EDUCATION FROM A GENDER EQUALITY PERSPECTIVE

MAY 2008

This report was developed for USAID's Office of Women in Development by the EQUATE Project, Management Systems International (Prime Contractor).

This report was developed for USAID's Office of Women in Development by the EQUATE Project, Management Systems International (Prime Contractor). This report was contracted under GEW-I-00-02-00021-00, Task Order #1, EQUATE: Achieving Equality in Education.

Cover photos:

Top left:	Children at a school in Kazakhstan participate in a national reading day. Sapargul Mirseitova/ Kazakh Reading Association, Courtesy of USAID
Top right:	Young students in India look on as their teacher uses a chalkboard to explain a lesson. © 2007 Rabin Chakrabarti, Courtesy of Photoshare
Bottom right:	A girl in Guatemala waits for her mother after school. © 2003 Antonieta Martin, Courtesy of Photoshare
Bottom middle:	Boys in Egypt reading books provided through USAID-funded educational programs. Ben Barber, Courtesy of USAID
Bottom left:	A young girl in Eritrea works on her studies. © 2006 Konjit B. Ghebremariam, Courtesy of Photoshare

EDUCATION FROM A GENDER EQUALITY PERSPECTIVE

DISCLAIMER
The author's views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **1**

THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE **1**
Girls' Education at a Crossroads 3

WHAT ABOUT BOYS? **4**

GENDER EQUALITY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR REACHING ALL LEARNERS **5**

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QUALITY AND EQUALITY **6**

THE MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION **7**
Equality of Access 8
Equality in the Learning Process 8
Equality of Educational Outcomes 9
Equality of External Results 10

RECOMMENDATIONS **11**

CONCLUSION **12**

REFERENCES **13**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education is universally acknowledged to benefit individuals and promote national development. Educating females and males produces similar increases in their subsequent earnings and expands future opportunities and choices for both boys and girls. However, educating girls produces many additional socio-economic gains that benefit entire societies. These benefits include increased economic productivity, higher family incomes, delayed marriages, reduced fertility rates, and improved health and survival rates for infants and children.

Over the years, education has focused on access and parity—that is, closing the enrollment gap between girls and boys—while insufficient attention has been paid to retention and achievement or the quality and relevance of education. Providing a quality, relevant education leads to improved enrollment and retention, but also helps to ensure that boys and girls are able to fully realize the benefits of education. The primary focus on girls' access to education may overlook boys' educational needs. This approach also fails to confront the norms and behaviors that perpetuate inequality.

This paper presents a framework that has been designed to address the inequality described above. A tool for education programmers, the framework helps ensure that education projects meet the needs of all learners. Using an approach that takes into account the relations and interaction between males and females (also known as gender dynamics), the Gender Equality Framework addresses four dimensions of equality in education. These are: equality of access, equality in the learning process, equality of educational outcomes, and equality of external results. Sections on each of the four dimensions include concrete activities that can be implemented as part of an overall strategy to achieve gender equality in education. Additional examples are provided through the use of text boxes, which highlight successful USAID education interventions.

In addition to presenting the framework, this report also explores topics such as the relationship between education quality and gender equality and the distinction between parity and equity. Achieving gender equality in education means that boys and girls will have equal opportunities to realize their full human rights and contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural, and political development.

THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Research has shown that education is "one of the most effective development investments countries and their donor partners can make" (Basic Education Coalition 2004). "Adequate investments in education facilitate the achievement of most other development goals and increase the probability that progress will be sustained" (USAID 2005). Each year of schooling "increases individual output by 4-7 percent, and countries that improve literacy rates by 20-30 percent have seen increases in gross domestic product (GDP) of 8-16 percent" (Basic Education Coalition 2004). Education builds the human capital that is needed for economic growth (USAID 2005). It also produces significant improvements in health, nutrition, and life expectancy, and countries with an educated citizenry are more likely to be democratic and politically stable.

Educating girls achieves even greater results. When girls go to school, they tend to delay marriage, have fewer but healthier children, and contribute more to family income and national productivity. In fact, "educating girls quite possibly yields a higher rate of return than any other investment available in the developing world" (Summers 1992). Despite this fact, "[i]n 2005 only 59 (about one-third) of 181 countries with data available had achieved gender parity … in their [gross enrolment rates] for both

primary and secondary education" (UNESCO 2007). While disparities in primary and secondary enrolment rates are decreasing, they have not yet been eliminated (UNESCO 2007).

Considerable attention has been paid to improving access and quality at the primary level; however, there is some indication that secondary level education may provide higher returns, especially for girls. "The economic returns to schooling at the secondary and tertiary levels are consistently high (and differentially high for young women). The gap between the returns to higher and lower levels of schooling is widening, thus putting an increasing premium on secondary and tertiary schooling for later success in the labor market" (Lloyd 2005). Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (2004) found that women experience an 18 percent return on secondary education, versus 14 percent for boys. In addition to increased economic returns, "[f]emale schooling at the secondary level is more consistently and strongly associated with increased decision-making and mobility for women than schooling at the primary level" (Pande, Malhotra, and Grown 2005). Recognizing and responding to increasing rates of return can help drive demand for schooling as parents see the benefits of additional education. It can also encourage attendance and improved performance at the primary school level. "Looking ahead to secondary school is an incentive for girls to attend and perform well in primary school, and reassures families that their investments will pay off" (Save the Children 2005).

Whether attention is focused on secondary or primary education, ensuring access and providing a high quality education is crucial if societies are to achieve their development goals. Developing countries that fail to ensure equitable access to basic education pay a high price for doing so (USAID 2005). The development costs of not achieving gender parity in education will be reflected in reduced economic growth and increases in fertility, child mortality, malnutrition, and poverty.

Too many children, especially those from poor families and those living in rural or remote areas, still lack access to a safe, nearby school or other quality learning opportunities. Working children, indigenous children, street children, refugee children, displaced children, orphaned children, trafficked children, child soldiers, and those who are physically challenged, living in conflict areas, or are affected by HIV or AIDS are not receiving an adequate education.

Being female exacerbates an already difficult situation. In most developing countries, girls are less likely than boys to enroll in school, stay in school, or have their educational needs met through non-formal means. The best development investment available is not being fully utilized.

PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SUDAN

USAID-supported education activities in Sudan are responding to high levels of female illiteracy and low school completion rates for girls. Program activities are designed to increase access and create a conducive environment for girls' education. Over 2600 girls have received scholarships to help them continue their education. Project activities have also included the distribution of gender advocacy materials and gender sensitization workshops for communities. USAID has supported gender-sensitive curriculum and materials to help improve the quality of education for all learners. Community advocacy campaigns are addressing cultural barriers to girls' participation and school improvements contribute to enhancing the learning environment for girls and boys.

Scholarships and accelerated training programs are encouraging women to become teachers. Over 900 scholarships have been provided to female students to promote interest in the teaching profession (USAID n.d.). Gender-sensitive codes of conduct are also being initiated to ensure that schools are safe environments for female instructors.

GIRLS' EDUCATION AT A CROSSROADS

The barriers that keep girls out of school are well known, and solutions for lifting them exist. However, governments and donor agencies have focused primarily on increasing female access and enrollment, with insufficient attention paid to the quality or relevance of education for girls or their retention and achievement rates (Sibbons, et al. 2000).

If primary school enrollment and completion rates are high, but the quality of education is low, then "education has not conferred the skills and knowledge that are the source of the hoped-for greater earnings, better health, and more engaged citizenship" (Levine et al. 2003). Access, duration, and quality are all critical variables in realizing educational benefits.

With most efforts focused on closing the primary school enrollment gap between girls and boys, insufficient attention has been paid to the gender dynamics that affect children's larger participation in school. The relationship between gender and educational inputs, such as curricula, textbooks, pedagogy, and teacher training, are rarely made explicit. Similarly, the links among gender inequities, inputs, and outcomes are not sufficiently acknowledged. An evaluation of a USAID-funded project in Malawi revealed that the focus on getting girls into school, without addressing impediments in the learning process, put girls at a disadvantage. The evaluation revealed that wide perceptions of girls' failure or weaknesses in English hindered girls in upper grades, where English was the medium of instruction. The study also indicated that girls had been regularly characterized as "dull, second-rate students incapable of answering questions" and boys were assigned high status tasks like timekeeping and ringing the school bell, whereas girls were responsible for sweeping and arranging furniture (Kendall 2006). Although these issues are often overlooked in education program policies and strategies, they contribute to reinforcing the gender gap in education.

To close this gap, governments and donor agencies must more effectively address the systemic barriers to girls' educational success as an essential education strategy.

Two students at a school in Ho, Ghana point to their homeland on their new map of the world.
© 2002 Todd Shapera, Courtesy of Photoshare

TRANSFORMING CLASSROOM DYNAMICS IN NICARAGUA

Since 1993, USAID has been supporting efforts to increase the active participation of students in the classroom, encourage the use of new instructional materials, and support democratic participation in school governance.

The Basic Education Project (BASE I and II) promoted an open-classroom system that included: training teachers to act as learning facilitators rather than lecturers; individually paced and self-managed learning; small-group and peer-directed study; active, democratic student government; and strong parent and community participation in support of local school quality.

All students, including girls, were viewed as important members of the school community and valued for their contribution to peer-group, class, and school activities. As a result of the project, girls assumed active leadership roles through student government and showed increased self-esteem and confidence.

The adoption of participatory student-centered teaching practices helped increase the participation of all students in class and resulted in improved academic performance, visible in the increased progression of boys and girls through the fifth grade.

The successes of the BASE projects prompted the Nicaraguan government to promote expansion of the teaching methodology nationwide. The USAID-supported Excelencia project is building on and expanding the model school network implemented as part of the BASE Project. Training for teachers, administrators, and ministry officials has been expanded and resource centers are providing teachers and students with the resources they need to develop lessons and complete homework. The Excelencia project continues to promote instructional methods that respond to each student's learning style and pace, reflect their interests, and take into account the realities of their communities.

WHAT ABOUT BOYS?

Focusing on female enrollment has not sufficiently engaged boys and men in confronting norms and attitudes that perpetuate inequality. Analyzing the relationships between and among girls and boys and teachers and learners can identify the root causes of inequality and suggest systemic, transformative changes to educational systems that will eliminate those causes.

A child receives tutoring at a primary school in the Surulere area of Lagos state, Nigeria.

© 2007 Opara Adolphus C., Courtesy of Photoshare

Interventions involving both girls and boys appear to be successful in addressing constraints that limit girls' participation in education (DeJaeghere 2004). Through a USAID-funded project in Ethiopia, boys became more sensitive to the multiple burdens girls face that interfere with their schooling. As

a result, boys began to help their female classmates with their homework and no longer judged them intellectually inadequate (DevTech Systems, Inc. 2004).

In some parts of the world, boys' educational outcomes lag behind girls' outcomes. In Botswana, Lesotho, and Namibia, some boys are taken out of school or denied entry all together to become cattle herders—a task that falls to them since many adult males are forced to seek wage employment elsewhere. Boys in Latin America and the Caribbean usually have higher repetition rates and lower achievement rates than girls. The reasons for boys' underachievement are becoming clearer through a growing number of studies. One study observed that boys' underachievement is inextricably linked to notions of gender and power (UNICEF 2003). Boys' weak performance in school may be related to their traditional socialization—for example, achievement in language and literature is considered to be more 'feminine' than 'masculine'. In Jamaica, one study found that boys were continually told they were lazy and inattentive to their studies. This resulted in low self-esteem and poor academic achievement and test results (MSI/EQUATE 2005). Boys underachievement is a growing problem that requires policy attention. However, it "should not divert attention from the continuing issue of low access for girls to primary and secondary education in many developing countries" (UNESCO 2007).

Third grade students smile for the camera in Katatura Township, Windhoek, Namibia.
© 2003 Harvey Nelson, Courtesy of Photoshare

These regional disparities do not mean that female-targeted projects are no longer needed. On the contrary, a World Bank study concluded that providing girls with a relevant, quality education necessitates a double-pronged approach that targets girls and addresses system-wide weaknesses (Kane 2004). The primary issue of targeted interventions, whether for girls or boys, is how the activity is designed and executed. Targeted interventions addressing gender inequalities should:

- meet an identified need and demand;
- be grounded in sound gender analysis;
- promote learning;
- bring about systemic changes; and
- transform the power dynamics between the sexes.

GENDER EQUALITY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR REACHING ALL LEARNERS

Gender equality is an often-used but infrequently defined term. Translating the concept of gender equality in education into a practical framework will assist education programmers in better designing, managing, and evaluating education projects. To be practical, this framework must draw clear distinctions and demonstrate interrelationships among the concepts of gender parity, gender equity, and gender equality. In addition to drawing out the nuances between equity and equality, the framework also reinforces other key issues in education such as access, quality, continuity, and relevance.

Gender equality means that males and females have equal opportunities to realize their full human rights and contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural, and political development. Parity and equity are the building blocks of equality in education.

As noted in *Gender and education for all: The leap to equality*, "[g]ender parity and gender equality in education mean different things" (UNESCO 2003). Parity is attained when the same proportion of boys and girls—relative to their respective age groups—enter the education system, achieve educational goals, and advance through the different cycles (UNESCO 2003). Reaching parity in enrollment is necessary, but not sufficient, for achieving equality and should be considered a "'first stage' measure of progress towards gender equality in education" (Subrahmanian n.d.). Equity is the process of treating girls and boys fairly. To ensure fairness, measures must be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent girls and boys from operating on a level playing field.

For urban Bangladeshi street children, the opportunity to attend an afternoon school near their sweeper's colony epitomizes a dream for fairness and equality.
© 2004 Jean Sack/ICDDRB, Courtesy of Photoshare

Equity does not imply treating all learners the same because many factors could disadvantage students in having a chance to achieve equitable outcomes. Responses may include "equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities" (ILO 2000). A basic principle of equity is equality of opportunity among people: "that a person's life achievements should be determined primarily by his or her talents and efforts, rather than by pre-determined circumstances such as race, gender, social or family background" (World Bank 2005).

Equity mechanisms such as scholarships have been used to achieve gender parity in enrollment. For example, USAID/Egypt has provided over 28,000 girls' scholarships to help alleviate the disparity in boys' and girls' school enrollment (USAID/Egypt n.d.). Additional equity tools such as math and science camps for girls have been implemented to increase achievement and encourage retention. In Tanzania, USAID supported science camps to motivate girls to stay in school. The camps gave many of the girls their first opportunity to conduct experiments using laboratory equipment (USAID/Tanzania n.d.). Equity strategies such as these are needed to eventually attain gender equality over the long term and must be reflected in policies and practices directed toward learners, teachers, and the community. Monitoring progress toward achieving gender equality is also important. Measuring changes over time requires that data be disaggregated by sex to illuminate the differential impact of activities on males and females.

An effective strategy for educating girls needs to include attention to parity and equity simultaneously. Furthermore, "interventions on behalf of girls should be integrated into a coherent overall strategy of education reform" (USAID 2000).

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QUALITY AND EQUALITY

Achieving parity in enrollment remains a critical objective and is fundamental to gender equality. However, focusing on access as the primary issue for girls can undervalue the importance of quality and relevance, with the false conclusion that what happens in the classroom need not be analyzed for possible differences in girls' and boys' opportunities and experiences. Some of the more traditional approaches to increasing parity in enrollment, such as offering parents food or financial incentives to send their daughters to school, treat only the symptoms, not the root causes of inequality. Striking a balance between equitable access, quality, and relevance is one way to ensure a quality education for all learners. A USAID-supported program in Mali, for example, increases demand for education "through improved,

more relevant schooling for girls and boys, by addressing their needs through gender-conscious curriculum and teacher training" (USAID 2007).

Children attend school in the Philippines.
© 2000 Liz Gilbert/David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Courtesy of Photoshare

Quality and equality in education are inextricably linked (UNESCO 2004). Poor or marginalized children, who are more likely to have illiterate parents and less access to reading materials in the home, are more dependent on their teachers for their learning than are better-off children. As a result, poor instruction perpetuates inequities because it is more often the most marginalized children who become school leavers, either through failure or voluntary termination. Research has shown that girls seem to be more sensitive to school quality than boys and that the quality of teachers has a greater impact on the demand for girls' education than for boys' (Kane 2004). For example, a Kenyan study concluded that "factors considered under opportunities to learn – chores, homework, tutoring, punishment, sex ratio, and class size – have slightly different effects on girls than boys" (Mensch and Lloyd 1998). In Malawi, researchers found that teacher behavior and the availability of desks affected girls more than boys (Kendall 2006).

Another important dimension of quality is relevance. Relevance refers to the degree to which the education provided is applicable and relates to learners' present and future. Too often education fails to prepare students for the contemporary labor market and adult life, as there are insufficient training opportunities for youth to acquire the skills needed to earn an income and become self-supporting. USAID's Advancing Employability for a Better Future Project is designed to build the bridge between the education system, professional training providers, and the business community. The project focuses on enhancing the quality of education, while ensuring that Moroccan youth acquire the knowledge, skills, and know how needed to succeed in the work force and in life (Projet ALEF n.d.).

THE MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

There are four main dimensions of gender equality outlined in the framework[1]:

- equality of access,
- equality in the learning process,
- equality of educational outcomes, and
- equality of external results (Subrahmanian n.d.).

Below are brief descriptions of each dimension, accompanied by examples of equity measures implemented to contribute to achieving equality. The examples are primarily derived from USAID education projects.

[1] The Gender Equality Framework has been adapted from UNESCO's work in the development of the report *Gender and education for all: The leap to equality*.

EQUALITY OF ACCESS

Equality of access means that girls and boys are offered equitable opportunities to gain admission to formal, non-formal, or alternative approaches to basic education. Actual attendance, rather than enrollment, is a better indicator of whether access has been achieved.

A boy and girl read at Salt Marsh Primary School, just outside of Montego Bay, Jamaica.
– Kristina Stefanova, USAID, 2005

Interventions

- Situate schools in close proximity to students' homes.
- Form girls' advisory committees in which teachers monitor girls' participation at school and intervene when necessary.
- Raise parents' awareness of their rights and responsibilities in education and of the importance of schooling for boys and girls.
- Reintegrate ex-combatants and other youth affected by conflict by providing non-formal educational activities that emphasize self-discovery, healing, health and well-being, democracy, good governance, and conflict management in addition to basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- Provide scholarships for children at risk to encourage better attendance while simultaneously addressing the importance of education with parents and fostering more positive attitudes in teachers.
- Reach out-of-school children, such as boy herders, through radio instruction provided in distance teaching centers; include literacy and numeracy skill building and livelihoods training.
- Train communities in monitoring access and quality through parent-teacher associations and school management committees, ensuring that women are part of their management.
- Improve the ability of schools to provide educational services through education finance mechanisms that increase spending on quality inputs such as textbooks and decrease parental payments that may inhibit student attendance.

EQUALITY IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

Equality in the learning process means that girls and boys receive equitable treatment and attention and have equal opportunities to learn. This means that girls and boys are exposed to the same curricula, although the coursework may be taught differently to accommodate the different learning styles of girls and boys. Equality in the learning process also means that all learners should be exposed to teaching methods and materials that are free of stereotypes and gender bias. In addition, it means that boys and girls should have the freedom to learn, explore, and develop skills in all academic and extracurricular offerings.

Interventions

- Train curriculum developers, textbook writers, administrators, managers, and teachers in gender awareness prior to developing new curricula.

A school in Bangladesh offers technical education, including basic electrical circuitry, to adolescent girls living in slums.
© 2001 Jean Sack/ICDDRB, Courtesy of Photoshare

- Train teachers in inclusive teaching practices to help them integrate students who have been marginalized due to poverty, ethnicity, language, or gender discrimination.
- Increase school safety and decrease violence by maintaining safe and secure latrines; protecting girls on their way to and from school; abandoning corporal punishment; training teaching staff and students to prevent violence; and enforcing teacher codes of conduct.
- Undertake annual classroom studies to monitor teachers' interactions with boys and girls to ensure equitable student treatment.
- Institute policies that encourage girls' participation in technical training.
- End academic streaming based on gender stereotypes (e.g., girls streamed into the humanities and boys into science and technology).
- Ensure that teachers working in emergency or conflict situations are equipped to help children understand their rights and to provide context-specific knowledge such as landmine safety, first aid, or peace education (INEE 2004).
- Provide accelerated learning programs to help students whose education was interrupted by war or other hardships to achieve grade level equivalencies and potentially re-enter the formal school system.

EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Equality of educational outcomes means that girls and boys enjoy equal opportunities to achieve and outcomes are based on their individual talents and efforts. To ensure fair chances for achievement, the length of school careers, academic qualifications, and diplomas should not differ based on a person's sex. Mechanisms for evaluating individual achievement should also be free of any gender bias. What tests, examinations, and assessments measure tells students what matters and to the extent that these mechanisms reflect a gender bias, they transmit messages to students that can discourage their interest in school or in particular subjects. Results from classroom tests, national examinations, and international assessments can influence boys' and girls' confidence levels and their perceptions of their abilities and what is expected of them. They can also impact what is taught in the classroom and how content is delivered. Where tests or examinations are used to determine promotion into future grades, or other types of educational opportunities, the extent to which there may be bias in these mechanisms is an important consideration when trying to ensure equality of access and equality of outcomes.

Two young women participate in a USAID-supported Girls Science Camp at the Kitogani School in Zanzibar, Tanzania.
–AKDN/Zahur Ramji, 2007, Courtesy of USAID

The results from the 2006 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) illustrate the complexities and the attention required for achieving gender equality. The scores in mathematics indicated that attitudinal differences between girls and boys were far more pronounced than performance differences. Girls reported much lower interest in mathematics, less confidence as mathematics learners, less motivation to use mathematics in the future, and much greater anxiety when learning mathematics.

Boys performed slightly better than girls, but were much more confident and less anxious learning mathematics (Schleicher 2007). Attitudinal patterns of school children are closely matched with current study and career choices. Test scores alone do not indicate whether the playing field has been leveled and whether girls and boys have equitable opportunities to achieve. Even when girls and boys are performing at the same rates, this can still mask inequitable treatment. These findings reinforce the importance of understanding the dynamics in the classroom and what knowledge, skills, and attitudes are being transferred to students and how this can limit children's future possibilities in career choice and future earnings.

Interventions

- Train teachers to understand how their perceptions or expectations of male and female students may influence how they assess students' progress, mark examinations, and provide feedback.
- Include an assortment of question types (prose, diagrams, charts, pictures, tables, etc.) when developing test, examination, or assessment questions to respond to the diversity in students' learning styles.
- Use various question types (multiple choice, essay, short answer, etc.) and weigh the test items to ensure that students with different learning styles have equal opportunities to succeed.
- Balance classroom assessment methods to evaluate group and individual work using verbal and written evaluation tools.
- Review existing tests, examinations, and assessments to determine whether the examples and language used are free of gender bias and stereotypes. Remove any gender-specific content and ensure that examples reflect a balance in girls' and boys' experiences.

PROMOTING STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING IN INDONESIA

Fostering equity and participation is one of the guiding principles of the Decentralized Basic Education project in Indonesia. This USAID-supported project is incorporating gender-sensitive teaching techniques in order to improve the quality of education. One component of the project focuses on enhancing the quality of teaching and learning through strengthened teacher training and improvements in the school learning environment. Teachers are trained in active learning methodologies that help transform the classroom into a dynamic learning environment that engages boys and girls. Classroom activities include small group sessions that give students the opportunity to share ideas and work together to solve challenges. As a result of the trainings, teachers are connecting education to students' realities and encouraging inquiry and reflection among them.

EQUALITY OF EXTERNAL RESULTS

Equality of external results occurs when the status of men and women, their access to goods and resources, and their ability to contribute to, participate in, and benefit from economic, social, cultural, and political activities are equal. This implies that career opportunities, the time needed to secure employment after leaving full-time education, and the earnings of men and women with similar qualifications and experience are equal.

The four dimensions of gender equality are related, but that relationship is complex and not necessarily linear. Parity in enrollment and greater gender equality in schooling can, and often do, coexist with inequalities outside of education. In fact, several studies have demonstrated that educational success for girls does not automatically translate into higher economic status or greater political participation as adults (SERNAM 2004). At the same time, improving opportunities for women in the labor market can

give them the economic means to send their children to school. Achieving equality after learners finish their studies and enter the labor market requires interventions that go beyond the education sector.

Interventions

- Enact and enforce labor laws that ensure equal opportunity and pay equity.
- Conduct social mobilization campaigns aimed at increasing women's and girls' status and value in society.
- Promote legal reforms that ensure women and girls have equal protections and rights with regards to family law, citizenship, property ownership, political participation, inheritance, and the financial sector.
- Provide leadership training for women.
- Promote infrastructure enhancements that encourage economic growth, reduce poverty, improve families' health and well being, and ease the burden on women and girls.
- Develop programs to remove implicit or explicit barriers to women's participation in non-traditional sectors, including targeted recruitment, training, and support initiatives for women.

Viewing programming options through the multiple dimensions of gender equality can generate new ways of thinking about education for all children. A perspective that considers the dynamics between males and females and their respective socioeconomic and political roles will produce better results in women's and girls' education. Such a perspective is also useful for understanding the dynamics that have a positive or negative impact on the education of boys.

The four dimensions of gender equality in education demonstrate that gender parity is not the only milestone against which success should be measured. Educators must understand how stereotypes limit the choices and opportunities for boys and girls and obscure their needs and differences. This understanding will help educators create learning opportunities that will enable all children to flourish and reach their full potential.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure that gender concerns are identified and addressed at the highest level of politics and public policy.
- Recognize that there are myriad entry points for addressing gender inequalities, which include enrollment policies and practices, curriculum relevance, teacher deployment, learning environments, security, new technologies, and resource allocation.
- Ensure that gender concerns are identified and addressed in activities focusing on global issues such as HIV/AIDS and education in emergencies or post-conflict situations.
- Analyze how specific educational programs and policies impact girls and boys differently, taking into account different roles, responsibilities, needs, and interests and address them during the project design process.
- Integrate gender awareness components into pre- and in-service teacher training.
- Incorporate gender considerations into activities to develop curricula and learning materials.
- Identify and report on indicators such as girls' and boys' net and gross enrollment, gender parity in enrollment, equality in educational outcomes, and girls' and boys' completion rates.
- Make interventions for girls more effective by integrating them into a coherent overall strategy for education reform.
- Develop practical tools to support programming staff in designing, implementing, reporting on, and evaluating programs that address equitable access and quality from a gender perspective.

- Develop indicators to better identify and measure progress toward gender equality in education.

CONCLUSION

Quality, retention, and achievement are essential elements of an education strategy designed to ensure that boys and girls maximize their full potential. As the Gender Equality in Education Framework indicates, addressing issues of access is insufficient to ensure that boys and girls receive the maximum benefit from their education. Getting children into school is crucial; ensuring that they stay in school, learn, and achieve requires more. The four dimensions of the framework provide planners with a systematic way of addressing the components necessary for ensuring a relevant, high quality education for all learners. Seizing these opportunities will help move closer to making education not just a lofty ideal, but a reality for millions of girls and boys throughout the world.

REFERENCES

Basic Education Coalition. 2004. *Teach a child transform a nation*. Washington, DC: Basic Education Coalition.

DeJaeghere, J. 2004. "Background paper for workshop 1: Quality education and gender equality." Paper presented at the International Conference on Education: Forty-seventh Session, Geneva.

DevTech Systems, Inc. 2004. *The Safe Schools Program Ethiopia assessment report: April 26 – May 7, 2004.* Washington, DC: USAID.

Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). 2004. *Minimum standards for education in emergencies, chronic crises, and early reconstruction.* n.p.:INEE.

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2000. *ABC of women workers' rights and gender equality*. Geneva: ILO.

Kane, E. 2004. *Girls' education in Africa: What do we know about strategies that work?* Africa Region Human Development Working Paper Series. n.p.: World Bank.

Kendall, N. 2006. "Strengthening Gender and Education Programming in the 21st Century." EQUIP 2 Working Paper. Washington, DC: AED.

Levine, R., N. Birdsall, A. Ibrahim, and P. Dayal. 2003. "Background paper of the Task Force on Education and Gender Equality: Achieving universal primary education by 2015". n.p.: Millenium Project.

Lloyd, C., ed. 2005. *Growing up global: The changing transitions to adulthood in developing countries.* Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

Management Systems International (MSI)/EQUATE. 2005. *A gender analysis of the educational achievement of boys and girls in the Jamaican educational system.* Washington, DC: USAID.

Mensch, B. and C. Lloyd. 1998. "Gender differences in the schooling experiences of adolescents in low-income countries: The case of Kenya." *Studies in Family Planning.* 29 (2): 167-184.

Pande, R., A. Malhotra, and C. Grown. 2005. "Impact of investments in female education on gender equality." Paper presented at the XXV IUSSP International Population Conference, Tours, France.

Projet Alef. n.d. "Découvrir le projet ALEF de l'USAID." Rabat, Morocco: USAID/Morocco. http://www.alef.ma/spip.php?article1.

Psacharopoulos, G. and H.A. Patrinos. 2004. "Returns to investment in education: A further update." *Education Economics.* 12 (2): 111-134.

Save the Children. 2005. *State of the world's mothers 2005: The power and promise of girls' education.* n.p.: Save the Children.

Schleicher, A. 2007. "Student learning outcomes from a gender perspective: What do international assessments tell us?" Paper presented at the World Bank's Global Symposium - Education: A Critical Path to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Washington, DC.

Servicio Nacional de la Mujer (SERNAM). 2004. *Mujeres Chilenas tendencias en la ultima decada: Censos 1992–2002*. Santiago, Chile: SERNAM.

Sibbons, M., D. Swamfield, H. Poulsen, A. Giggard, A. Norton, and A. Seel. 2000. *Mainstreaming gender through sector wide approaches in education: Synthesis report*. London: Overseas Development Institute/Cambridge Education Consultants.

Subrahmanian, R. n.d. "Gender equality in education: Definitions and measurements; Background paper for UNESCO GMR 2003-043". n.p. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/file_download.php/ daa3a7d75587a9ae6_c90e68d961a5229Gender+equality+in+Education.doc.

Summers, L. 1992. "Investing in *all* the people." Policy Research Working Paper 905. n.p.: The World Bank.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). 2003. *The state of the world's children 2004*. New York: UNICEF.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). 2003. *Gender and education for all: The leap to equality*. Paris: UNESCO.

———. 2004. *Education for all: The quality imperative*. Paris: UNESCO.

———. 2007. *Education for all by 2015: Will we make it?* Paris: UNESCO.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID). 2000. "Policy paper: Program focus within basic education." Washington, DC: USAID.

———. 2005. "Education strategy: Improving lives through learning." Washington, DC: USAID.

———. 2007. "President's international education initiative: Expanded education for the world's poorest children; Mali fact sheet." Press release, September 24. Washington, DC: USAID.

———. n.d. Education. Washington, DC: USAID. http://www.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan_africa/sudan/ education.html.

USAID/Egypt. n.d. "Reforming Egypt's education system." Cairo: USAID/Egypt. http://egypt.usaid.gov/Default.aspx?pageid=26.

USAID/Tanzania. n.d. "Science is for girls: Science camp sparks interest in science and math." Washington, DC: USAID. http://www.usaid.gov/stories/ tanzania/ss_tz_science.pdf.

World Bank. 2005. *World development report 2006: Equity and development*. Washington, DC: World Bank.