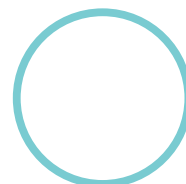# Back2School Project

Gender Equity
and Social Inclusion
Guidelines for the
scaling of Accelerated
Learning Programmes

Graça Machel Trust

November 2023

GRAÇA MACHEL TRUST

IDRC · CRDI
International Development Research Centre
Centre de recherches pour le développement international

Canada

African Child
Policy Forum
ACPF

GPE KIX
KNOWLEDGE INNOVATION EXCHANGE

DIOCESE OF MUSOMA

I_REP
Empower a girl, Empower the community
FOUNDATION

PARS Research
Pan African Research Services Ltd

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE FOCUS ON GENDER IN EDUCATION

Over the last 25 years, progress has been made in improving girls' access to education, with nearly two-thirds of countries having gender parity in education levels in 2019 (UNESCO, 2022). Nevertheless, 129 million girls and young women worldwide are still not attending school. Overall, low-income countries have lower school completion rates for girls than higher-income countries (UNESCO, 2022; UNICEF, 2020). However, country-level statistics do not reflect the disparities across social divisions such as income levels, gender and rural/urban divides. For example, Ethiopia has a gender parity rate of .94, meaning that for every 100 boys in school, 94 girls enrol. However, 70% of those in urban areas complete secondary school, whilst only 40% of rural children do. Similarly, only 26% of those from the lowest socioeconomic groups complete secondary school (UNESCO, 2014). Likewise, girls are less likely to complete both primary and secondary schooling than boys in many contexts (UNESCO 2022). Thus, at the local level, there is a need to understand how gender and other forms of social exclusion impact enrolment, retention and completion of education.

Traditional gender roles often prioritise boys' education over girls', hindering girls' schooling and reinforcing stereotypes (Van der Vleuten, 2016; Quing, 2020). However, even in contexts where girls are enrolled in school, gender inequalities within the school environment can hinder their learning and prevent them from entering occupations considered suitable for men (Tomasetto, 2011, Talbani et al, 2000). In addition, early marriage and pregnancy, as well as harmful cultural practices, limit girls' enrolment and achievement in education (Buhl-Wiggers, 2022; Dube 2015). Thus, understanding local gender dynamics is essential to addressing barriers to girls' education.

Within the school environment, there are also several gendered challenges that students face. Many teachers hold biases favouring male students in subjects like science and math (Reilly et al., 2019; Ruhle, 2022). Gender norms and imbalances also contribute to School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) involving verbal, physical, and sexual abuse. School-related gender-based violence disrupts learning, self-esteem and well-being, leading to lower academic achievement and potential depression. It also causes absenteeism and dropouts, increasing risks like adolescent pregnancies and HIV/AIDS transmission (Badri, 2014).

Although gender disparities on education have been well documented, what is clear from the discussion above is that these intersect with other forms of vulnerability to shape a child's educational success. These include whether they live in a rural or urban area, their socioeconomic status and their community and domestic responsibilities. Thus, in this guideline, we focus on Gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) to capture these intersecting forms of vulnerability.

1.2 EXISTING PROMISING PRACTICES

Schools around the world have developed interventions to address the problems noted above. They can be summarised as follows:

Targeted Outreach and Awareness Campaigns: Several schools have made efforts to develop targeted outreach and awareness campaigns. These campaigns tend to engage with communities, parents, and local leaders to challenge gender stereotypes, dispel myths about girls' education, and highlight the importance of educating both girls and boys.

Safe and Inclusive Learning Environments: Creating safe and supportive learning environments is essential for encouraging girls to attend and remain in school. Typical interventions have included providing gender-sensitive facilities, including separate toilets and dormitories for girls. Additionally, addressing issues related to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) is crucial. By implementing strict anti-SRGBV policies, training teachers and staff, and fostering a culture of respect, schools have attempted to become secure spaces where girls can thrive academically and personally.

Teacher Training and Gender Sensitisation: Educators play a pivotal role in shaping students' experiences and perceptions of education. Several existing teacher training materials incorporate GESI into teaching methods. This training can equip teachers to recognise and address their own and others' biases, promote gender equality in their classrooms, and create an inclusive environment that empowers all students.

Curriculum Development with Gender Perspectives: Promoting GESI within education requires integrating gender perspectives into curricula, textbooks, and learning materials. Whilst the content of the curriculum is inflexible in many countries, it is possible to teach it in ways that challenge stereotypes, present diverse role models, and encourage critical thinking about gender roles.

Scholarship and Incentive Programs: scholarship programmes for at-risk students have been one intervention to promote completion by helping to alleviate financial barriers, incentivise families to prioritise girls' education, and encourage girls and other marginalised groups to complete their schooling.

Engaging Communities and Challenging Gender Norms: Promoting gender equality requires engaging communities on harmful gender norms and stereotypes. There are several examples of awareness campaigns, workshops, and community discussions to sensitise parents, teachers, and community leaders about the value of girls' education. By challenging views that prioritise boys' education over girls', interventions have attempted to shift perceptions and attitudes towards a more equitable educational environment. Many of these programmes have also tried to reduce harmful practices that limit girls' access to education, such as early marriage or pregnancy and female genital mutilation (FGM).

Mentorship and Role Models: Introducing mentorship programs and providing access to female role models can be instrumental in encouraging girls to aspire to higher levels of education and careers. The project can facilitate interactions between successful women from various fields and young girls, showcasing the possibilities that education can unlock. These interactions can help girls envision their future potential beyond traditional gender roles.

1.3 ABOUT THE BACK2SCHOOL PROJECT

The Back2School project aims to generate evidence to support scaling the impact of Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALPs) for out-of-school girls in rural areas of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania. The project approach involves scaling the impact of promising strategies and techniques for getting more rural out-of-school girls to enrol, be integrated and retained in school and complete their education with quality learning outcomes. In this regard, the project approach involves scaling research impacts to balance the magnitude, variety, equity, and sustainability of effects for the public good. Secondly, it seeks to promote a systematic, critical, and principles-based science of scaling that will increase the likelihood that research and innovation will benefit society.

The Back2School project built on experiences and lessons learnt from the implementation of Complementary Basic Education for Tanzania (COBET) model that was supported by the Graça Machel Trust (GMT) from 2016 to 2018 in collaboration with the Mara Alliance - an alliance of governmental and non-governmental organisations working to combat child rights violations in the Mara region of Tanzania.

The COBET model is an accelerated learning program for out-of-school children (OOSC) aged 8-18. Introduced in 1999 by the Government of Tanzania, it aims to provide out-of-school children with the opportunity to learn through a specially designed curriculum to support them to 'catch up' and attain age-appropriate education competencies (numeracy and literacy) and life skills and eventually integrate into the formal education system. The COBET programme targets children who have never enrolled in school as well as those who have dropped out.

These Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) guidelines aim to support the GMT's efforts to ensure that Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALPs) are implemented with due attention to equity and social inclusion.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

This guideline was developed in three phases:

1.4.1 PHASE 1: DESK REVIEW

During this phase, the researcher focussed on understanding the project implementation thus far. A desk review was conducted to find other programmes with similar goals to Back2School. A second comprehensive review was undertaken to collect examples of mainstreaming GESI into early education.

1.4.2 PHASE 2: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

During this phase, interviews were conducted with the implementing partners and other stakeholders working on the Back2School project. The interviews focused on understanding the gender and social exclusion challenges evident in these contexts, the approach taken to education, the gaps in creating an inclusive educational environment and the ideas and suggestions that those implementing the project had for improving GESI.

1.4.3 PHASE 3: PILOTING

This document was drafted drawing on the desk review and interviews described above. Once the guideline was drafted, it was shared with colleagues from the GMT and the implementing partners for comment. After revision, it was shared with those who would be using the guidelines in future. This included head teachers, teachers, policymakers and community members, particularly those involved in the Parent-teacher associations. Their inputs were then used to edit the guidelines so that they reflected local needs and experiences.

1.4 HOW TO USE THIS GUIDELINE

The guidelines were created for four specific audiences. The first is the Head Teachers of schools, who create an enabling environment within schools to promote GESI. The second is teachers who would be implementing GESI activities within their teaching content and practices. The third is community members who are part of the school community and reproduce the social norms that impact GESI. Finally, a separate policy brief has been developed for policy makers who are responsible for creating a conducive policy environment for equitable access to school.

The guidelines are designed so that they can be used independently. For example, teachers can use the guideline for teachers without having to review the whole document. Similarly, each guideline has two parts. The first part briefly overviews the existing knowledge on the topic and areas where the research evidence suggests interventions might be most helpful. For example, the guideline aimed at school principals focuses on four key areas where, based on existing research, principals might intervene to promote GESI. The second part is a series of practical interventions. These suggested interventions are not comprehensive but illustrate how GESI might be integrated into the work of the different roleplayers. Users should adapt these to their context or use the methods for different purposes. It is expected that different schools will use different parts of the guidelines and they will adapt them as necessary.

2. GUIDELINES FOR KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO IMPROVE GESI IN ALPS

2.1 GESI GUIDELINE 1: THE ROLE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN PROMOTING GESI

2.1.1 WHY DO WE NEED GESI IN EDUCATION?

Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in education plays a vital role in the well-being of society. The three documented positive impacts of GESI in education that have been shown through research and were emphasised in the key informant interviews for this study are:

1.   GESI in education leads to improved human rights and societal well-being,

2.   GESI in education leads to accelerated economic development and

3.   GESI in education leads to improved livelihoods and decreased state dependence.

This guideline outlines evidence on how GESI can positively affect these three areas. In particular, this guideline is targeted at school leaders and identifies interventions based on current research that are within the control of school leaders. It is designed to give school leaders examples of good practices based on research evidence.

2.1.2 IMPROVED HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIETAL WELL-BEING

GESI in education results in improved human rights and social justice for all. For example, it is estimated that 37% of young people in East Africa have no or incomplete primary education in 2020 (see www.statista.com). In addition, 49% had lower secondary education, and 14% had an upper secondary or tertiary education. These overall statistics, however, belie significant gender disparity in school enrolment rates, school dropout rates, the extent of secondary schooling and absenteeism. Often, it is girls who are out of school. All three countries where the GMT-supported ALPs have been piloted have national-level support for the Social Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 4 sets the following target:

By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

Beyond the ethical demands for social justice, equal education has a significant ripple effect on society. GESI in education has the obvious impact of increasing the livelihood opportunities for girls. As women take up employment outside the home, families tend to become more equitable, and women's ability to resist gender-based violence and gender inequality in their families and communities increases (World Bank, 2001; King et al., 2008; Klasen et al., 2009). Education thus has the long-term effect of allowing women to resist harmful cultural practices such as FGM as they gain greater independence and autonomy in their families and communities. Education can also lead to more gender-equitable attitudes within society, although this impact has been inconsistent in the research evidence.

2.1.3 THE IMPACT OF GESI EDUCATION ON DEVELOPMENT

One of the most compelling reasons for interventions that support GESI in education is its impact on development. For example, research has shown that gender-equitable education results in lower fertility rates, lower child mortality, reduced poverty, and improved health among the children of women who benefit from education (Klasen et al., 2009). Higher education has a more significant effect when girls' education is prioritised than when gender inequalities in education are allowed to persist (World Bank, 2001; King, Klasen, and Porter, 2008).

In addition, GESI in education reduces the population's dependency on the state (Klasen et al., 2009). In all countries that have implemented ALPs with the support of the GMT, this relationship between societal well-being, individual well-being and GESI in education is recognised. For example, the Kenyan Ministry of Education has as its vision: A globally competitive education, training, research and innovation system for sustainable development" (https://www.education.go.ke/vision-mission).

2.2 THE ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERS IN PROMOTING GESI IN EDUCATION

In addition to the economic benefits of GESI in education, early education is central to children's development of values. This occurs through overt education and through the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum refers to the "values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms and values which are important parts of school function, ceremonies and the quality of interpersonal communication" (Çubukçu, 2012). It plays an important part, alongside the formal curriculum, in establishing the character and values of a school. Evidence in much of Southern and East Africa suggests a complex set of factors, including parenting style, social norms and economic factors that restrict opportunities for GESI. In this light, school leaders play an essential role in creating an ethos of inclusion through their management and policy-making activities.

As important as they are, school management, policies, and practices are insufficient to create gender equity and social inclusion alone. Studies from Bangladesh have shown that, very often, increases in gender-inclusive education do not necessarily shift social norms (Chisamya et al, 2011). In other words, creating social change is difficult and complex. Nevertheless, much of the research suggests that leaders of schools are also in a critical position to shift social norms and influence community attitudes towards GESI. This is covered in more detail in the guidelines for communities below. Most notably, school leaders set the tone for the values and guiding principles of the school and so are an essential element of GESI mainstreaming in education. In many ways, they form the framework around which the other GESI practices identified in this series can be implemented. Without this leadership, teachers and parents may not feel empowered to implement GESI interventions in their everyday educational practices.

In addition to creating sound values, quality and equitable education requires a policy framework and management systems that value and support social justice initiatives (Aikman & Unterhulter, 2005; Aikman & Unterhulter, 2011). A wealth of information reflects how equality can be created by providing a conducive management environment.

A number of the ALPs that form a part of this study have developed promising practices that can promote GESI. Integrating these promising practices into other regions' ALPs and ensuring that they are mainstreamed as the ALPs are scaled up will ensure that the effective mainstreaming of GESI will occur incrementally. The guideline below integrates these local promising practices with ideas and promising practices from other parts of the world to provide school leaders with examples of how they might promote an inclusive school environment.

The following key activities have been identified as central to creating this inclusive environment. These are areas that school leaders can directly influence to promote GESI:

• Creating a culture of inclusion and respect for diversity

• Teacher training and recruitment

• Record keeping and performance management

• Designing safe and inclusive school infrastructure

Each of these will be discussed below in more detail with practical examples of how they may be implemented.

2.3 GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL LEADERS TO PROMOTE GESI

2.3.1 CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

School leaders can play an essential role in ensuring an inclusive school culture. One method for ensuring this is by explicitly including GESI in the school's vision and mission statement. All schools in Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia must have a school mission and vision, and in some instances, this needs to be displayed in the front of the school. This sets the tone for stating the values that guide the school culture.

Activity 1:

Brainstorming questions that can promote a culture of GESI.
Identify the opportunities to speak out about the importance of GESI (school assemblies PTAs, staff meetings, sports).

Identify moments where learners and teachers can take on roles that disrupt gender stereotypes.
Identify possible GESI champions.

An example might look like this:

| CONTEXT	TOPIC	PRIORITY/ TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
School Assembly	Discussing the vision and mission of the school with an emphasis on GESI	Will make sure some aspect of GESI is in the head teacher's speech one a term. Can be implemented immediately Priority 1	Head teacher	A revised vision statement in line with GESI best practice within 6 months
Staff meetings	Discussions with all teachers about how to include GESI in their teaching practices. All teachers to bring examples of their interventions to discuss	Priority 2. Lead by head teacher with inputs from all teachers	Head teacher	1 case study to be presented by a teacher each month at the staff meeting
School management meetings	Review of the following policies to include and explicit statement on GESI as well as non-discrimination and GBV: • Discipline policy • Code of conduct for teachers • Code of conduct for students	Priority 2. To be done alongside the curriculum interventions	Nominated teacher to lead the process	All policies reviewed edited and approved within 1 year

🏃 **Activity 2: Creating a public statement about GESI**

The learners and educators could collectively review and reflect on the school vision and mission statements. They can be asked:

1. Does the vision statement say anything about GESI?

2. What does it say? Is the focus on gender, ethnicity, intersectional exclusion etc?

3. Can it be edited to emphasise GESI? What would this look like?

Example: Creating a culture of inclusion

Head teachers can find many examples of school mission statements and visions online. These can be adapted to the needs of different schools. In the Back2School project, several examples of schools have mission and vision statements that are highly visible and emphasise inclusivity. Schools can use gatherings such as assemblies and parent meetings to publicise these values. The following signs displayed in schools are examples:
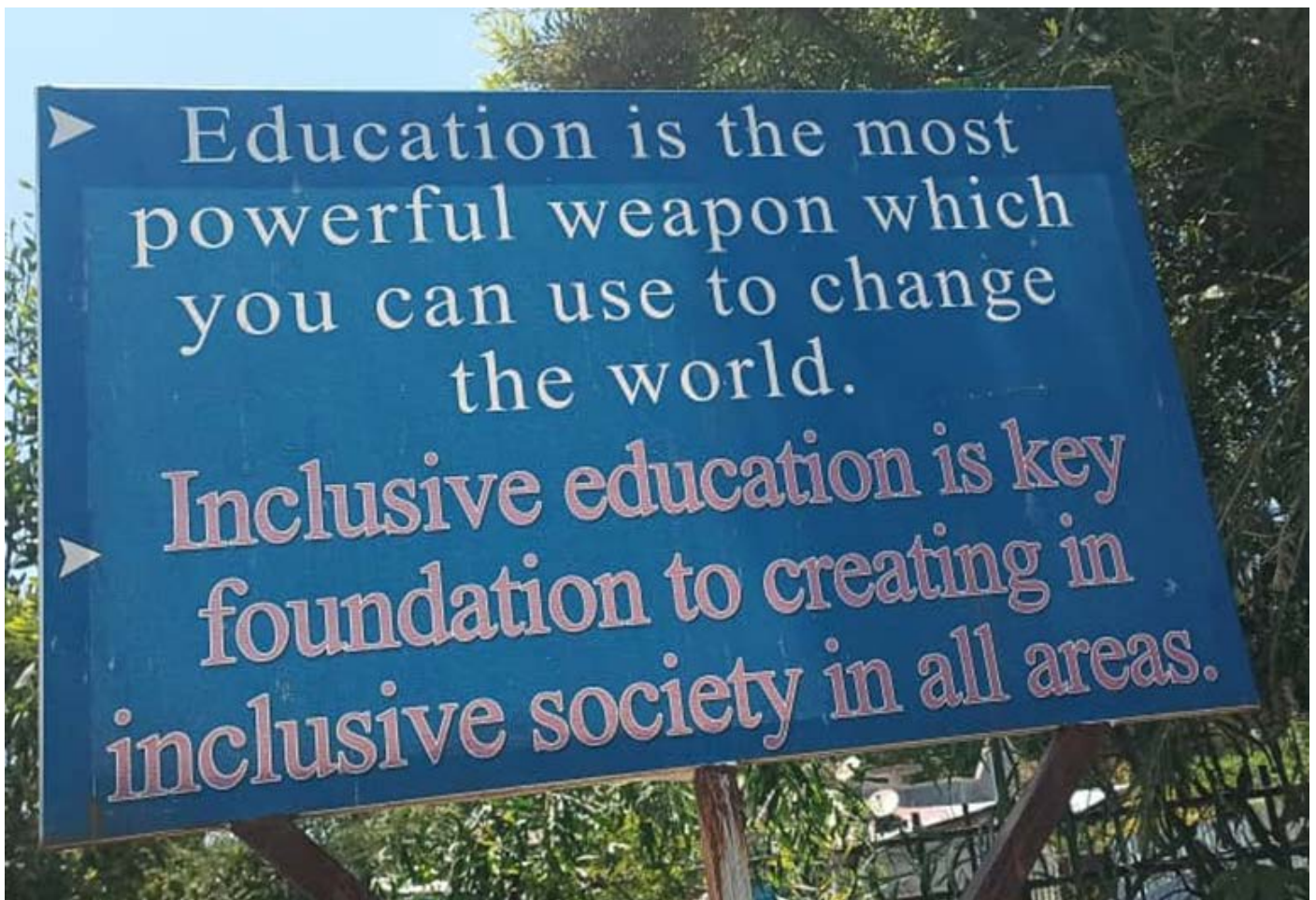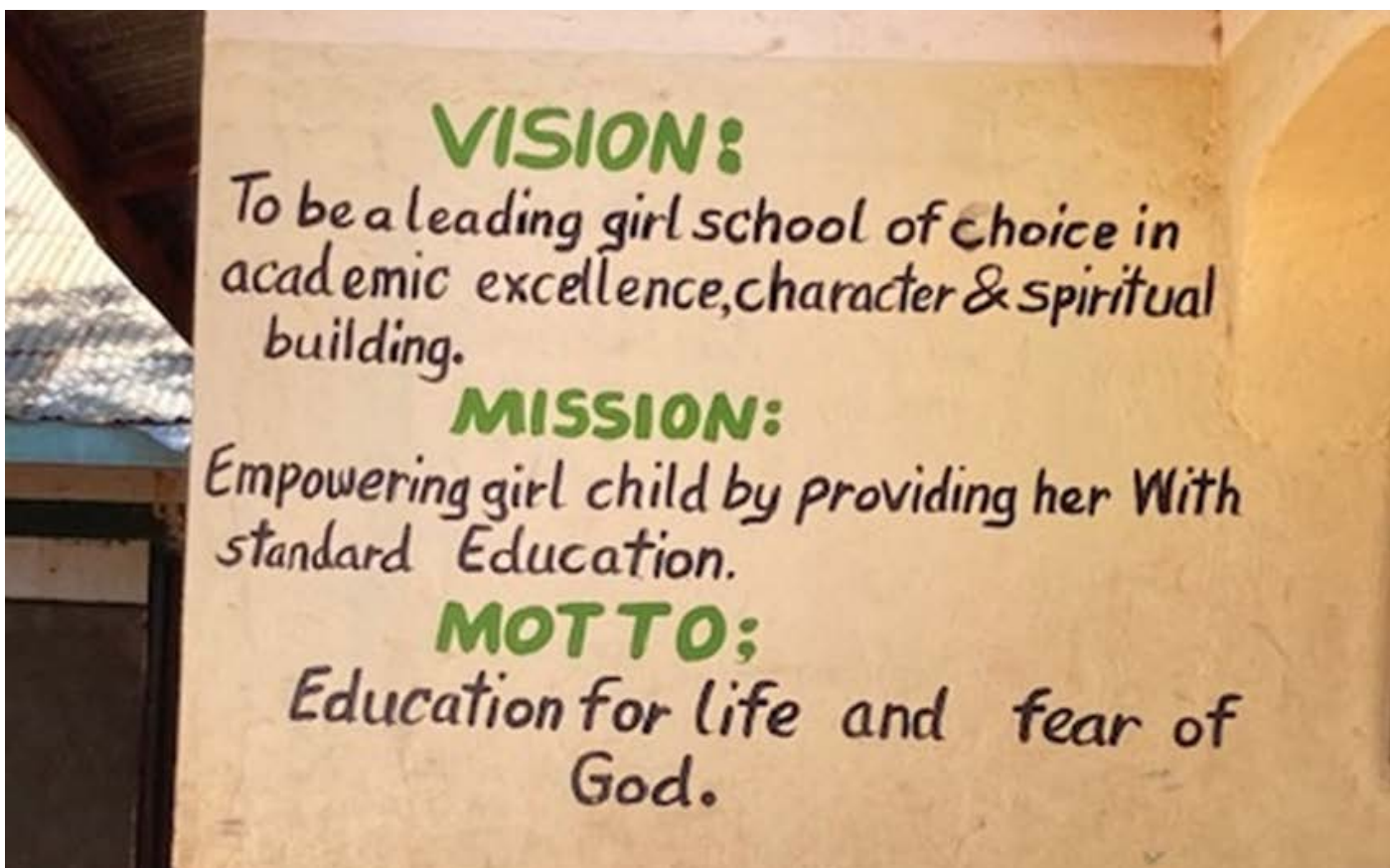
Similarly, the school code of conduct for teachers and students could emphasise non-discrimination and set clear penalties for discriminatory behaviour. Using the guiding questions listed above, each school can reflect on their own vision, mission statement and code of conduct to assess its promotion of GESI.

2.2.2 QUALITY TEACHER TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT

The recruitment and training of teachers is an opportunity for school leaders to ensure that principles of GESI are mainstreamed into the school. Each stage, from recruitment to training to classroom pedagogy, offers opportunities for GESI mainstreaming. Even before recruitment, GESI can be included in the process. Whilst Head Teachers may not always be able to control the recruitment of teachers, they may influence the hiring of paraprofessionals/facilitators and the selection of representatives for the Parent Teacher Associations and school committees.

The following activities can be helpful before the interview stage to ensure that facilitators/paraprofessionals with awareness of GESI are hired:

- Identify the gender age, and ethnic breakdown of the staff in the school.

- Where are the gaps or inequalities? Is there adequate gender representation among staff? Is there a need for greater representation of people living with disabilities?

- What are the gaps in staff expertise? For example, are there gender experts on the teaching staff? Are there suitable staff to work at a 'gender desk' (see below)? Is there someone in the community with a particular standing or importance who can act as a champion for GESI?

In addition, in many schools, teachers have developed innovative strategies for including awareness of GESI in their everyday teaching. Head teachers can play a central role in ensuring that there are opportunities for teachers to share these ideas. These might be with other staff in the school or with other nearby schools.

In regional teachers' workshops, the following can act as guiding questions to share good practices in GESI in the classroom:

- Please give us an example of a GESI lesson plan.

- Can you describe how you ensure inclusivity in your teaching practices?

- What can be done to improve the access of girls, children with disabilities and other marginalised groups?

- What, in your view, are the critical barriers to the recruitment, retention and completion of vulnerable students?

- How can some of these challenges be addressed?

2.2.3 MANAGEMENT AND DATA COLLECTION PRACTICES

An essential role for school leaders in promoting GESI is to ensure that information is collected that can allow for a meaningful understanding of the patterns of vulnerability and can assist with planning the appropriate interventions. As mentioned in the introduction to this guideline, national-level data suggests that girls are more likely to fail to enrol in school, have higher rates of absenteeism and are less likely to complete schooling. However, there are often crucial local-level gender dynamics that influence which children are vulnerable and in what ways. Understanding these and using data as evidence when engaging with policymakers, parents, and other stakeholders can be essential in responding appropriately. Below are some examples of what information might be helpful and how to collect it. The suggested content areas in the tracking sheets are derived from key informant interviews about the nature of the barriers to GESI in schools.

Tracking sheet 1

Absenteeism and attendance

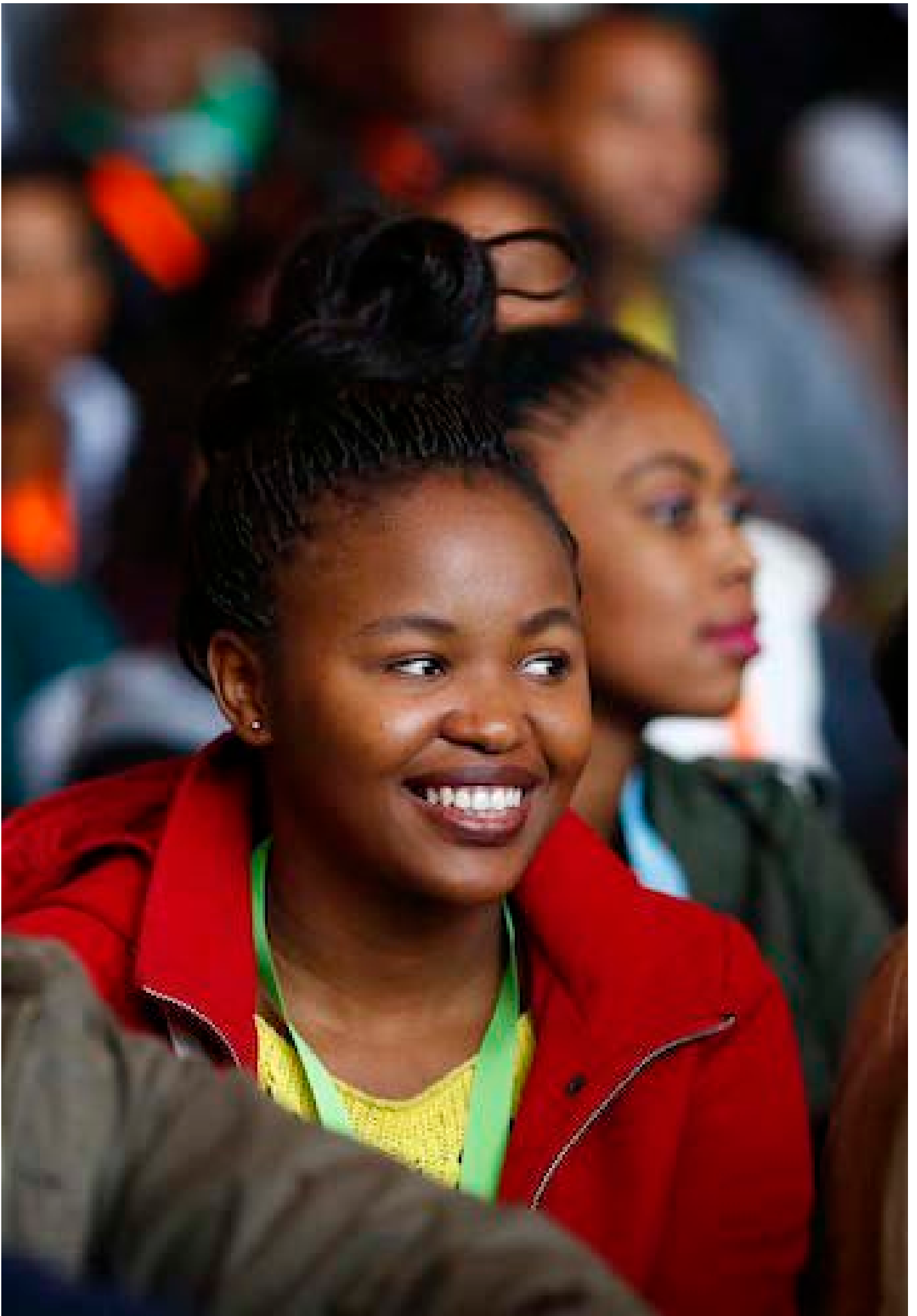| STUDENT NAME	STUDENT GENDER	DATE/S ABSENT	VULNERABILITIES NOTED	RECOURSE TAKEN

Tracking sheet 2

Incident report sheet

STUDENT NAME	STUDENT GENDER	DATE	NATURE OF THE INCIDENT. PLEASE EXPLAIN IN DETAIL THE INCIDENT AND THOSE WHO WERE INVOLVED	RECOURSE TAKEN

Tracking sheet 3

Enrolment and retention

STUDENT NAME	STUDENT GENDER	DATE/S ABSENT	VULNERABILITIES NOTED	RECOURSE TAKEN

Tracking sheet 4

School performance and educationally at risk students

STUDENT NAME	STUDENT GENDER	MARKS OBTAINED	SPECIFIC VULNERABILITIES E.G. LOW SES, GENDER EXCLUSION	RECOURSE TAKEN

Tracking sheet 5

Children's psychosocial well-being

[This tracking sheet can be developed from the teachers psychosocial monitoring exercise described in the guidelines for teachers below].

STUDENT NAME	STUDENT GENDER	PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS IDENTIFIED	RECOURSE TAKEN

Putting it all together: Creating a GESI annual plan

6 monthly, this data can be consolidated to identify progress and ongoing gaps in promoting GESI. At the end of the year, an annual GESI plan can be developed for the next academic year.

Guiding questions for the GESI plan

With teachers and parents (separately), discuss the following questions:

Divide participants into five groups. Provide each group with one set of tracking sheets for the year. Make sure any confidential information is anonymised, such as names of students.

Ask each group to answer the following questions:

In the area your group focuses on, list the main successes in mainstreaming GESI?

These could include innovative pedagogies or curriculum implementation, changes to the demographic composition of the learners/PTA/teachers/school management.

List areas of ongoing gender inequality and social exclusion. Why do they continue?

What can be done about them next year?

Summary of GESI plan for the following year:

Focus area	Priorities listed in the previous year	Areas of success / improved GESI	Ares of ongoing challenge	Priority areas for intervention in the following year	Indicators of success
Absenteeism	Reduce absenteeism or girls who are menstruating	Overall reduction in absenteeism	Girls from low SES groups continue to be absent during menstrual cycles	Create special rooms for girls to have privacy and cleanliness. Fundraise for access to sanitaryware or bathrooms	Reduce absenteeism by 10%
Incidents					
Enrolment					
Academic performance					

2.2.4 SCHOOL SAFETY AND INCLUSION AUDITS AND GESI

Safety and inclusion audits are helpful for getting young people's perspectives included in a school's planning activities. Whilst there are many ways to go about it, one of the most common is a mapping exercise that can be used to evaluate the existing school infrastructure and design to ensure that it promotes GESI.

Before you begin:

Who:

Give careful thought to who should facilitate the audit exercise. The facilitator should be a trusted person, preferably not a teacher or person in authority. A facilitator who is not a school member can be helpful because it requires the students to explain the school in detail. A young but professional member of the community would be ideal.

What:

Try to use colourful paper, pens, markers etc. These can help make the exercise relaxed and fun. Don't worry about drawing nicely or accurately.

How:

Set ground rules: Emphasise the importance of confidentiality and not discussing who said what after the session, allowing everyone a chance to speak and allowing differences of opinion. Emphasise that there is no right or wrong answer. Separate groups of boys and girls will be helpful to bring out gender differences.

In groups:

ask children to draw a map of their school on a big piece of paper. It doesn't have to be accurate it is ok be very rough. List all the important places e.g. classrooms, play areas, eating areas, staff-only areas, bathrooms etc. They can walk about whilst doing the map to point to locations and ensure they haven't forgotten places.

- Look at your map and ask learners to answer the following questions:
- What are the places where you feel safe? Highlight them in one colour;
- What are the spaces that you feel unsafe? Colour these in another colour;
- What are the fun places! Choose a fun colour for them;
- Who can you go to for help? For example, if you feel scared or sad. These could be in your school in your community. In your peer group, your family etc What do they help with?
- Look at your colourful map! What would you like to change? And what do you like about your school?

Analysis questions for facilitators:

What are the gender differences in the students' responses?

What are the key places of danger? What is the nature of the danger they identify? Who are they dangerous for, and who are they not dangerous for (e.g. for disabled students? young girls? etc)

What are the key places of exclusion? For whom? What form does the exclusion take?

Are there vulnerable groups who need dedicated safe spaces? What would these look like?

What are the safety resources that the students identified? Are these resources that can be enhanced?

Good practice example:

In Tanzania, every school is required to have a gender desk. The gender desk includes a chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer and two pupils, one boy and one girl from each class. The gender desk monitors incidents of gender-based violence and gender discrimination and reports these incidents through the government structures as necessary. Although this is a government requirement, not all schools have active gender desks.

Two schools, however, had gone a step further than creating gender desks. One school argued that reporting to the gender desk can intimidate pupils. They, therefore, chose students and trained them to be peer mentors. These students could hear the concerns of others and get support from teachers to deal with them as needed. This way, the system was designed to be less intimidating to children. Another school had created a suggestion box for members of the school community to raise concerns anonymously. They said they opened the box publicly before the School Committee with teachers and parents present. The issues raised in the suggestion box are then read and responded to privately. Initially, they said they had about 20 issues per week ranging from GBV to poor teaching to administrative challenges in the school. With time, however, the complaints were decreasing.

Several schools have created child safety or gender clubs within the school. In one example, this club comprised 11 children and 2 trusted teachers. The children acted as peer educators and reporters of gender and other kinds of discrimination.

In addition, other schools have a private room for girls. This room provides girls with privacy during menstruation, which teachers and head teachers felt would reduce absenteeism among girls. In most schools, teachers concurred that girls faced additional challenges such as menstruation, lack of sanitary materials and pressure to marry. This is, therefore, a high-risk group. This is addressed further in the guidelines for teachers and community members.

Each of these examples aligns with existing research evidence for reducing absenteeism and dropout of vulnerable children. By implementing these and developing their own strategies using some of the techniques in this section, Head teachers can promote GESI in their schools.

2.3: A GUIDE TO EDUCATORS ON GESI IN THE TEACHING ENVIRONMENT

2.3.1 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN GESI

Whilst many social factors contribute to inequality in education, including political instability, GBV, early marriage and other harmful gendered practices, several factors in the classroom also contribute to the exclusion of girls and other marginalised social groups. Educators play a central role in creating an environment that is inclusive. Without the work of teachers, commitments to GESI by policy makers and Head teachers remain symbolic and will not be implemented in practice (see Chisholm 2005; Chinyani 20120). While teachers often do not write the curriculum, they implement it and can draw on examples and practices that emphasise GESI. Similarly, in some of the countries that form part of this research, the life skills curriculum is not defined, creating a perfect opportunity for topics related to GESI to be introduced. A great deal of existing evidence shows how the content and nature of teaching is one of the most essential factors in promoting GESI. Overall, this can be broken down into three main interventions that teachers have control over. These are:

• Emphasising GESI in the curriculum and teaching it in a way that promotes GESI

• Attending to the hidden curriculum

• Creating inclusive pedagogical practices

2.3.2 EMPHASISING GESI IN THE CURRICULUM

Firstly, they can teach the curriculum content in ways that emphasise GESI. For example, teachers can give equal weight and value to male and female historical figures in teaching a historical concept. Similarly, representing other marginal groups, such as disabled people or people from minority ethnic groups in positions of leadership and social value is important to challenge prejudice (Akpakwu et al, 2024). In a review of the curriculum in Pakistan in 2012 Ullah and Skelton (2012) found that there was extensive gender stereotyping in how men and women were represented in the curriculum, in activities such as sports or leadership and in caring roles. Most significantly, the curriculum reinforced patriarchal notions of family, with men playing very dominant roles in the family.

Extensive research documents the different educational achievements of boys and girls. Until recently, boys have tended to outperform girls, particularly in mathematics and science subjects. However, in some contexts there has been a recent shift whereby girls tend to outperform boys in many areas. Despite this, girls and boys continue to select gender-stereotyped subjects or are less likely to enrol in school in the first place. Subject areas where gender equality have been shown to be a particular problem is in math and science education (Ayalon 2002) sports and physical education (Flintoff 2008) and social studies. Specific interventions in math and science education have debunked the myth that boys show greater aptitude for these subjects and, in contexts where interventions have taken place, girls often perform as well and even better than boys.

A substantial literature suggests that different learners perform best in different kinds of assessments. For example, students who struggle with anxiety in school may perform better in continuous assessment rather than examinations. Teachers need to understand who performs well in which kinds of assessments and why.

2.3.3 THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

One of the most important contributions teachers make to promoting GESI is through the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum refers to the "unspoken or implicit values, behaviours, procedures, and norms that exist in the educational setting." (Alsubaie, 2015: 125). Thus, the hidden curriculum may refer to how the classroom and recreational areas of a school are organised, what behaviours are modelled by teachers in the way that they intersect with each other, what everyday gender norms are undertaken, such as making boys and girls line up separately or leave the class separately, which students are encouraged to speak on which topics and who speaks when in class. Many studies have shown that teachers often reinforce gender stereotypes and encourage rivalry between girls and boys (Omvig 2005; Akpakwu et al, 2024). Norwich & Koutsouris (2020) emphasised the importance of the hidden curriculum in research on social integration. They argued that, despite widespread legislative changes, social integration is unlikely to be effective unless the focus is also on these everyday inclusion practices. They recommend a range of positive practices, such as giving small rewards for equal participation in class (see Akpakwi 2014 for more).

Life skills programmes or 'character education' are useful starting points where teachers can promote GESI. The life skills programme in many countries includes explicit content on discrimination, social inclusion, human rights and gender equality. However, even where this content is not explicitly included, there are opportunities to model GESI in delivering the curriculum. By its nature, life skills subjects offer young people a chance to reflect openly on values otherwise taken for granted. Nevertheless, research shows that this teaching can be incompatible with community values and managing this is a complex task for teachers and principals. Importantly, research has shown apparent class differences in how young people are parented and the values they hold. This is not to suggest that interventions should aim to treat boys and girls as the same in all ways but rather should aim for educational equality and meeting the particular needs of vulnerable children where appropriate. In a study in Tanzania in 2004, researchers found that gender stereotyping existed in the curriculum primarily through the depiction of gender-stereotyped roles, with girls shown in reproductive and caring roles and boys in roles of power and authority. Similarly, family representations tended to emphasise the heterosexual nuclear family (Mkuchu, 2004). Mkuchu (2004) also found evidence of gendered personality traits in the curriculum, such as girls being more naturally caring or more suited to unpaid labour.

In the following guideline, the aspects of GESI that are within the scope of teachers' work are unpacked further to provide practical examples of interventions. Teachers are encouraged to adapt the guidelines to suit the topics and contexts they work in.

2.4 GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS TO PROMOTE GESI IN THE CLASSROOM

As described in the section above, teachers can promote GESI in the classroom in three main ways. The first is through the actual content that they teach to students. The second is through the hidden curriculum, and the third is through the pedagogies used in the classroom.

2.4.1 CURRICULUM DESIGN/PLANNING

One of the most common interventions to promote gender equality in the curriculum is a curriculum analysis. In a curriculum analysis, teachers would undertake a structured analysis of the curriculum in order to assess whether it promotes GESI in its current form and where there are opportunities to promote GESI. In the case of the Back2School project, teachers can give this input as part of each country's ongoing curriculum revision process. The teachers' forums described in the section above can also be meaningful opportunities for teachers to reflect on GESI in the curriculum. The following are helpful questions that can guide this discussion:

Discussion points for feeding into curriculum review processes

Many of the existing ALP curricula have excellent examples of how the curriculum has been written in ways that change gender norms. Teacher training workshops are an important place where teachers from different countries and schools can share curricula and discuss ways to change the curriculum. As most of the ALPs are in the process of revising curricula, teachers with an awareness of GESI need to be part of this process. To ensure GESI in the curriculum revision process the following key discussion point can be included in the process:

Representation in the curriculum

Is there a gender balance in the number of images, narratives and examples used in the curriculum?

If not, discuss how you could you bring in additional examples that would create more gender balance. Look that the content of the references to men and women. Do they reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes. For example, how often are women represented in domestic roles? In leadership roles? Etc. How often are men represented in caring roles?

Are any marginalised groups represented such as those with disabilities or minority ethics groups? How can these be included through the examples in a similar way?

Opportunities for shifting social norms

There are many such examples in curricula such as in the teaching of science concepts there is scope to discuss important female scientists and their discoveries. In the teaching of history there is scope to focus on male and female contributors to history. There may be poems that can be used in a language lesson that speak to issues of discrimination and its impact on marginalised groups.

Look at the language used. Is it gender neutral or gender inclusive? If this cannot be changed then it can be an opportunity to discuss with learners how language shapes our understanding of gender and how we might change the language we use to be more inclusive.

In some countries, a great deal of progress has been made in developing a curriculum that takes GESI into account. Examples from the Tanzanian text can be seen below. Sharing these can be an important way for teachers in other countries to compare and reflect on their curricula. Although the subject is English, the hidden curriculum is evident in how the textbook depicts gender relationships and roles.

Choose the correct word from the brackets to complete the sentence.

Example
What does Mr. Mapunda do everyday?
Mr. Mapunda **washes** clothes every day. (wash, washes)

From the box below, make as many sentences as possible using :I would like to".

take a cup of coffee, dance, sing a song, climb Mount Kilimanjaro, swim, play football, read a story book, ride a bicycle, visit friends, eat a banana, drink soda, cook food.

2.4.2 TEACHERS' TIPS FOR GESI IN THE CLASSROOM

One of the areas where teachers have a great deal of skill is finding ways to make classrooms more equitable. Teachers in the Back2School project refer to this as teachers' tips. Sharing these across the countries and schools is an important way to ensure local experiences are developed and reflected in the ALPs.

Practices of a gender equitable and socially inclusive classroom

These are some of the many ideas that teachers had for making sure that their schools prioritised GESI:

- When doing group work, ensure that girls are group leaders as often as boys, support them in this role and don't allow others to talk over them.

- In class, allow equal talk time to diverse students. And gently silence those who talk too much.

- Challenge stereotypes whenever you hear them. Ask why some children feel one child can do something the others can't.

- Don't divide the classroom into boys and girls. For example, at break don't ask students to have separate girls' and boys' lines. During classroom activities don't have groups of only boys and girls.

- Encourage mixed gender activities. Try to get all students to use different sports equipment, books, toys etc. Have mixed sports activities.

- Reflect on your own language: How do you greet children? Do you say "good morning boys and girls". Rather say "Good morning everyone" Avoid referring to girls as pretty and boys as strong or other similar stereotypes. Rather compliment their work and skills.

- Allow all children access to all materials such as colours, toys, sports equipment .

- Consider what is in the classroom: books, posters etc. Avoid gender stereotypical ones

- Reconsider discipline: do we hit boys? What does this teach?

- Emphasise consent and body safety. And model this behaviour. For example, do not pick students up without first asking if tis OK with them.

These are some additional sources for thinking through tips for GESI:

https://theconversation.com/5-ways-parents-can-help-kids-avoid-gender-stereotypes-154604
https://thinkorblue.com/teachers-reduce-gender-bias-at-school/
 https://www.ungei.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/UNGEI_Learning_Brief-Ending_Gender_Stereotypes_V8.pdf
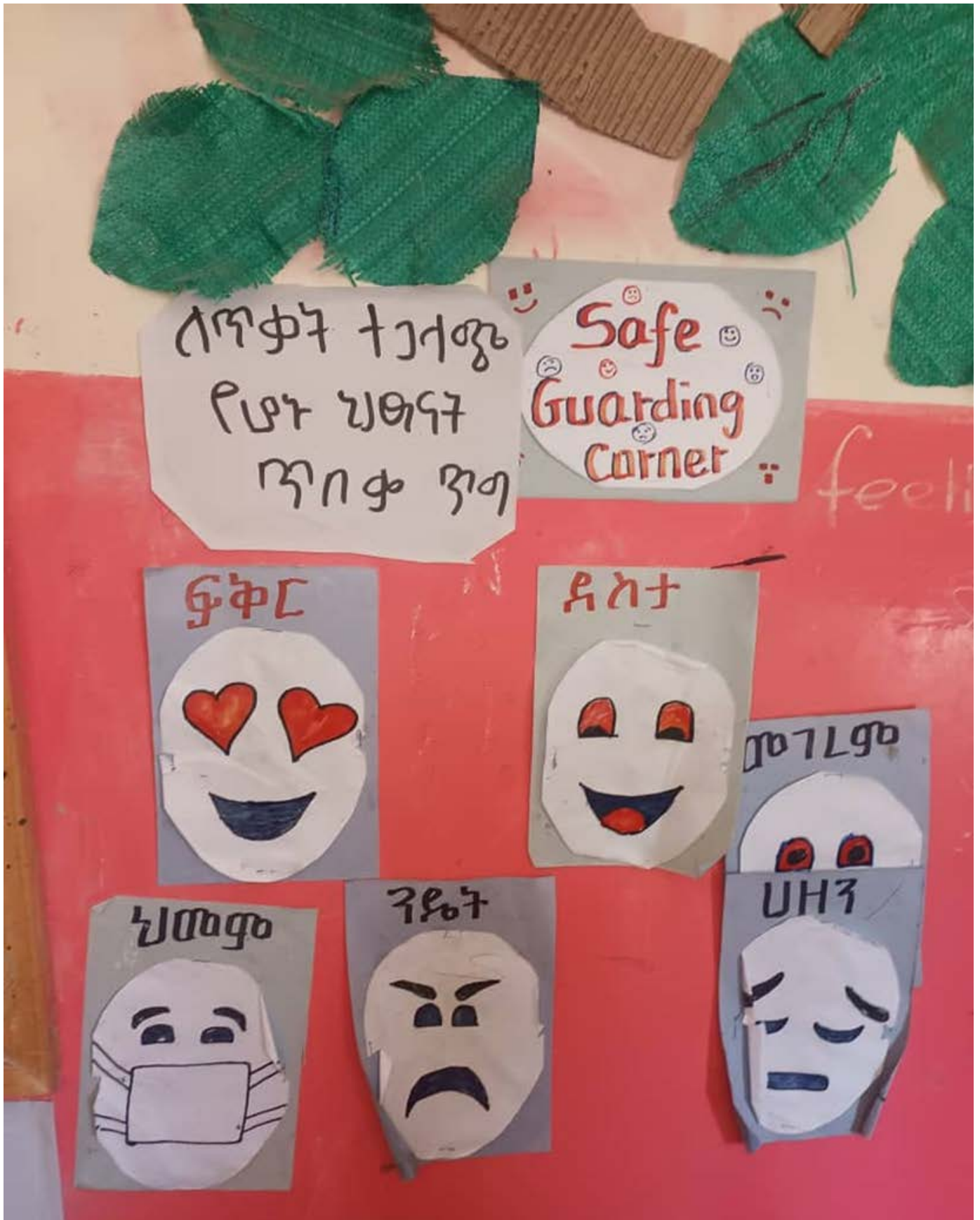

2.4.3 PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING IN THE CLASSROOM

Teachers in the Back2School project repeatedly emphasised the importance of attending to children's psychosocial well-being. Given the stigma of being older than other children and their educational challenges, teachers felt that low self-esteem and psychosocial well-being were often the reasons for children dropping out. One example below shows a novel way to track children's emotional well-being and intervene as needed:

Good practice example: monitoring children's psychosocial well-being

one teacher had developed a 'safeguarding corner'. This is a wall with images of different emotions including happy, sad, sick, angry etc. As children enter the class, they touch an image to describe how they feel so that the teacher can follow up on children who are regularly sad or angry. Importantly, the teacher recorded this on a daily basis, allowing her to track each child's emotional state over time. She also made notes of follow-
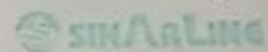
up conversations with the children, which led to information about GESI vulnerabilities. Teachers and Head teachers can use the recording system to identify children who might need additional support and predict who might be at risk of absenteeism or dropout. Images of the system are included below:

የታወቀወሰፕ ትግባኦxc		Sete garding word						
		ፋቅር	ጸለት	ፍC47	ህፍ3	ካGቶ	ሃወጫ ወኢኅ
1 እበበ	ወዐበፕወ	‖‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖			‖	፡ ፡
2 እጹ ኅብማ	እቁዪ	‖‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖			‖‖‖	፡ ፡
3 ኡዪስ	ይሾጿዪ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖‖		‖‖‖	‖	፡ ፡
4 ኡፎቀወ	ኦሬ	‖‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖		‖‖	‖‖‖‖	‖ ፡
5 በፉዕዪማ	ፉዕፈ	‖‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖‖	‖	‖	‖	‖
6 የሾቆ3	ፉዐማ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖	‖		
7 ጠርቶዪ3	ኦዪ47	‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖	‖‖	‖‖‖	‖	‖
8 ኦፉቶዪፕ	ፉዐዒ						
9 ፉC47	ኡዪ5ፉ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖	‖	‖	‖‖‖	
10 ኡዪዪማ	ፉዐዒ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖	‖	‖	‖‖‖	‖
11 ዪዐዪ	ኡዪዪፕ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖		‖	‖	‖
12 ኡፖዪ	ፍዪዐዪ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖		‖‖		‖‖
13 ፉዪዪ	ወፉዪ						
14 Uዪፉ	ኦዪዪ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖	‖	‖	‖‖		‖
15 Uፉ	ኦ3ፉዪU	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖			‖‖	‖
16 Uዐ	ወዪዪU	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖		V	‖‖‖	‖
17 ፉዪዪ	ኡዪፉ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖			‖‖	
18 ወዪዪዪ7	ፉዪ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖			‖	
19 ወዪዪዪ7	ፉዐወዪ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖			‖‖‖‖	
20 ወዪዪዪ3	ኡዪዪ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖			‖‖‖	‖
21 ፉዪ8	ኦዪዪ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖			‖‖‖		‖‖‖
22 ኦዪዐፉዪ	ኦዪ	‖‖‖‖‖	‖‖‖‖		‖	‖	‖	‖

2.5 GESI IN THE BROADER COMMUNITY: A GUIDE TO USING SCHOOLS AS CENTRES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Research has consistently shown that parental involvement in children's education has an impact on choice of study areas and academic achievement (Rafiq, 2013; Dearing, 2006; Desforges, 2003). Smit et al (2007) clearly distinguish between parental involvement and participation. Parental involvement involves the parents' role in bringing the child up at home and supervising any schoolwork done at home. Parental participation, however, refers to being part of school-based activities such as parent/teacher meetings, sports and extracurricular activities and school management. Desforges (2003) showed that parental involvement is a complex concept that can include good parenting in the home, providing a safe environment, parent-child discussions that focus on academic content, modelling of good norms and social values; having regular contact with schools; participation in school events; participation in the work of the school; and participation in school governance (see p. 5). In spite of this, most studies have been conducted in the global north and are focussed on educational achievement. This is because they often work form the assumption that young people are in school.

Whilst existing research consistently finds that parental involvement in school matters for educational achievement, Smit et al (2007) argue that school involvement is sufficient to improve the academic performance of children. Their study showed little impact of parental participation on chidlren's educational attainment. Desforges (2003) concurs that parental involvement within the school is far less important than parental provision of a supportive home environment. In spite of these consistent findings, a number of factors affect the impact of parental involvement on students' academic outcomes. The first is the socioeconomic status of the family. Desforges, (2003) notes that this particularly impacts mathematics achievement. In addition, they note that parent-child discussions have an overall effect on achievement rather than subject-specific ones. In addition, the education levels of parents also have an impact on students' achievement. Garcia et al (2002) show that good parenting in the home environment is likely to have the most significant impact on school success. Barriers to parental involvement in school include language barriers where education may be in a non-mother tongue as well as parents' sense of alienation from schools if they have not benefitted from education (see, for example, Garcia et al., 2002).

Key to promoting parent involvement is positive interactions between the school and parents. Hoover-Dempsey (2005) found that schools are often poorly organised for parental involvement, and barriers include school management systems, an unwelcoming school climate, an unfriendly environment for parents and hierarchical power dynamics between parents and teachers. These will arguably be more acute in contexts where parents do not have high levels of education or language skills. One of the factors that shows an impact on academic achievement is parental values. Reese et al (2016) showed that parental values significantly impacted children's educational achievements. In particular, their attitudes to education. Although for younger learners' assistance with school work can be beneficial, it would appear that supportive values are more important. Authoritarian parenting styles have also reduced school achievement among young children.

Whilst most of these studies have been conducted in the global North, these findings can be used as a starting point to identify possible promising practices in ALPs. Akpakwu et al (2014) show how, to enrol and retain girls, the value and relevance of education must be clear to parents. In particular, parents must believe it will have greater value than marriage and domestic work do. Early marriage and practices such as FGM have a negative impact on girls' schooling. Girls who are most likely to marry as children are those from rural areas, those from poor households and those with low levels of education (Psaki et al, 2014).

Policy change regarding marriage has been taking place across East Africa. Since 2016, marriage before 18 is prohibited in Tanzania. This is in line with the UNCRC, which Tanzania has signed. However, the practice lags behind. One Tanzania Demographic Health Survey (TDHS) 2015/16, showed that one in three women in Tanzania marry before their 18th birthday (UNFPA fact sheet 2015/2016)[1]. They attribute this to three main factors, namely poverty (which sees girls as a source of income through dowry and or labour), a conflict between customary law and state law, low levels of education, which mean there are few employment opportunities and teenage pregnancy. In Kenya and Ethiopia, there are similar laws prohibiting child marriage. However, again the practice is not always in line with the policy. For example, according to Psaki et al (2014) 75% of adolescent pregnancies are within marriage and thus can be deemed to be planned pregnancies.

This research evidence suggests the need for a shift in social norms. Where programmes aimed at changing social norms exist, Psaki et al (2014) indicate that they have tended to have the following focus: "empowering girls with information, skills and support networks; educating and mobilising parents and community members; enhancing the accessibility and quality of formal schooling for girls; offering economic support and incentives for girls and their families; and fostering an enabling legal and policy environment" (p.5). Whilst these may not all be within the remit of an ALP, some of these can be included in the curriculum, and there can be connections to existing programmes within the community.

While many interventions have aimed to promote parental involvement in school, there are few evaluations of these interventions, and it can be challenging to know what works. Furthermore, where interventions have been undertaken, they often do not face the same challenges of low parental education, low SES and gender inequality that are found in the East African context. This can make transferring the results to the East African context difficult.

Overall, three main types of interventions have targeted parents and community members. These programmes promote the immediate connection between parents and schools, community-based education programmes, and parent training (usually psychosocial and health training). What is clear is that home/school collaborations will take time to implement (Desforges 2003), and this area of intervention will likely require short and long-term programs.

Nevertheless, promising interventions aimed at improving school-parent relationships tend to focus on the following:

- Creating a school culture that welcomes parents. This includes but is not limited to good parent-school communication (reports, meetings, regular discussions)

- Advocacy for GESI (value of girls' education)

- Mentorship of girls and provision of role models

- Parenting styles and home management

- Drawing on community resources from disgorges, conduct a community scan of resources, survey parent expectations and approach to involvement, and communicate results back to parents.

[1.] https://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/SR233/SR233.pdf

2.5.1 CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR PARENTS

Creating an environment that welcomes parents can assist in improving parent-school relationships. The table below shows a few quick interventions that can make a more welcoming environment for parents:

- Ensure any posters or visual displays in the school reflect families and are diverse.

- Ensure that any staff that interact directly with parents are friendly and welcoming and focus on an ethos of respect for parents.

- If possible, create comfortable spaces within the school where parents can wait or discuss matters with staff.

- Ask parents for their input often. This could be input into teaching, school structure, times, etc. Show that their opinion matters. Keep a book on ideas from parents – or a suggestion box.

- Ensure regular meetings with parents regarding the pupils' progress.

- Use current parent groups (e.g., PTA or School Committees) to invite all families to participate in school activities and ensure that the PTA's composition reflects gender equality and has representation from marginalised groups.

(adapted from Hoover, Dempsey et al., 2005, p. 118)

2.5.2 PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

A more medium-term strategy is to focus on parent participation in school management practices. All schools include parent-teacher associations. These typically support the school in raising funds for facilities, supporting the paraprofessional/facilitator, or assisting with school maintenance. All of the PTAs require some degree of GESI in the composition of the PTA/School Committee. In addition to these minimum requirements, however, the board of management can create a code of ethics / good practice that includes a statement of non-discrimination and equal access for all children.

Within this framework, different schools are likely to have different needs and priorities. The activity below can assist with identifying local priorities for each school:

Activity 3:

Goal setting for PTAs
- What is the current gender breakdown between men and women on the PTA? How can we reach gender parity?

- Are there particular vulnerable groups who need representation on the PTA? Are there people with particular skills who can benefit the PTA?

- Identify a vision for the PTA that includes a statement on commitment to GESI.

2.5.3 SHIFTING SOCIAL NORMS

In addition to creating a climate that encourages parents to participate in the school, several promising practices suggest that parents provide a pivotal connection to the broader community. They can, therefore, change social norms and generate greater support for the school in the wider community. One way to create a strategy for parents' role is to undertake a community resource audit. One such example for how this can be done is below:

Before the audit begins, answer the following questions:

Who is best to be part of this audit? Ideally, these should be people who have an investment in the well-being of the school and are sensitive to the need to increase the enrollment of girls and vulnerable children in ALPs.

Who are the key constituencies that are part of this community? For example, it might be that parents of out-of-school children are considered key community members as well as organisation leaders such as NGOs, churches and other community leaders. Furthermore, the group may decide that children are a vital community. Describe this in as much detail as possible.

What will the audit focus on? Depending on the school's priorities, this might include identifying the key reasons why girls are out of school or how they might be encouraged to join the ALPs.

Conducting the audit:

Start with the members of the audit team. List the resources that currently exist within the community. Who can do what? For example, perhaps a church runs safe houses for girls who experience GBV. Perhaps there is a community leader who can act as a gender champion for out-of-school girls. List these assets in one column. Don't forget to include infrastructure. For example, a library, resource centre or a sports facility.

It is inevitable that there will be things the audit team do not know or where there are gaps in community assets. For example, there may be a lack of certainty about who can approach parents of out-of-school girls or who can provide scholarships. List these uncertainties in another column.

There are likely to be some community challenges to which there is no obvious solution. This is to be expected. List these in another column.

Finally, create a plan of action. For the known assets, the action may involve tasking one member of the community audit team to approach the person or organisation that can support the school. For the areas where there is a knowledge gap identify a plan for finding out. For example, the team may create community awareness teams that visit families of out-of-school girls and discuss their challenges with their parents to better support these children. Alternatively, it may be agreed that a survey will be sent to community members to ask their opinions about the ALPs and their role in community development.

Good practice example:

In one example, a particularly active School Committee had undertaken a community audit exercise like the one described above. They had begun by brainstorming the businesses and other resources in the community that could support the school. They approached them for sponsorship and donations of materials. They had upgraded the toilets and built two modern classrooms like this. They had also built a strongroom to store examinations and upgraded the teacher housing on the school grounds. In another school, the School Committee ran a feeding scheme for the children and teachers. This was a priority for the school because the teachers routinely identified school feeding schemes as key to children's retention. In other schools, parents provided the feeding schemes. In another school, the PTA mobilised funds for the provision of water and rented out front of the school grounds as an income-generating activity for the school. In addition, parents often provided labour by building structures or planting trees.

2.5.4 GESI CHAMPIONS AND PEER MENTORING

Two of the most promising practices for shifting social norms regarding education are ambassador programmes and mentoring programmes. Many examples of these from around the world can be adapted to local conditions and needs. There was widespread support for these programmes in all the Back2School ALPs, but there was no example of a fully developed ambassador or mentorship programme. Examples from other contexts are therefore provided below:

Good practice example:

- Save the children's 'school me' gender champions training for girls education

- Save the Children has developed a 5-day programme for the training of gender champions to promote girls' education. The training includes information about gender and its impact in various sectors such as schools, the workplace. It also includes materials on gender and power. This training can be undertaken in contexts where there is a lack of gender champions in the community.

These training materials are available online and could be adapted if there is a need to train gender champions. https://www.ungei.org/publication/gender-champions-training-manual.

Mentoring girls:

In Rwanda, mentorship programmes have been working with girls in lower secondary school to encourage them to continue into secondary school. https://issuu.com/intdevmm/docs/030_project_summaries_and_learning_from_rwanda/s/25889411 The project included one-on-one mentoring, girls clubs and saving schemes. They identify two conditions for the success of mentoring programmes. Firstly, they require dedicated mentors who are financially supported. Where this is not the case there tends to be insufficient commentment from mentors given how much work is involved. Secondly, mentoring programmes should be 'owned' by the school and integrated into everyday school life. Thus schools should feel free to adjust existing mentorship programmes to focus on their key priority areas. While the Rwandan programme did not show much impact in preventing dropout, it did show greater financial investment in education, increased confidence among girls, and improved academic achievement.

In the Mokomborero project in Zimbabwe, mentors were past female students from the school. These past students can be an important link between the community and the school. Although most mentoring programmes focus on girls in school, there is also scope to implement mentoring programmes with out-of-school girls.

Similarly, the Amuka Foundation in Kenya has developed a mentoring model to prevent dropout and ensure girls reach their academic potential. The mentoring includes weekly meetings of girls to offer support for education and monthly parent meetings to discuss their role in supporting the girls' education. https://amuka-foundation.org/girls-mentorship-programme-karare/

Elements of these interventions had been included in all of the Back2School ALPs. However, they sometimes lacked a clear focus and rationale, which could be further refined to ensure their success.

2.5.5 INTEGRATING COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.

In this guideline parents are taken as a starting point to create broader community awareness and to support girls in – school. The example below shows how parents can become agents of social change, given their role in the school.

Good Practice example:

The Kathmandu project, funded by UNICEF, is a community-based programme that encourages out of school girls to reenrol and remain in school. This project incorporates many of the lessons supported by evidence and described above. As described above, the area had low enrolment of girls in schooling due to low parent literacy levels, few incentives for educating girls, poverty and few livelihood opportunities for girls after education due to caste discrimination. Parents reported feeling intimidated to attend schools, given their low education levels.

The project began with informal home visits to families with out-of-school girls from low-caste communities. Through community meetings and consultations, it was decided that ad hoc education committees would be established. These committees promoted the concept of girl-child education within the communities. In this way, they acted as the gender champions described above. Seed funding was obtained to support families to send girl children to school. Again, this is in keeping with the global evidence that financial incentives can promote girls' education. Because of the high rates of absenteeism and dropout of girls, particularly if they were struggling with school work, the ECs took on the role of monitoring vulnerable children's progress (as described in the guidelines for school managers above) and then meeting with the girls to support their ongoing schooling. This is similar to the kind of mentoring roles described above.

In this project, there were additional benefits in that the project expanded to include adult literacy classes in addition to schooling for girls. Where this is not possible, links to such classes provided by the government or other NGOs could help encourage adults to see the benefits of education for girls. The project also connected with other income-generating community projects, such as handicraft projects.

The key to the success of this project was the informal community consultations, which led to the creation of an intervention that was tailored to local experiences and needs.
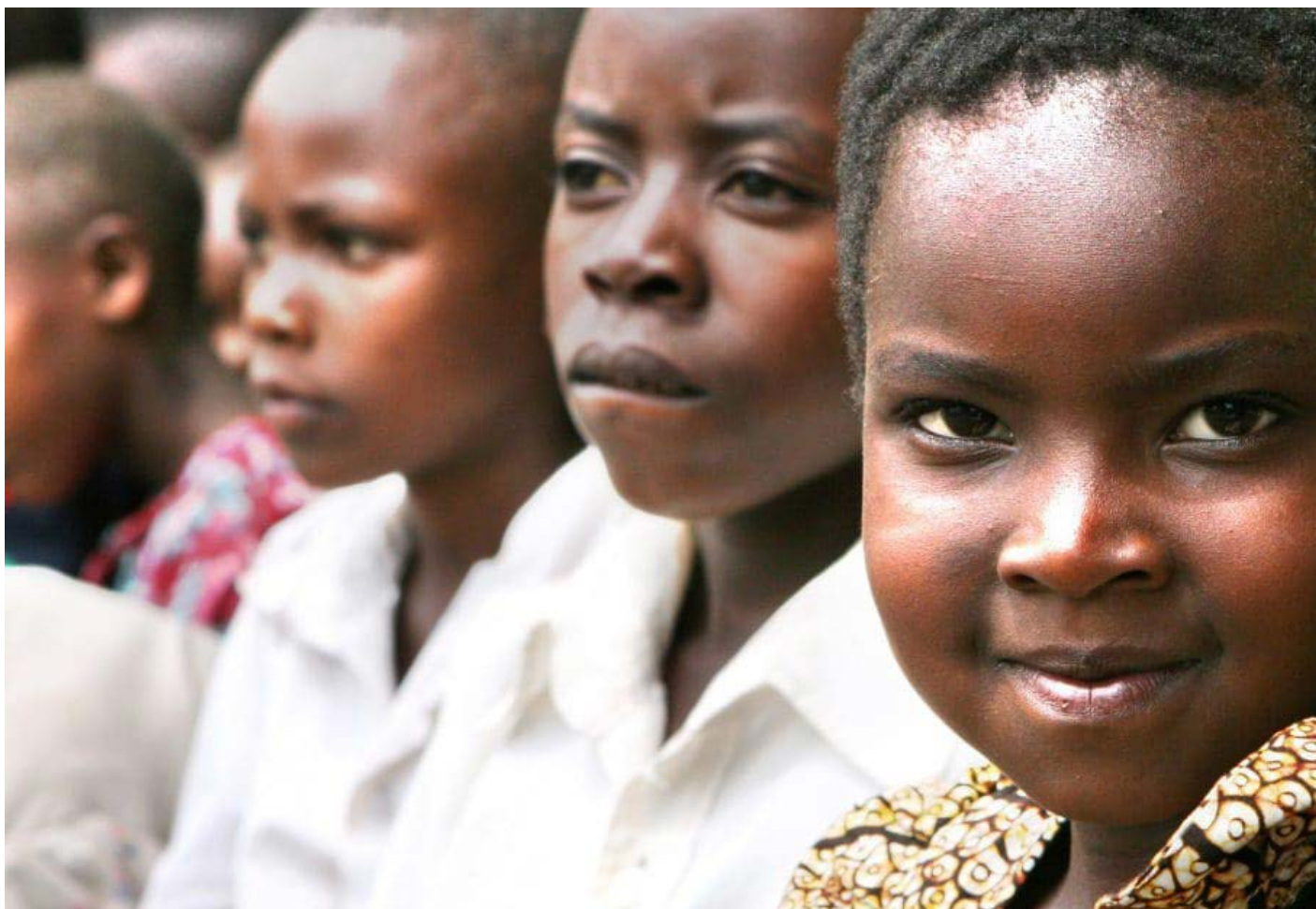
REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- Aikman, S. (2011). Educational and indigenous justice in Africa. International journal of educational development, 31(1), 15-22.

- Aikman, S., & Unterhalter, E. (Eds.). (2005). Beyond access: Transforming policy and practice for gender equality in education. Oxfam.

- Akpakwu, O. S., & Bua, F. T. (2014). Gender equality in schools: Implications for the curriculum, teaching and classroom interaction. Journal of Education and Practice, 5(32), 7-12.

- Alsubaie, M. A. (2015). Hidden curriculum as one of current issue of curriculum. Journal of Education and practice, 6(33), 125-128.

- Ayalon, H. (2002). Mathematics and sciences course taking among Arab students in Israel: A case of unexpected gender equality. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 24(1), 63-80.

- Badri, A. Y. (2014). School gender-based violence in Africa: Prevalence and consequences. Global Journal of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, 2(2), 1-20.

- Buhl-Wiggers, J., Kerwin, J. T., Muñoz-Morales, J., Smith, J., & Thornton, R. (2022). Some children left behind: Variation in the effects of an educational intervention. Journal of Econometrics. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeconom.2021.12.010

- Chisamya, G., DeJaeghere, J., Kendall, N., & Khan, M. A. (2012). Gender and education for all: Progress and problems in achieving gender equity. International journal of educational development, 32(6), 743-755.

- Chisholm, L. (2005). The making of South Africa's national curriculum statement. Journal of curriculum studies, 37(2), 193-208.

- Cubukcu, Z. (2012). The effect of hidden curriculum on character education process of primary school students. Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice, 12(2), 1526-1534.

- Dearing, E., Kreider, H., Simpkins, S., & Weiss, H. B. (2006). Family involvement in school and low-income children's literacy: Longitudinal associations between and within families. Journal of Educational Psychology, 98(4), 653.

- Desforges, C., & Abouchaar, A. (2003). The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievement and adjustment: A literature review (Vol. 433). London: DfES.

- Dube, T. (2015) Gender Disparities in Education Enrollment and Attainment in Sub-Saharan Africa, Journal of Educational and Social Research, Vol. 5 No. 3, pp. 279-284

- Flintoff, A. (2008). Targeting Mr average: Participation, gender equity and school sport partnerships. Sport, education and society, 13(4), 393-411.

- Garcia Coll, C., Akiba, D., Palacios, N., Bailey, B., Silver, R., DiMartino, L., & Chin, C. (2002). Parental involvement in children's education: Lessons from three immigrant groups. Parenting: Science and Practice, 2(3), 303-324.

- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Walker, J. M., & Sandler, H. M. (2005). Parents' motivations for involvement in their children's education. School-family partnerships for children's success, 40-56.

- King, Elizabeth M., Stephan Klasen, and Maria Porter. 2008. "Gender and Development Challenge Paper." Paper prepared for 2008 round of Copenhagen Consensus Project. Mimeographed, Copenhagen Consensus Center

- Klasen, S., & Lamanna, F. (2009). The impact of gender inequality in education and employment on economic growth: new evidence for a panel of countries. Feminist economics, 15(3), 91-132.

- Kamer, L. (2022). East Africa: Youth by Education level 2000 – 2040, Accessed on 06 November 2023, https://www.statista.com/statistics/1233447/distribution-of-young-people-in-east-africa-by-educational-level/

- Ministry of Education . No date. Vision and Mission. Accessed on 07 November 2021, https://www.education.go.ke/vision-mission

- Mkuchu, S. G. V. (2004). Gender roles in textbooks as a function of hidden curriculum in Tanzania primary schools (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Africa).

- Norwich, B., & Koutsouris, G. (2020). An inclusive model of targeted literacy teaching for 7–8-year-old children who are struggling to learn to read: The Integrated Group Reading (IGR) approach. In Inclusive education: Global issues and controversies (pp. 216-233). Brill.

- Omvig, C. (2005). Teacher/student classroom interaction in vocational education. Kentuchy: University of Kentucky.

- Psaki, S. R., Seidman, J. C., Miller, M., Gottlieb, M., Bhutta, Z. A., Ahmed, T., … & Mal-Ed Network Investigators. (2014). Measuring socioeconomic status in multicountry studies: results from the eight-country MAL-ED study. Population health metrics, 12, 1-11.

- Psaki, S. (2016). Addressing child marriage and adolescent pregnancy as barriers to gender parity and equality in education. Prospects, 46, 109-129.

- Rafiq, H. M. W., Fatima, T., Sohail, M. M., Saleem, M., & Khan, M. A. (2013). Parental involvement and academic achievement: A study on secondary school students of Lahore, Pakistan. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 3(8), 209-223.

- Reilly, D., Neumann, D. L., & Andrews, G. (2019). Gender differences in reading and writing achievement: Evidence from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). American Psychologist, 74(4), 445.

- Reese, E., Peterson, E. R., Waldie, K., Schmidt, J., Bandara, D., Carr, P. A., … & Morton, S. M. (2016). High hopes? Educational, socioeconomic, and ethnic differences in parents' aspirations for their unborn children. Journal of Child and Family Studies, 25, 3657-3674.

- Rühle, R. (2022). Mind the Gap: An Analysis of Gender Differences in Mathematics and Science Achievement in South Africa. Department of Economics, University of Stellenbosch.

- Smit, F., Driessen, G., Sluiter, R., & Sleegers, P. (2007). Types of parents and school strategies aimed at the creation of effective partnerships. International Journal about Parents in Education, 1(0), 45-52.

- Talbani, A., & Hasanali, P. (2000). Adolescent females between tradition and modernity: Gender role socialisation in South Asian immigrant culture. Journal of adolescence, 23(5), 615-627.

- Tanzania, T. A. C. A. I. D. S. (2010). Mpango Uendeshaji wa Kijinsia Kwa ajili ya Mwitikio wa VVU Tanzania bara 2010-2012.

- Tomasetto, C., Alparone, F. R., & Cadinu, M. (2011). Girls' math performance under stereotype threat: the moderating role of mothers' gender stereotypes. Developmental psychology, 47(4), 943.

- The DHS Program. (2015-2016). 2015-16 Demographic and Health Survey and Malaria Indicator Survey. https://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/SR233/SR233.pdf

- Tzannatos, Z. (2006). The World Bank, development, adjustment and gender equality. In Feminist Economics and the World Bank (pp. 31-57). Routledge.

- UNESCO (2014). Regional Report on Out-of-School Children in Eastern and Southern Africa. Available: https://uis.unesco.org/en/search/site/Education%20East%20Africa?f%5B0%5D=type%3Adocument

- UNESCO (2022). Global education monitoring report 2022: gender report, deepening the debate on those still left behind. Accessed on 06 November 2023, https://www.unesco.org/gem-report/en/education-and-gender-equality

- Unicef.org. Girls' education. 2020. Accessed 07 November 2023, https://www.unicef.org/education/girls-education

- Ullah, H., & Skelton, C. (2012). Gender Representation in the Public Sector Schools Textbooks of Pakistan. Educational Studies. 1 (12), 1–12.

- World Bank. 2001. Engendering Development. Washington, DC: World Bank.
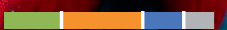
GRAÇA MACHEL TRUST

Investment Place, Block C,
10th Road | Hyde Park, 2196
Johannesburg, South Africa

info@gracamacheltrust.org

www.gracamacheltrust.org

@Graca Machel Trust

@TheGracaMachelTrust

@G_MachelTrust