at school/community level. At the national level they involved education supervisors, managers and politicians.

137. Sensitization to the general audience was done through media and distribution of booklets and fliers.

- **Human and material capacity building**

138. This involved teachers' seminars of practical teaching in all the 10 provinces. Seminars were conducted for the curriculum developers, examiners and school heads on the improvement of girls' participation in SMT. Other activities training of school center coordinators on the management skills and provision of basic support services such as a science building; water system and electricity supply to best performing schools.

- **Pedagogic animation;**

139. Both boys and girls were fully involved in carrying out practical activities so as to relate science to real life. Competitive spirit and cooperation were encouraged through working in groups. Other activities included carrying out remedial lessons and conducting SMT camps for girls.

- **Cultural animation activities;**

140. This involved carrying out varied cultural activities and performances that have a science orientation such as sports, songs, story telling, cultural evenings, FEMSA day, and career open day. The cultural performances attracted a big audience. The content of the sensitization focused on the importance of science and mathematics in life for both men and women.

5. FEMSA in practice at school level: The case of the Lycée Classique d'Abong-Mbang

141. Lycée Classique is a mixed high school situated the Eastern Province within the township of Abong-Mbang. Before FEMSA was introduced to the school, i.e. 1997/1998, Lycee Classique d'Abong –Mbang had 500 students altogether. Among 108 students who had enrolled in the science class in that year, only 8 were girls.

142. In that school all FEMSA activities were carried out during science camps and in girls' clubs. They included *sensitization on SMT, human and material capacity building, pedagogical animation and cultural activities*. The implementation of the activities was geared towards removing the socio-cultural barriers, economic and school related obstacles that contributed to the girls' low participation in science-related courses.

6. The science camps

143. Some awareness raising and sensitization activities were performed during science camps sessions. Opening and Closing sessions officiated by signatories proved handy and effective. Students, teachers, the school community and the surrounding community members usually attended the sessions. Messages related to fighting against socio-cultural attitudes and practices that discourage girls from participating in SMT were given. Appeals were also made for the community to change its attitudes.

144. Other sensitization activities were panel discussions on contemporary issues e.g. Sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, abortions among school girls, the importance of science education for women, the place of science at home, etc. Occasionally, role models were invited to give talks or to participate in debates; doctors, teachers, engineers, and other experts within the township are instances of this. Evenings were occupied by scientific film shows. In all these activities, students, especially girls were encouraged to ask questions and give their views on various issues.

145. On material and human capacity building, science teachers held a parallel session where they conducted discussions on the importance of carrying out practical activities and methodologies that encourage girls' participation. They compiled simple guidebooks on the teaching of on practical Science.

146. During Science lessons, ALL students, (boys and girls) were given an equal opportunity to discuss, experiment and draw conclusions. Some remedial sessions and sports were also given time.

7. Girls' clubs

147. Membership to the school-based club included both the students and the teachers. Activities carried out in the FEMSA clubs included free talk sessions with students, teachers and the community. The talks usually centred around girls' schooling in relation to science subjects. Other activities covered: cultural performances in which educational messages were sent through songs, plays, and traditional games competitions.

148. The club also arranged for remedial and/or extra classes mainly to cater for practical exercises. Some competitions and educational trips are organized to promote interest and science learning.

149. In addition, the clubs organized sessions whereby messages to advocate girls' participation in SMT were prepared. Such messages were, like "Treat students of both sexes equally, "Enroll more girls in sciences" and "Science is for girls and mothers". Such captions appeared on posters, banners while others were sent to the media and other promotion agents. Clubs have also organized quizzes; FEMSA days and girls " Speak out" sessions.

8. Resources

150. Some of the funds for running clubs and science camps were contributed by members, the school, interested individuals and local community organizations. The other source was the FEMSA fund. However, most of the organizational activities were done on voluntary basis.

9. Impact of FEMSA

151. Positive results were noticed in Lycée d'Abong-Mbang school after FEMSA activities have been in operation for four years. An example is the increase of girls' enrolment in the science class from 8 to 48 within four years (1997/98-2000/01) while the number of boys decreased from 99 to 80 within the same period.

152. The table below compares the participation of girls in two schools: of Lycée d'Abong-Mbang (FEMSA school) and Lycée de Doume – a non FEMSA (control) school.

Table 5 Counselling in science for two identical schools: one with a FEMSA cell, the other without

Year	Number of students present in the 5th year in class C		Percentage	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
97/98	08	99	07.5	92.5
98/99	25	77	24.5	75.5
99/00	42	66	38.9	61.1
00/01	48	80	37.5	62.5

Conventional Lycée d'Abong-Mbang School with a FEMSA cell

Year	Number of students present in the 5th year in class C		Percentage	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
97/98				
98/99	2	11	15.4	84.6
99/00	1	8	12.5	87.5
00/01	5	18	21.7	78.3

Lycée Doume' Control school

Source: Eboutou Mfou Rose 2003: Improving the Quantity of Education in sub-Saharan Africa, Case of FEMSA in Cameroon. Note that class C are those taking science courses.

153. Table 5 above shows a significant increase in the number of girls who benefited from counseling in science in the school with FEMSA cell compared to the

control school. However, it was not established as to why the number of boys had dropped.

10. FEMSA achievements in Cameroon

154. Different people through an oral interview gave an assessment on the achievements of FEMSA. People interviewed included school headmasters/headmistresses, principals, community members, parents, girls, boys, teachers and education supervisors. Some views given on achievement were as follows:

- Remedial classes are now functioning and attended by more girls.
- Boys have also benefited from FEMSA.
- Competitive spirit among girls and boys has increased.
- Parents are aware of the importance of science to girls and allow them to enroll in the subjects.

155. More girls have been admitted to technical secondary schools due to high performance in primary school examinations.

- *In 1997/1998 school year only 3 girls enrolled in the science class of "Terminale C"*
- *In 1998/1999 there were 4 girls in Terminale C" all of whom passed the Baccalaureate C examinations.*
- *In 1999/2000 school- year, 13 girls registered in "Terminale C"*

Source: Lady Principal: Lycée de Tsinga Adapted from FEMSA Cameroon Newsletter.

11. Lessons learned

156. Among lessons learned from FEMSA Cameroon project are ;

- Sensitization using cultural artistic media is quite effective since it sends messages very fast.
- For effective change of attitude, sensitization is an effective intervention at all levels i.e. from micro-(school level) to the macro-(national)-level.
- When learner/girl-friendly and relevant approaches are used, girls become better participants and performers in SMT.
- Families benefit more from girls' basic home/family/domestic SMT skills than from the boys. But both, boys and girls need the skills.
- Partnership of stakeholders in raising funds for running the project is instrumental.

157. FEMSA was a project designed to demonstrate that it is possible to create an enabling environment for paving the way for more girls' participation in SMT. However, as it has been discussed above, all carried out FEMSA activities are normal pedagogical school activities that are supposed to take place in any ideal school setting, if the education system was functioning well. The deterioration of professional teachers' conduct, lack of interest and seriousness by all actors (teachers, learners and the community) have contributed to such an unfavorable situation. A more serious follow-up on teachers' performance is needed in order to reorient them for a more professional endeavor with a focus on gender balance and more girls' participation.

158. It is possible for all schools in all countries to replicate FEMSA activities since they are more school/community based. For a more efficient implementation, FEMSA activities should be mainstreamed into the National Education plans in the Ministries of Education of each country, as it has been done in countries where FEMSA project was being conducted.

Case Study 3

Education for children out of school; The complementary basic education in Tanzania (COBET) program

1. Main features

159. Through this community based program ,basic education is provided to the out-of-school children who either dropped out or were never enrolled in formal school. The program uses a child-friendly curriculum that is competence-based, simple, flexible and shorter than the formal school one. The community facilitates with classrooms materials and teachers. Girls with babies are enrolled and the curriculum allows time for domestic chores.

160. The race of attaining the EFA goal of achieving UPE by 2005 has taken different approaches and forms in different countries. As the prevailing conditions in education differ from country to country, starting points have differed accordingly.

161. In Tanzania, campaigns for UPE started in the 1970s and indeed made a significant progress whereby GER and NER increased drastically from 1970 to 1980 and later fell back, as the following figures display.

Table 6 Enrolment trend in Tanzania in the last three decades.

Year	GER	NER
1970	39.1	27.0
1975	54.1	47.1
1980	98.0	68.0
1985	85.5	67.8
1990	73.5	54.3
1995	77.6	55.5

Source: Adapted from Galabawa 2003: COBET: "Some Revelations from a strategy for access and quality improvement at Primary School Level"

162. The downfall from 1980s to 1990s can be accounted for by considering different economic reforms which didn't address the education quality and equality. (Galabawa 2003)

163. By the close of the last decade, it was estimated that more than three million Tanzania children and young people between the age of 7 and 18 years had dropped out of school or had never been enrolled (ESDP – PEDP 2001).The case might be different now after the policy of free primary education as from 2002.

164. Several studies were carried out in late 1990s including *school mapping and needs assessment* to identify the real situation. From the studies it was learned that many

children, most of whom are girls, especially in rural areas, do not have access to education or do not complete primary education. For those who complete, their performance is quite low (Katunzi 2003). Appendix I in this paper, reveals the low level of achievement for girls in Tanzania compared to boys, although generally, the performance is low for both boys and girls.

165. Several and varied reasons have been given for low participation and performance in education. In some places, it was in the availability of schools or of space in the school. For others, it was inability to afford fees and other school requirements, long walking distance, lack of interest due to unattractive school environment, family roles, low educational returns and irrelevant curricula. Others were harsh and unfriendly teachers, manual work in school and sexual harassment. (Tanzania School Mapping Reports 1997-2000; Katunzi 2003).

166. As discussed earlier, the reasons given relate to direct and opportunity costs, distance, school based factors and low educational returns. Also, typical of countries in sub-Saharan Africa, girls are more affected by the situation in that many more of them do not participate effectively in basic education (Mushi 2002).

167. After the Jomtien declaration on EFA, Tanzania also started designing some reforms that would hasten the attainment of the goal. The reforms included putting in place the Education and Training Policy (ETP) the Education Sector Development (ESDP) and Master Plans for Primary, Secondary and Teacher Education, to address the issues of access retention and performance, with the aim of achieving the EFA goal by 2015.In all these reforms the issue of equity in provision of quality education featured prominently.

168. Some interventions have been tried out to find out a model that can work to clear the backlog of school aged children who had no access to school, while at the same time, ensure retention and performance, especially for school aged girls. The models tried out were:

- Child-friendly schools initiative (CFSI) to curb dropouts and promote participation and performance.
- Ward Based Education Management (WABEM) to promote community participation and decentralized school management systems.
- Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET) to provide access and full participation for the out-of-school children.

169. This study has picked up COBET model to share some experiences on what has been done to demonstrate a gender responsive environment in addressing the out of school age cohort.

2. Background information on COBET

170. Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania is a program initiated in 1999 by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) in collaboration with UNICEF. It was carried out on a pilot basis in five selected districts where enrolments were very low, dropouts rate was high and community awareness on education was quite low.

171. The general objective of COBET program is to contribute to the provision of basic education to school aged out-of-school children. Specifically, COBET seeks to:

- Provide complementary basic education opportunities to-out-of school children with special focus on girls.

- Develop a complementary basic education curriculum by strengthening basic competences, life and survival skills and introducing flexible timetabling.
- Establish a system for a regular, periodic collection of information on out-of-school children disaggregated by gender, for planning and implementation of COBET.
- Identify and improve the capacities of key partners involved in basic education to plan and implement education of out-of-school children.
- Improve capacity at community level to initiate, plan, monitor, evaluate and report on COBET.
- Sensitize communities and parents towards education and other basic rights of unschooled and schooled children so as to increase support and participation in COBET (MOEC 1997).

3. The COBET model and gender responsiveness

172. The COBET has four main elements that have made the model a gender-responsive one. Firstly the program started with *participatory needs assessment* where information was collected from children, parents, community leaders, and local experts. That information was analysed using Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) approach to basic education. Secondly, there was *empowerment of and participation by all stakeholders* in all activities. Thirdly, *pluralism and institutional linkages* through COBET committees (drawn from the community), NGOs, CBOs, faith groups, private sector and local leadership. Fourthly, *relevant curriculum and materials* were designed in a participatory manner. Lastly, *the bottom-up grassroots-based administrative system* in which committees are involved in planning, budgeting and provisioning (Galabawa 2003).

4. How COBET worked as a gender-responsive initiative

173. COBET is regarded as a gender-responsive initiative. Arguments to support this are given by looking into each of the elements mentioned above.

- *Participatory needs assessments involved* all the stakeholders including parents, guardians, out-of-school girls and boys, local leadership, CBOs, NGOs, faith groups, education sector professionals and influential people within the community. For each category of people gender balance was observed. Learners themselves proposed the curriculum content, the type of teachers, venues, time and duration. These proposals were used in developing a curriculum that was relevant.
- *Empowerment and participation of stakeholders*; The facilitators and premises were drawn from the community. Decision-making concerning resources, administration, enrolment, provision of materials and monitoring of progress was done at the local level where more women were participating.
- *Pluralism and institutional linkages*: Institutions based in the district, such as voluntary, government and community institutions, were mobilized to support the operationalization of COBET centres. These institutions were represented even in the formulation of the curriculum. Other on going out-of-school youth program were also invited to give their experiences and for linkage and future planning.
- *Cohort separation*; The learners are grouped in two major cohorts basing on age groups. The first cohort includes learners of 11-13years while cohort two takes the learners of 14-18 years

- *Curriculum and materials*: A skill and competence based curriculum was formulated after consultation with other international such experiences. The curriculum was a condensed normal primary school one, with additions of life skills, livelihood skills, personality building and counseling. Curriculum for Cohort one learners focused on skills that would lead them to mainstream into the formal primary school system within or after three years. That one of cohort two is more of livelihood skills-based with a condensed complete primary education curriculum.
- *The teaching and learning approaches* are participatory, learner and girl friendly with full teacher/learner interaction. Teachers just facilitate learning and hence addressed as facilitators.
    - Teaching and learning materials are simple and attractive; taking the modular form that allows choice and different entry points and interests. Learners self-assessment is provisioned as well as parents and community give feedback on the learners' progress.
    - Facilitators have been retrained several times in pedagogy, counseling, HIV/AIDS, assessment of learners and record keeping.
    - Timetabling: The timetable is short and flexible to allow time for other domestic roles, provided that three-hours instructional time is effectively used.
- *Environment is friendly* – there are no corporal punishments, uniforms or fees.
- *Bottom-up grassroots based administrative committees*: each center consists of a committee with equal numbers of men and women. Learners also have equal gender representation in the committee. Some facilitation expertise is drawn from the community, especially where it is not available among the facilitators.
- *Community involvement in assessment*; Parents, leaders, elders, NGOs, CBOs give feedback and recommendations about the learners` progress, facilitators` performance and program implementation.

174. Other aspects in COBET that promote gender equity in the provision of basic education are;

- Waiving off fees and other direct costs on materials and school uniforms.
- Flexibility of timetable gives the girls time to accomplish other family chores that would, otherwise, hinder them from effective participation in school.
- Learner-cented curriculum and, friendly teaching/learning methods. Also, simple and attractive materials which raise them and make learning more effective.
- Enrolment of learners with babies– was a special attraction for girls.
- Full community involvement in the whole process of problem identification, planning, implementation and evaluation which allowed:
    - gender balance in the representation in committees
    - gender sensitization and awareness raising in the community
    - high community support for schooling of girls.

5. Achievements

175. After three years of COBET implementation in the five pilot districts, some positive results on the participation of out-of-school children, especially girls, in education have been realized. An evaluation done by UNICEF on COBET pilot implementation (Galabawa 2003) has shown that:

- Dropout from centers was minimal and completion rate was 89% girls and 90% boys..
- Girls actively participate in learning
- Girls with babies, and others married attend COBET classes regularly.
- Some COBET learners in cohort two (14-18years), boys and girls, passed the National Examinations (PSLE) and a few have proceeded to secondary schools at the transition rate of 5 % which is the corresponding rate in the formal system. The number of boys and girls selected was at par, i.e. 50% each. (Masasi District Education Officer report 2003).
- COBET learners appear clean, more behaved, assertive and have vision (Galabawa 2003, Assessment Reports by Tanzania Institute of Education 2000-2002).
- Learners of the younger cohort (cohort one-8-13years) have successively mainstreamed into the formal system at Grade V and VI
- COBET program has proved that it is possible to run a school without corporal punishment.

6. Lessons learned

176. With the COBET model, several lessons have been learned. The most important ones are:

- Provision of a conducive environment, in this case, a girl-friendly environment, is essential for their enrolment, retention and performance.
- Issues that are biological in nature e.g. child bearing shouldn't be a basis for penalty to attaining basic education, especially for girls.
- Effective schooling can be conducted with maximum friendliness and minimum harshness.
- A relevant, well-staggered curriculum raises learners' interest and permits effective learning that promotes retention, especially for girls.
- Involvement of the community, stakeholders and institutional linkage is necessary for effective management of the education system.

7. What didn't work

177. The program assumed from the beginning that formal primary education system would improve along-side the implementation of COBET program so as to allow smooth mainstreaming of the younger cohort into the formal system. Reports from the district COBET coordinators for Masasi and Kisarawe revealed that some learners, very few though, have not mainstreamed after completing the three years of the COBET program for fear of being harassed by teachers through the use of corporal punishment.

178. Facilitators who volunteered to teach in the program were to be paid an allowance by the local district councils. This worked only in districts which are economically better off. Where resources are scarce, payment was irregular, a situation which discouraged the facilitators and, at the times, affected their performance. In future the government budget on education should consider catering for the non-formal education for the school age who also have the right to education.

179. COBET program has demonstrated the provision of a friendly learning environment for effective learning especially for girls. Assessment reports on learners' progress by Tanzania Institute of Education from 2001-2002 show that the performance of boys in day-to-day lessons still remained higher, generally, than that of girls. Thus gender equity in performance still remains a challenge.

8. Replication

180. From the achievements made in the COBET program, the Minister of Education, in his Parliamentary Budget speech of 2002 announced that the program will now be expanded to other districts with a few modifications. Also several NGOs e.g. Plan International "Child in the Sun", have started COBET programs with their youths programs. But, more importantly, it's the change that need to take place in the formal education system in response to the lessons learned. Learner/girl friendliness has no cost, but rather a change of attitude. Retraining of serving teachers and serious follow-up by the education supervisors and administrators could help change the school environment to become more accommodating. This will promote gender equity in retention and performance and enhance attainment of the EFA goal.

9. General conclusions and recommendations

181. The EFA goal of attaining UPE by year 2015 was drawn from the United Nations Vision on Primary education. The Dakar Framework of Action emphasizes that education for all includes eliminating gender gaps and providing quality education for both boys and girls equally.

182. The review of the situation has shown that one third of countries which have high risk of not achieving the goal are in the sub-Saharan Africa and that gender gaps are still very prominent in most countries in the region (UNESCO 2001b). The risk of not bridging the gender gap is therefore high as well. That means more concerted efforts from all fronts are called for so as to offset the risk.

183. This paper has tried to identify factors that cause the gender gaps and proposed some possible strategies that the so termed "off track" countries can adapt or replicate in order to come back to the track and make a bigger pace for the attainment of the goal.

184. The narrated case studies have given specific messages on what can possibly be done to hasten the attainment of the goal and how. The case of Kajiado Centre of Excellence gives clear possibilities for replication in Kenya and elsewhere with similar challenges while Cameroon has reported a big success in having more girls studying the science subjects.

185. Community awareness rising has been seen to have played a very big role, together with capacity building activities. FEMSA activities are already mainstreamed into the respective FEMSA countries' government education plans..

186. COBET in Tanzania has demonstrated a strategy to address the out-of-school cohort by provisioning a learner-friendly atmosphere in schools. The intervention has facilitated access retention and performance in education with a special focus on girls.

187. In all the three cases, a common feature has been the involvement of the community, including learners and other actors, in the whole process of problem identification, planning implementation and monitoring. This feature has facilitated the positive results due to the community support gained. This fact further confirms the argument that strategies that are community-focused enjoy community ownership and support (World Bank 2002b). They are sustainable and, therefore, more likely to be successful in minimizing gender disparities in education.

188. This strategy can be adopted in implementing any of the initiatives proposed earlier for success and sustainability sake in the promotion of gender equity in learning.

6. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Performance in the primary school leaving examinations (PSLE) in Tanzania by sex, 1996-2000

Appendix 2: Repetition rate at grade 5 and transition rate to secondary schools of selected countries in SSA

Appendix 3: Why education for girls ? Evidences from research

Appendix 4 : Stories on traditions and science

Appendix 1: Performance in the primary school leaving examinations (PSLE) in Tanzania by sex, 1996-2000

	Male			Female		
Exam Year	Pass (%)	Fail(%)	No. of Candidates	Pass (%)	Fail	No. of Candidates
1996	25.6	74.4	185,616	12.9	87.1	186,405
1997	25.4	74.6	202,830	14.0	86.0	210,898
1998	28.1	71.9	180,201	14.6	85.4	183,813
1999	25.0	75.0	207,075	13.8	86.2	219,506
2000	28.7	71.3	190,646	15.5	84.5	199,060

Note: The minimum pass mark is 61 out of 150 marks (about 41 percent). The Net enrolment stood at 48% female and 46 male during those years.

Source: The National Examinations Council of Tanzania, Primary School Leaving Examinations Results for Year 1996-2002, adapted from Chomola, R.C. 2003.

Appendix 2: Repetition rate at grade 5 and transition rate to secondary schools of selected countries in SSA

Country	Repetition Rate (%)		Gross Enrolment in Secondary School	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Burkina Faso	17.7	15.4	8	12
Burundi	30.6	31.9	6.1	8.1
Cameroon	26.9	27.3	22	32
Chad	15.2	15.0	5	18
Comoro	18.7	20.3	16	21
Ethiopia	-	-	11	15
Guinea	25	22	7	20
Liberia	8	4	12	31
Mali		17	10	20
Mozambique	19.3	18.7	11	17
Niger	15	14.9	10	16
Rwanda	37.6	35.2	11	12
S. Africa	8.1	10.8	76	91
URT			5	6
Uganda	5.4	5.8	9	15
Zambia			22	29

* Repetition rates recorded are those of grade 5 only.
Source: Compiled by author from FAWE country Profiles Prepared for 1st FAWE Donor Consortium meeting Feb. 2003.

Appendix 3: Why education for girls ? Evidences from research

– GIRLS' EDUCATION BENEFITS ALL –

(Adopted from FEMSA Cameroon Newsletter)

Why does supporting girls' education benefit the Nation?

World Bank studies show that 4 years of primary school education improves the yield by 5 per cent to 10 per cent in many areas.

- Multiply the girls at school and watch the improvement in women's and children's health as well as people dying of preventable diseases. Watch population growth slow and the better management of national resources.
- Girls education creates a pool of skilful competent workers which increases productivity and the standard of living of the entire nation.
- Education brings increased opportunities for improving earnings (children who have not gone to school cost more to their parents than they gain compared to those who have been to school), using preservative resources and increasing the capacity to tackle challenges posed by poverty and a variety of environmental risks. Education produces the business people, scientists civil servants, politician, mothers, fathers and caretakers of the future. Science Education does the same.
- Women are a pivotal factor in raising standards of family health, particularly child and maternal health through increased standards of nutrition, child care and sanitation. Each additional year of schooling for women is associated with a decline in infant mortality of between 5 and 10 per cent. There is a higher rate of child survival.
- Women with education marry later and are more likely to use a contraceptive method successfully with the results that they have the number of children they want, when they want them.
- In terms of policy-making women are under-represented in general and therefore are an under-utilised resource. Increasing the number of women will enable policy makers to bring new perspectives, which have hitherto been neglected. Women's' advancement leads to increased status of nations and supporting women's advancement and girls' education fulfils international agreements and conventions, specifically:
    - The human Rights Convention:
    - The Children's Rights Charter (CRC);
    - The Convention for Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);
    - The Beijing Platform for Action.

In terms of decision-making, an educated woman is able to make more informed decisions regarding her own health, and that of her children.

Appendix 4: Stories on traditions and Science

(Adopted from FEMSA Cameroon Newsletter)

"If you think education is expensive, try ignorance".

O n e – The Cooking Spoon

Mrs. EHUOMA comes home to find her daughter Miriam crying. There were broken plates, a cooking spoon with a pot of soup splashed all over the floor. "What is the matter here?" She asked frightened "Mummy the cooking spoon was in the hot pot of soup and when I held it, it burnt me". Miriam replied in tears.

Mrs EHUOMA quickly realized the gravity of the situation and rushed the girl to the hospital. She had incurred severe burns on her legs and hands.

What lessons do we learn from this story?

A basic knowledge of the physical and chemical properties of materials would have enabled the girl to know that metals are good conductors of heat and therefore it is dangerous to hold a metal spoon in a hot pot of soup with bare hands.

T w o – A boy child

Mr. OKUN was sure there was some ill-luck or bad omen hanging around him. How come after so many years of marriage, his wife could not give him a boy child?

Mr OKUN had eight children, all girls and he knows it was all his wife's fault. They quarreled over this several times. He made secret plans to send her away and marry a second wife.

He did marry a second wife, but unfortunately for him, the second wife who had two boys out of wedlock, bore him three children, all girls. Mr. OKUN now decided to seek advice from a medical doctor who, to his greatest surprise, told him the sex of a child is determined by the father and not the mother of the child.

Lessons to draw from the story: Some knowledge of genetics is necessary for peace to reign in this home. If Mr OKUN had known that the sex of a child is determined by the father, he would not have sent away his first wife.

T h r e e – The schooling wife's legs

A story is told of a young Nigerian girl who was killed by amputation. This brutal act was committed by a husband she did not want to marry. At the tender age of 11 years, she refused to abandon school to marry this 45 years-old man to whom she had been betrothed as a child.

She ran away from home but continued to go to school. Her husband and her parents considered this as an insult to their tradition. On her way home, one day, she was kidnapped by the husband and taken to his house where he thought the best way to ensure she never went back to school again ever was to amputate her legs. From ignorance and naivety she bled to death.

What lessons do we learn from this story? The consequences of ignorance and attachment to traditions that militate against the education of the girl child can be dangerous to the family, the community and even the society as a whole.

Out of ignorance and naivety, the girl in the story bled to death. Due to lack of any science notions on the way the human body functions, the husband killed his wife. I believe his intentions were not to kill but to keep his wife at home. Some knowledge of the basic notions of sciences would have helped the situation. There is therefore an urgent need to inculcate a science culture in the day to day experiences of everyone

F o u r – The fire

Mr ATANGANA was a rich man. After he had acquired for himself wealth, car, he decided to get married. He went to the family of OYONO and got Miss EDIMA for a wife. Miss EDIMA was so beautiful that her husband nicknamed her "Bouquet" and gave instructions that she does not leave the house ever.

One day, while the husband was out of the house, a fire broke out as a result of an electrical short-circuit. Mrs ATANGANA, completely helpless even with a fire extinguisher on the wall, rushed to the kitchen, got a bucket of water and tried to quench the fire. But to her greatest dismay, the flames only increased in intensity. It is only by God's grace that she was saved but all of the family's hard earned wealth was reduced to ashes.

F i v e

Cooking on her electric stove one afternoon after school, Rose decided to add water to the pot. As she poured the water, something strange happened. She was quickly catapulted and she fell at a distance of about 3 meters away from the cooker, loosing consciousness. When she recovered consciousness, she discovered she was in a hospital bed.

Stories spread that it was her uncle who out of jealousy, wanted to give her into "Famila" but didn't succeed this time. The hatred in the family continued.

The truth is that Rose had suffered from an electrical shock.

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