

A young girl with dark skin and short hair is standing on a dirt path. She is wearing a light pink, short-sleeved dress with a subtle pattern. She is carrying a bright green bag with red accents. The background shows a dirt path, some green grass, and trees under a clear sky. A purple text box is overlaid on the top right of the image.

Gender Discrimination in Education: The violation of rights of women and girls

Global Campaign for Education
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GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR
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*A report submitted to the
Committee on the Elimination of
Discrimination against Women
(CEDAW)*

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PART 1: Introduction

1. There are multiple and diverse links between gender equality and the fulfillment of the human right to education. The pervasive denial of the human right to education experienced by women and girls across the globe – as shown, for example, by the fact that two thirds of the world’s non-literate adults are women – is a striking example of gender discrimination. Education is an enabling and transformative right. As pointed out by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the right to education “has been variously classified as an economic right, a social right and a cultural right. It is also a civil right and a political right, since it is central to the full and effective realization of those rights as well. In this respect, the right to education epitomizes the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights³¹. A strong education system, in line with the principle of non-discrimination, is key for redressing gender injustice in wider society, and for overcoming social and cultural norms that discriminate against girls and women. CESCR has also clearly stated that “the prohibition against discrimination enshrined in article 2 of the Covenant [of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights] is subject to neither progressive realization nor the availability of resources; it applies fully and immediately to all aspects of education and encompasses all internationally prohibited grounds of discrimination”. The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) therefore sees the challenge posed by gender discrimination in education as multiple: policy and practice in education needs to be re-oriented to ensure the deconstruction of gender stereotypes as well as the promotion of equality of experience and relations for both sexes in education, thus addressing power imbalances that perpetuate gender inequality and leveraging access to all rights by woman and girls.

2. Education is strongly embedded in CEDAW, in ways that reflect this rich relationship between gender equality and the right to education. CEDAW article 10 explicitly enshrines the right to equality in education, while many other articles – notably 5 (on social and cultural norms), 7 (on civil and political participation), 8 (on international representation), 11 (on employment), 14 (on the social, economic and cultural rights of rural women) and 16 (on rights to and within marriage, and women’s reproductive rights) – express rights of which the full realization is very strongly dependent on addressing gender discrimination in education. Moreover, CEDAW’s General Recommendation 3, as well as article 10 of the main convention, expresses clearly the role of education in addressing wider gender discrimination based on stereotyping and biased cultural norms.

3. The human right to education and non-discrimination is further affirmed by a number of other international treaties. Along with the clear expression of a universal right to education in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the provisions on gender-equitable education in CEDAW, the most significant expressions of these rights are found in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966) and the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education. Governments further committed themselves to ensuring gender equality in education in the Dakar Framework for Action (2000), the Millennium Development Goals (2000), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the World Declaration on Education For All (1990), which stated that “the most urgent priority is to ensure access to, and improve the quality of, education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation.” Yet despite these numerous treaties, States and the international community still largely treat education as a development goal and not as a right. GCE believes that a clear rights-based understanding of education is crucial to overcoming gender discrimination and to re-orienting education towards the promotion of greater gender equality in society as a whole.

4. There has been undeniable progress made in improving gender parity in education in the three decades since the entry into force of CEDAW. Parity in enrolment has accelerated over the 22 years since the first agreement of the Education For All framework in Jomtien, and since agreement of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000. The number of girls out of school fell by more than 40% from 1999 to 2008³², and girls now constitute 53% of those children out of school, as opposed to 60% at the start of the millennium. The MDGs called for gender parity at primary and secondary education by 2005, a target that was clearly missed; nevertheless, it is encouraging that at an aggregate level, the world is now closer to achieving gender parity, at least so in primary education.

5. Progress on enrolment, however, should not mask the fact that girls and women continue to be denied their rights throughout the education cycle, and still face huge discrimination and disadvantage in terms of access, progress, learning and their experience in schools. The target of achieving gender parity in school enrolments gained significant traction in the international community not least because of its inclusion in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). But the consequent progress has led to a dangerous complacency about the reduction of gender inequality in education. Girls are still far more likely to drop out before completing primary education, have markedly worse experience in school, often characterized by violence, abuse and exploitation, and have scant chance of progressing to secondary school and tertiary education. The preliminary findings of GCE’s global survey of gender in schools show that more than one fifth of girls in secondary schools are unhappy

with their gender, and nearly two fifths have been made fun of at school for being a girl. In sub-Saharan Africa, there is a 10 percentage point gap between girls' and boys' primary school completion rates, and in only seven of the 54 countries in sub-Saharan Africa do girls have a greater than 50% chance of going to secondary school. GCE's survey shows that gender stereotypes still prevail in schools, particularly around male and female aptitudes, as do unequal power relations, as shown in, for instance, the fact that girls are far more likely to perform classroom chores. This perpetuates gender inequalities within the education system and society as a whole. It is hardly surprising, then, that nearly two-thirds of the world's illiterate people are women. True gender equality in education — and beyond — remains far from being achieved.

6. The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) is a civil society coalition which calls on governments to act immediately to deliver the right of every girl, boy, woman and man to a free quality public education. Since our formation in 1999, millions of people and thousands of organizations – including civil society organizations, trade unions, child rights campaigners, teachers, parents and students – have united to demand Education for All. We believe that quality public education for all is achievable, and we therefore demand that governments north and south take their responsibility to implement the Education for All goals and strategies agreed by 180 world governments at Dakar, in April 2000, and since agreed time and again.

7. GCE's Global Action Week in 2011 focused on gender equality in education. GCE mobilized members and schools in over 100 countries to discuss gender discrimination in education, and to call for politicians to 'Make it Right' for gender equality in education. We presented parliamentarians, ministers and heads of state with demands in the form of manifestos and petitions. Our coalitions joined forces with national women's groups

and enlisted the support of high-profile women to amplify our demands. The GCE coalition continues to campaign and lobby on the global, regional and national stage to ensure gender justice prevails within and beyond schools.

8. With this report, GCE seeks to present the CEDAW committee with information that indicates the current state of gender equality in education globally. In order to do so, we draw on GCE's own report jointly produced with RESULTS from 2011, *Make It Right: ending the crisis in girls' education*, which included an analysis of girls' education in 80 developing countries; on information supplied by GCE member coalitions before and during 2011 Global Action Week on gender and education and on the preliminary results of ongoing participatory research on gender discrimination in schools, which GCE and its membership is conducting with students, teachers and the community. Part II of this report sets out the rights-based framework through which we will analyze gender equality in education, and presents an overview of progress and key areas of concern, while Part III indicates the kinds of State actions needed to address these issues. In Part IV, we present the preliminary results of the participatory research (due to be concluded in mid-2012 and the conclusions from which shall be formally presented to CEDAW). We finish with conclusions and recommendations in Part V, with our predominant focus on national-level action that can and should be taken by CEDAW's State signatories, in terms of the legal, political and financial frameworks that will support gender equality in education. The report also includes brief national case studies, from different regions, which present examples of some of the different forms of gender discrimination in education. The premise of this report is that human rights law should be more explicitly recognized as the primary foundation for efforts to achieve Education For All, and more specifically gender equality in education, and that this recognition will entail an appropriate focus on State responsibility and capacity.



CASE STUDY 1: BOLIVIA

Legislative and policy context

Bolivia ratified CEDAW without reservations in 1990 and the optional Protocol in 2000. The constitution guarantees equal rights for men and women; yet women generally have a lower level of protection than men. Living conditions for Bolivia are among the worst in Latin America, and women are often the victims of violence and discrimination. The degree of discrimination is even greater for indigenous women, gender inequality is deeply entwined with class stratification and is hard to bring to light.

The numbers

Thirteen percent of adult women in Bolivia cannot read and write, compared to just 5% of men, but there is some sign of progress in efforts to educate young generations. The net primary enrolment rate for girls is 94%, and Bolivia also reports a 94% rate of girls' transition to secondary education. Overall net enrolment rates for secondary education are, however, much lower (for both boys and girls) at just 69%.

Violence

One significant problem which affect women's and girls' ability to realize their right to education is violence. Physical integrity is not sufficiently protected and this has created a serious crisis in education. Fifty percent of Bolivian women are believed to have suffered physical, psychological or sexual violence at the hands of men, and a study by Child Defense International Bolivia found that there are at least 100 cases of sexual attacks on children at school, every day. Until schools are guaranteed to be safe spaces for girls, this problem will continue to have a huge impact on girls' and women's education.

Pregnancy

Of great concern is the ill treatment of pregnant girls. Although national education policy allows pregnant girls to continue with schooling, they are repeatedly excluded because school authorities bow to societal pressure against keeping pregnant girls in school. Civil society groups are currently contesting the decision of school authorities in El Alto to exclude two final year pregnant girls from school. They were re-enrolled in line with national education policy but due to reprisals from the public, the girls were once again excluded.

Multiple discrimination

Indigenous women are disproportionately targeted by discrimination. For example, Amalia Laura is a 23 year old law graduate who suffered repeated discrimination based on her indigenous and rural background, while taking her university degree at an urban center. She was targeted for the traditional indigenous way she wore her hair and clothes throughout the years and her college graduation picture was altered by classmates, transforming her dressing into the toga she had refused to wear for the occasion, in a clear demonstration of intolerance, abuse and discrimination. She took the case to court.

Civil society action

In the last few years, the Bolivian Campaign for the Right to Education and its allies have carried out a number of important initiatives addressing gender discrimination at national and local levels. Civil society pressure helped ensure that the new National Education Law affirms that the Bolivian State will promote education free of patriarchy, and a new law against violence in schools is currently being discussed in Parliament. Civil society organizations are campaigning for a new curriculum to be agreed, based on gender equity, for both primary and secondary education. The campaign also works hard to raise awareness, share information and increase citizen participation in education policy. Adult learners have also been invited to take part in the process – they have been involved especially in the 2011 Global Action Week, debating how a gender perspective can change education.

Bolivian Campaign for the Right to Education; CDI-Bolivia; UNESCO Institute of Statistics (<http://www.uis.unesco.org>)

PART II: The nature of gender discrimination in education

9. **GCE understands education to be a right, and analyzes it through the '4A' framework, which encompasses availability, accessibility, acceptability, and adaptability.** The 4A framework was developed by the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, the late Katarina Tomasevski, and adopted by the CESCR in 1999. In this submission, and drawing on the work of ActionAidⁱⁱⁱ and the Right to Education Project, we select criteria and indicators for each of the four As that are most relevant to the experience of girls and women in education, and to the role of education in combating broader gender discrimination. We therefore ask the following questions:

■ Is education available to girls and women, throughout the cycle, and not simply in terms of primary level enrolments?

■ Is education accessible, in terms of the absence of financial, physical, geographical and other barriers?

■ Is education acceptable for girls and women as well as boys and men, in terms of its content, form and structure – both what is being taught and learned, and how that teaching and learning happens?

■ Is education adaptable, in terms of being responsive to girls' and boys' different needs and lives, taking into account phenomena such as girls' and women's labour, early marriage and pregnancy?

Some of the relevant issues may cut across different As; they can be inherent to the school system (such as curriculum), or have a much broader scope (such as child labour or gender stereotyping).

10. **GCE's analysis of the availability of education in 80 developing countries finds very mixed progress, but across the board there is a shocking disconnect between girls' access to primary schooling and their ability to enjoy a full cycle of education.** Our 'availability table' (see annex I) tracks the current status of and recent progress in girls' enrolment, attendance, learning and transition from primary through to tertiary levels. Of the 80 countries, we rate 20 as strong performers, 18 as middling, 16 as weak and eight as failing. A further 18 countries do not have sufficient data to assess their progress – itself an indication of a lack of attention to girls' education. It should be noted that even in countries rated as strong performers, the rate of girls' continued attendance and transition to secondary education can be woeful. Tanzania, for example, scores highly because of vast improvements in enrolment; but only 32% of the girls who complete primary school make the transition to lower secondary. In Burundi, girls'

primary enrolment increased a remarkable 200%; yet one quarter of enrolled girls will drop out before grade 5 and, of those female students remaining, only 22% will make the transition to lower secondary. In fact, in 47 out of 54 African countries, girls have less than a 50% chance of completing primary school. The very low rates of continued attendance and, in particular, transition to secondary education, are a stark reminder of why we need to look beyond primary school enrolment figures (often measured only on the first day) and track availability more comprehensively, including in early childhood care and education, on which there is still extremely scarce data.

11. **Whilst improving availability of girls' education will require investment, our analysis shows that there is no simple link between a country's income level and its performance.** Of the 24 weak or failing countries, half are low-income countries, and half are middle income. Of the 20 strong performers, five are low-income countries. This indicates clearly that appropriate policies can be successfully implemented (or not) regardless of a country's overall wealth.

12. **Looking at the policies of successful countries in terms of availability of education for girls, GCE has identified the provision of early childhood care and education (ECCE), improved non-formal education for adult women, and removing barriers to secondary education as all being crucial.**

■ ECCE: World Bank studies, among others, have established that girls provided with pre-primary education stay enrolled in and attend school for longer^{iv}, whilst ECCE eases the caring burden on older girls and women. Yet in low-income countries only 18% of children are provided with a pre-primary education^v.

■ Youth and adult education: given that two thirds of the world's 796 million non-literate adults are women – a legacy of women's exclusion from formal education and of their rights being violated – a focus on quality and appropriate youth and adult education is key to repair such legacy. Yet provision is patchy, under-funded, and under-emphasized. Governments should invest at least 3% of their budgets in youth and adult education, as many have previously committed to do.

■ Post-primary barriers: secondary education remains out of reach for millions of girls, and tertiary even more so. In the Central African Republic, Niger, Chad and Malawi, for example, fewer than 1 in 200 girls go to university. Systemic barriers include a number of cultural factors, as well as significant cost barriers.

Explanations of the (un)availability of education for girls and women are also to be found through analyzing the other 3As: accessibility, acceptability and adaptability.

13. **The financial costs associated with schooling, which can affect accessibility for all, have a disproportionate impact on girls.** Analysis abounds of the gendered impact of school fees (and other associated costs of schooling),

which combine with a preference for educating boys to impact girls disproportionately. Basic education should therefore be both free – genuinely so, with adequate finance provided to schools – and compulsory. These elements have been found to address both the reality and the perception that it is more valuable to educate boys^{vi}. In Uganda, the introduction of free primary education caused total girls’ enrolments to rise from 63% to 83%, and enrolments of the poorest fifth of girls from 46% to 82%^{vii}. Given the lack of accessibility of secondary education for girls, it is extremely important that States extend free education to this level, as established in General Recommendation 13 of CESCR that affirms “States parties are required to progressively introduce free secondary and higher education”. Beyond direct fees for education, it is also necessary to provide support for the associated costs of education, such as school material, transport and food, which often lead parents to keep children out of school, particularly during times of economic hardship. Research published collaboratively by a number of organizations and US universities in early 2012 reported that many young women in post-earthquake Haiti are exchanging sex for payment of educational expenses: this is just one shocking example of the coping mechanisms in place when education is not freely available, and the exploitation that such situations facilitate^{viii}.

14. Opportunity costs must also be tackled upfront, as there are important associated gender impacts, related in particular to the above mentioned overall preference to prioritize boys’ education. Child labour is a central obstacle to the fulfilment of the right to education, with over one fifth of the world’s children aged 5-17 years being exploited by child labour, a huge proportion of which relates to domestic servants, primarily carried out by girls. We highlight that “child domestic work is a clear example of how gender identity contributes to the shaping of the different kinds of labour. Child domestic labour patterns correspond to deep-seated, sex-based divisions of labour”, being a clear reflection of gender discrimination^{ix}. Legislation that combats child domestic labour is key to overcoming gender associated inequalities in access to education. It is worth noting that stipend programs and conditional cash transfer programs have been employed in settings as diverse as Brazil, Yemen, Nepal, Tanzania, Malawi, Madagascar, Gambia and Kenya, and have succeeded in reducing girls’ drop-out rates and delaying early marriage.

15. The distance of schools and the lack of adequate facilities both have a significant effect on the accessibility of education for girls, particularly in terms of the provision of sanitary facilities for girls. In research conducted in Uganda, 61% of girls reported staying away from school during menstruation^x. A lack of adequate, separate facilities and can also increase vulnerability to and fear of sexual assault and violence. Similarly, when children have to travel long distances to school, parents are more likely to prevent girls from going to school because of fears for their safety^{xi}. This requires both greater provision of schools in rural areas

and mechanisms to ensure safe transport, which may be as simple as ensuring adult accompaniment for children travelling to school.

16. Addressing the lack of female teachers is a significant element in making education more acceptable for girls. This can have a direct impact on enrolment, with the correlation especially strong in sub-Saharan Africa and at secondary level^{xii}. Yet only around one third of secondary school teachers in South and West Asia are female and fewer than three in 10 in sub-Saharan Africa. Disparities can be even greater at tertiary level: in Ethiopia, for example, fewer than 1 in 10 tertiary level teachers are female. The absence of women teachers from this level is perpetuated and exacerbated by the systemic lack of opportunities for girls and women to access required skills and training^{xiii}. Those women who do enter teaching can suffer gender discrimination in their profession: the preliminary results of GCE’s global teacher survey show a huge 30% of female teachers reporting that they have experienced gender discrimination. In regions where the teaching profession has become feminized, however, this has in some cases contributed to its low status and pay. There needs to be simultaneous efforts to raise the status of the teaching profession, whilst supporting greater female participation in regions where this is very low.

17. Making education more acceptable for girls also involves ensuring that the curriculum, the classroom and school culture are of high quality, uphold rights, and are relevant and safe. In terms of curriculum reform, a greater emphasis is needed both on including equal and positive representation and images of women, and in ensuring that relevant skills and knowledge – including around sexual and reproductive health – are included. Along with improvements in the overall quality of education, these curriculum reforms could do much to address perceptions and reality of the low value of education, which acts as a disincentive for parents to educate their daughters. In terms of classroom culture, teachers must ensure full participation of women and girls in the classroom – which itself may involve a break with cultural norms – and schools need to work harder to avoid directing boys and girls into subjects, activities and games deemed ‘appropriate’ for their gender. GCE’s survey showed that overall around half of pupils still tend to identify so-called ‘soft’ subjects with girls, and more technical subjects with boys, with the associations strongest in South Asia. The majority of pupils were aware of games that they described as being “only” for girls or for boys. School safety is a huge issue for girls: at their best, schools can provide girls with protection from violence and abuse, through the act of educating them; at their worst, they are a site of abuse. Surveys conducted by GCE members indicate that violence against and abuse of girls often exists alongside a culture of impunity, in which abuse is rarely reported or punished. Required action includes not only monitoring and enforcement of legislation, but improved school infrastructure, training for teachers and parents, more female teachers and curriculum reform.

18. In November 2010 there were hearings at the CESCR on sexual and reproductive rights and GCE supports a greater emphasis on the need to address the direct, indirect and structural determinants that may influence the level of enjoyment of sexual and reproductive health. These determinants, which include women's level of education, relate to the enjoyment of all other human rights. As the former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Vernor Muñoz, has noted, education plays a key role in promoting sexual and reproductive rights: "There is no valid excuse for not providing people with the comprehensive sexual education that they need in order to lead a dignified and healthy life."

19. The educational system must be adaptable to students' different contexts and interests; for girls this means being responsive to issues around labour, early marriage and early pregnancy. The aim of preventing early marriage and pregnancy – in which the continued availability of school for girls must be a key strategy^{xiv} – should be accompanied by efforts to ensure that education is available to girls regardless of marital or parental status. The right of pregnant girls to an acceptable education is explicitly recognized in the UNCRC, among other conventions. Yet the disconnection between international law and national law, and between law and practice, means that many girls are denied access to education as soon as they become mothers. In Tanzania, for example, expulsion of pregnant girls is implicitly sanctioned by a 2002 regulation (GN295 of 2002 Cap. 66), and thousands of girls are forced to drop out of school each year due to pregnancy. Making school adaptable to these girls' needs involves not only addressing these laws and practices, but also positive action, for instance, to make timetables and physical infrastructure responsive to childcare responsibilities.

20. Adaptability of education must also take into account multiple discriminations, or the interaction of gender discrimination with other forms of discrimination, which can explain how women and girls are often the most marginalized among marginalized groups. This includes sexual identity and preferences, which must be respected within the school environment. In 2002, a Chilean secondary school student was expelled after having been seen on the streets with her girlfriend. The case was taken to the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights. Perhaps the most prevalent form of multiple discrimination is that experienced by poor indigenous and Afro-descendent women as well as by poor rural women. In Bolivia, Honduras, Tanzania, Madagascar and many other countries, rich urban boys will spend more than twice as long in education as poor rural girls^{xv}. In Mali in 2006, 17% of poor rural girls were completing primary education, compared to 68% of wealthy urban boys^{xvi}. With the Commission on the Status of Women focusing on rural women in its current session, particular attention should be paid to the education of rural women.



"I'm not happy being during their

PART III: Necessary state action

21. The responsibility for addressing gender discrimination in education – as understood through the 4A framework – lies ultimately with States. Gender inequalities in education are a function of gender discrimination and patriarchal social and cultural structures, which exist everywhere in the world. Yet any government can revolutionize girls' and women's experience of the education system through adopting laws, policies and practices to make education available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable. Bangladesh, despite the existence of ongoing challenges, has achieved gender parity for primary and secondary enrolment and for primary completion via policies including free secondary education for girls, improved school construction, including of sanitary facilities, and targets for increased recruitment of female teachers^{xvii}.

22. Given the scarce resources available and broader social gender inequalities, national strategies should focus principally on governance and budgeting. Governance reforms should address themselves to the question of who creates, implements and monitors policies, as well as how the authorities are held accountable. Women and girls – including the most marginalized – must participate in governance if the system is to function in their interests. Similarly, gender-responsive budgeting and decision making that includes civil society participation is widely understood to have a significant impact in improving education for girls^{xviii}. GCE's analysis of education availability shows that high performance in access is clearly linked to increases in education and related development spending.



a girl, because young women suffer physical development and can face discrimination in some jobs.”

Girl, 17 years old, urban Bolivia

PART IV: Initial survey results

23. GCE is in the process of conducting a survey of students' and teachers' perceptions of gender discrimination at school, with the participation of GCE coalitions around the world. The full results will be analyzed and presented to CEDAW later in 2012. Some initial results are presented here, based on c.800 responses received so far, but should be taken as preliminary and indicative, pending the full analysis. This analysis is based on over 500 responses from students, with a fairly even split between girls and boys, primary and secondary, and rural and urban and over 250 responses from teachers, of whom 60% were at primary level, and just over half female at both levels. The majority of responses so far are from South Asia, East Asia and Latin America, with relatively few from Africa, North America or Europe.

24. One of the most striking findings from the survey so far is that one in five of the girls in secondary school who responded said that they were not happy being a girl. The proportion was lower but still dramatic - nearly one in 10 - at primary level. This contrasted with less than 3% of boys who were unhappy with their gender at secondary school and less than 1% boys at primary school. The reasons cited by those girls who were unhappy included restrictions on their freedom, a lack of opportunities compared to boys, and feelings that they were less safe or faced more harassment. The boys

explained their happiness at being male in relation to the same factors: greater freedom, greater opportunities, greater value from society or families. There was some regional disparity, with girls in South Asia least likely to be happy, and those in Latin America most likely to be happy, particularly at primary level - but at secondary level, still 15% of girls were unhappy.

25. The survey also revealed boys' and girls' very different experiences of schools in terms of attitudes towards their gender: nearly four in 10 girls reported being made fun of because they are a girl, compared to under 1 in 10 boys.

26. There was regional and urban/rural disparity in terms of separation of children at school, with children in South Asia and rural children more likely to play separately and sit separately in classrooms. Overall, around half of children played separately, although mixed play was more common with increasing age, and more common in Latin America (62% of children overall). The perception that girls and boys sit together in class, on the other hand, falls with age, and was much higher in urban than rural areas. Moreover, 98% of secondary school respondents in South Asia said girls and boys sit separately, compared to 27% in Latin America.

27. There was a marked divergence in gender roles in tidying up in the classroom, with a 40 percentage point divergence at secondary level - but strong regional variation. Whilst more than half of respondents at secondary level, and 62% at primary level, said that both girls and boys perform this chore, the remainder almost all said that girls do this. The proportion saying that girls do it was highest in South Asia, 69% compared to just 18% in Latin America.

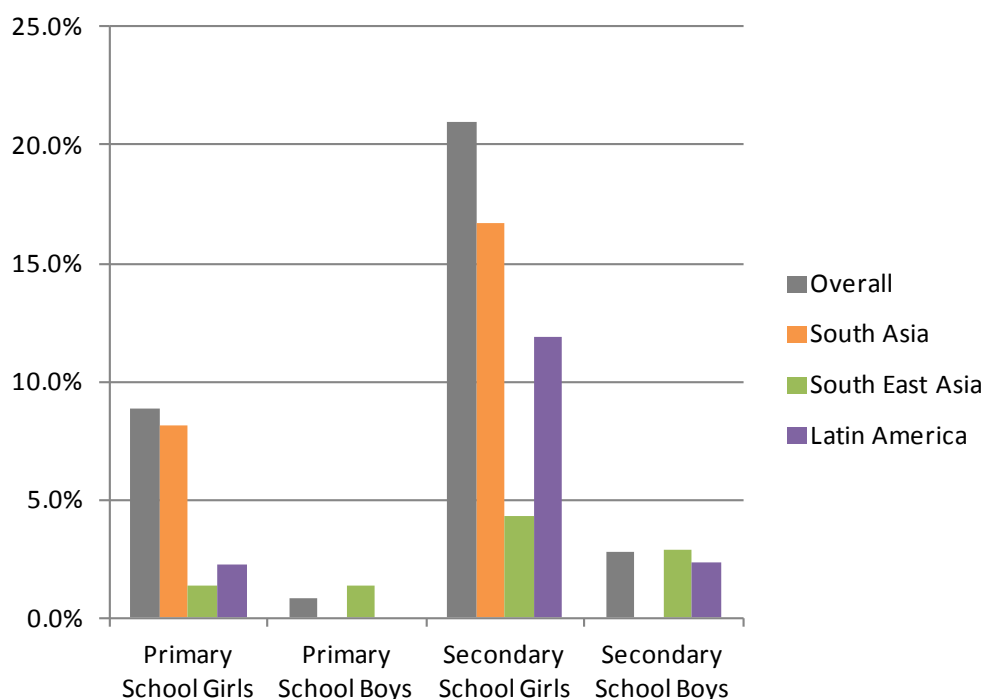


Figure 1: % Unhappy being a girl/boy

28. Where there was gender stereotyping of aptitudes for different subjects, girls were generally seen as better at ‘soft’ subjects like languages, history, art and music, and boys better at sports and more logical subjects like mathematics and computing. Overall, about half of respondents (both girls and boys) actually saw a difference in aptitude, aligning with these stereotypes. Some stereotypes favouring boys seemed more prevalent among boys: at secondary level 56% of boys thought boys were better at sport, and 53% thought they were better at technology, compared to 40% and 46% of girls, respectively. There were regional variations, however: in East Asia, for example, girls were seen as better at mathematics.

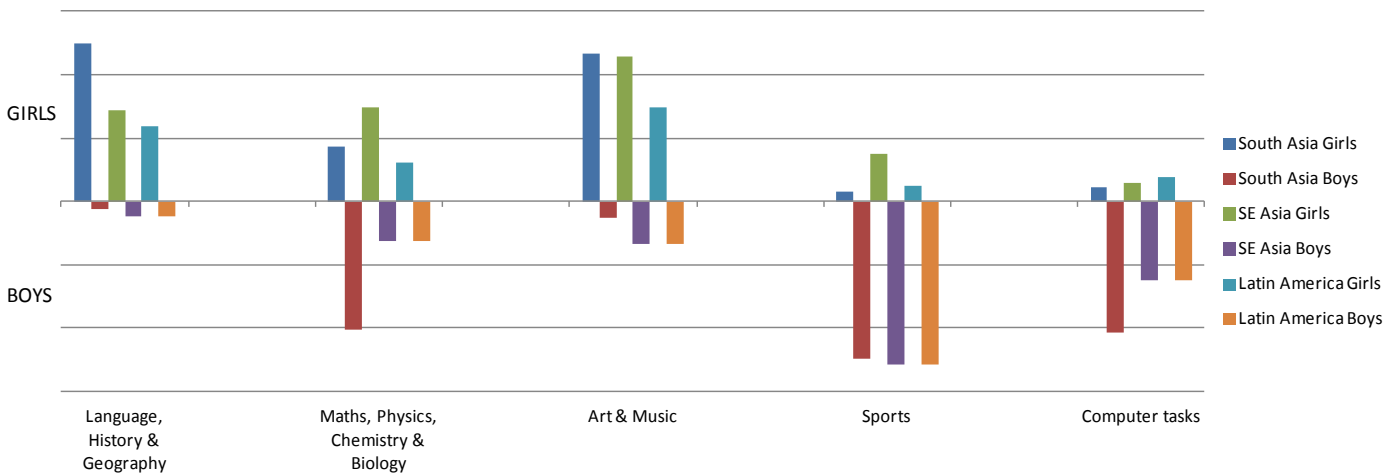


Figure 2: Gender stereotyping of subject aptitude

29. Students did not show any strong view on whether male or female teachers were more competent, but did express the view that men are more intelligent and women more caring, especially in rural areas. There was only a 5 percentage point difference in perceptions of the intelligence of male and female teachers in urban areas; but a 27 point difference in rural areas. In South Asia, there was a much more equal view of male and female intelligence, and female teachers were rated as more competent.

30. Among teachers, female teachers were more than four times as likely as male teachers to state that they had experienced discrimination because of their gender. Overall, a huge one third of the female teachers surveyed said they had experienced such discrimination. There was not a strong difference between rural and urban areas, or primary and secondary levels. The reports of discrimination were at the highest rate in Latin America.

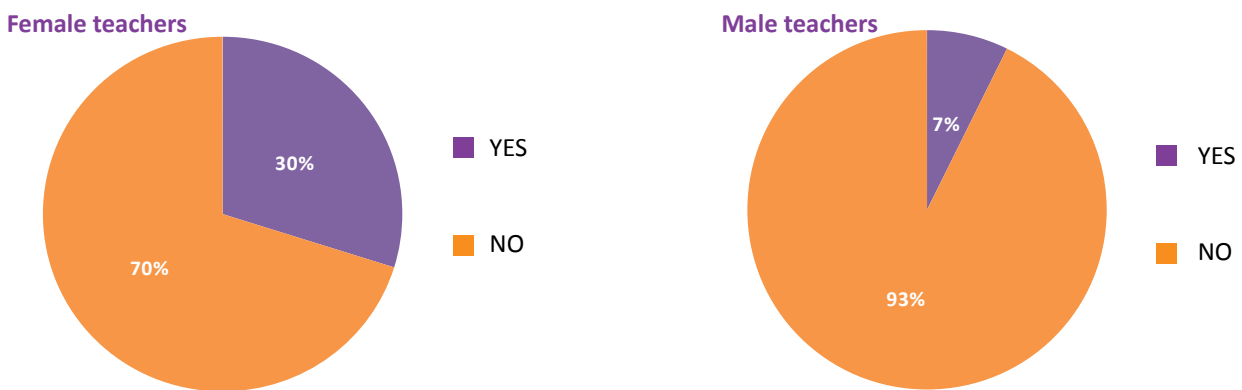


Figure 3: Teachers' experience of gender discrimination

CASE STUDY 2: ARMENIA

Legislative and policy context

Armenia ratified CEDAW in 1993. The constitution contains guarantees for the right to education, and enabling legislation on the exercise of this right is in the Education Act. This includes free and compulsory education to all without any discrimination, including gender discrimination. There are special departments on family, women and children in each of 11 Armenia's regional administrations. The reality on the ground, however, is still a far cry from the legal position.

The numbers

Armenia has high levels of female literacy – 99% - yet the data about school enrolment and attendance make clear that girls are far from getting a full education. In particular, it is worrying that the net rate of girls' enrolment at primary level in 2009 – at 86% - was even lower than at secondary level, where it is 89%. In many regions in Armenia, there are no schools and children have to walk up to 7 kilometers to get to school. This can be extremely dangerous, especially in winter months when wild animals may attack, and many girls stay home as a result.

Child marriage

Poverty and child labour are significant reasons for girls to be out of school, but the pressure on girls to marry early, combined with the practice of forcing girls to leave school after marriage, is a huge source of discrimination against girls in education. When girls come from ethnic minorities, this can reinforce other discrimination against them. Among Yezidi and Kurds communities, for example, there is strong pressure for girls to enter early and forced marriages. Traditional and religious stereotypes demand that girls are married off between the ages of 13-16. Girls aged 18 and older are ostracized and considered 'old maids or spinsters', 'aged' or 'immoral', which creates immense pressure for girls to leave school and start families. According to Aziz Tamoyan, President of the Armenian Yezidi National Union, only a tiny number of girls graduate from secondary school, because as a rule, after engagement or early marriages, girls are excluded from school.

Civil society action

Civil society organizations have contributed greatly to the positive legislative changes that have happened in the country. For example, in 2000, a Women's Council in the office of the Prime Minister was formed, and was directly linked to civil society pressure. The Armenian national education coalition, along with other civil society actors, is now concentrating their advocacy efforts towards implementation of legislation. For example, the coalition has recently participated in a national forum to discuss the draft law on providing equality and equal opportunities for men and women. During this forum, the coalition called for implementation of legislative measures to address the inequalities still faced by girls and women, particularly those in minority communities and disadvantaged backgrounds.

Armenian Constitutional Right-Protective Centre; UNESCO Institute of Statistics (<http://www.uis.unesco.org>)



“My father wouldn’t send me to school, never allowed me to study when he saw it. Now I’m learning how to write, so I will not be afraid anymore... I will not shake anymore or hide behind other people.”

Balvina, indigenous woman, Peru
Ampliando Voces, Campaña Latinoamericana por el Derecho a la Educación

PART V: Conclusions and recommendations

31. **There has been undeniable progress in some aspects of gender equality in education, and the contribution of international treaties and agreements, often used by civil society to increase pressure for state action, is clear.** Yet the pursuit of the goal of gender parity in enrolments has obscured the need for balanced attention to, and investment in, laws and policies that will ensure that girls can stay in school and acquire the learning they need to empower them throughout life, and that women who missed out on schooling are able to access high quality and appropriate education, including but not limited to literacy. CEDAW's state signatories should be directed towards transforming education legislation, policy, governance, budgeting and practice in ways that increase the availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability of education for girls and women.

32. **GCE's survey, though still in preliminary form, raises major concerns about the experience of girls in school and their self esteem, about the strong presence of gender stereotyping in schools, and about the discrimination faced by women teachers.** GCE will present full results and analysis to CEDAW when these are available, but would propose that these areas be considered for further actions and recommendations. It is key to raise awareness among States and within broader society of the deep rooted and persistent gender discrimination that takes place in schools, which on the contrary must be sites which promote non-discrimination and social justice.

33. **GCE encourages CEDAW to use its country reporting process and/or the general recommendations to push the following actions by State signatories:**

- that State reports to CEDAW on progress with regard to article 10 should address the entire educational cycle, including early childhood care and education and adult literacy programs; that they should report on progression and learning, as well as initial enrolment; and that they should explicitly analyze the accessibility, acceptability, adaptability of education for girls, as well as availability;

- that States undertake regular gender audits of national education strategies and policies related to the overcoming of gender discrimination.

34. **Additionally, GCE encourages CEDAW to develop specific recommendations to States, regarding the overcoming of gender discrimination in education, which may include:**

- that States make education free and compulsory, at primary level as well as early childhood education and secondary level, and that this should be understood as central to progress towards gender equality in education. Indirect costs such as school feeding, transportation, uniforms and materials, should also be free;

- that States provide well-designed, targeted and appropriately structured demand-side incentives such as stipends and cash transfers to counteract indirect and opportunity costs and ensure that girls complete primary and transition to secondary;

- that States promote the adoption of legal and policy frameworks that combat child labour, with emphasis to child domestic labour, which affects girls at disproportionate rates;

- that States, ensure that law and practice enable girls to continue their education regardless of marital or parental status, and that education systems are responsive to these differing situations;

- that States draw legal and policy frameworks envisaged to eliminate and properly address all forms of gender violence within schools;

- that States take into account the needs of girls when planning school and transport infrastructure, including providing separate toilet facilities for girls, safe transport, and schools in rural areas;

- that States introduce gender-sensitive budgeting for education, as well as gender impact assessments in planning;

- that States draw legal and policy frameworks envisaged to eliminate gender bias and stereotypes in teaching and learning, promoting positive representation of women as well as training in gender-equitable classroom practice;

- that States scale up adult literacy programs by increasing budgetary allocations to at least 3% of education budgets, ensuring adequate pay, professional status and training, and ensure that such programs are designed in consultation with women (who make up the majority of non-literate people);

- that States track progress against equity-based targets for enrolment, progression and learning in a way that disaggregates data by gender, age, grade, wealth and location, among others.

35. **GCE recommends there be increased dialogue and synergy between the CEDAW and the main UN bodies and multilateral initiatives that address gender equality as well as the fulfillment of the human right to education, including those related to Education for All (EFA):**

■ The global entities addressing Education for All including UNESCO EFA fora, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the EFA Global Monitoring Report and the UN Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) all have embedded targets for reporting on girls and women's education and the overcoming of gender discrimination in education. We recommend that these different initiatives be more articulated with CEDAW in order to strengthen a co-ordinated approach to tackling discrimination against girls and women in education.

■ In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly set up UN Women and in May 2011, UNESCO launched a New Global Partnership for Girls and Women's Education. Moreover, the UN's Secretary General has now announced that a Global Initiative on Education shall be launched in 2012, with one priority focus being advancing gender equality. GCE believes all these initiatives can act as leverages for redressing gender injustice in education and in society as a whole and that these must be taken forward in tune with human rights conventions, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Woman. GCE believes the set of obligations States have in relation to gender equality must serve as reference to the other multilateral initiatives that exist.

36. Last but not least, GCE encourages CEDAW, in dialogue with other UN bodies, to consider the following actions:

■ that the UN high-level event on education that is being planned as part of the UN General Assembly in September 2012 includes a specific focus on gender equality in education, highlighting the key challenges still faced for overcoming gender discrimination in education;

■ that the strongly gendered aspect of youth and adult illiteracy be tackled more directly, including through more substantial integration of gender discrimination into UN adult education initiatives-for instance, follow up to the last Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) by the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning;

■ that any post-2015 development and education goals agreed by the international community through the UN should encompass a broader understanding of gender equality in education, with equal prominence for access, retention, completion and learning; should embrace the whole educational cycle from early years to adult education; should tackle the overcoming of gender discrimination in education and should recognize the role of education in promoting all human rights.

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CASE STUDY 3: PAKISTAN

Legislative and policy context

Pakistan is a signatory to various international instruments on women's rights including CEDAW, which it ratified in 1996. In response to the Beijing Plan of Action as well as ratification of CEDAW, Pakistan has pursued initiatives to implement gender equality and women's empowerment. Further, the Constitution (1973) prohibits discrimination based on sex. In December 2011, Parliament unanimously passed two landmark laws aimed at protecting women from negative customs. The new law seeks to punish offences against women such as forced marriages, depriving them from inheritance and marriage to the Quran. The second law criminalizes throwing acid at girls and women with life imprisonment as the maximum sentences for offenders.

The numbers

Only four in 10 of Pakistani women over the age of 15 can read and write, compared to 70% of men. This dramatic educational disadvantage is the result of a deeply unequal education system. Although girls' enrolment rates have improved, the net rate at primary level is still just 60%, compared to 72% for boys. At secondary level, the performance is even more appalling (although the gender difference is smaller): the net enrolment rate for girls is just 29%. Altogether, more than 8 million girls of school age (primary and secondary) are not in school. In addition, Pakistan has recently experienced one of the worst monsoon floods in history. Around 680,000 girls were affected, and if they miss the start of the academic session, it will reinforce the multiple barriers to education they already face.

Violence

Violence against women in the form of physical, sexual and emotional abuse is widespread in Pakistan. Strict family, tribal and religious customs mean that some intimidating activities have become cultural norms, while domestic violence is seldom reported and rarely investigated. Violent acts committed mainly by men against women within the context of the subordinate status of women which society seeks to preserve include domestic violence; sexual violence; traditional harmful practices including female genital mutilation, honor killing and dowry-related violence; and human trafficking. Such widespread violence against women can impact severely on girls' and women's education even when it does not take place at school: studies conducted in northern Pakistan, for instance, have found that girls' access to education was "severely" restricted because of their families' fear of violence whilst traveling. It should, moreover, be noted that female teachers, as well as students, can be the victims of violence: a report by USAID in north west Pakistan found that female teachers were frequently threatened or assaulted in the villages where they work and are frightened to leave the school. As well as the severe impact on these women, this will discourage other women from working as teachers, which in turn further damages girls' educational prospects.

Civil society action

Pakistan's National Education Coalition (PCE) has partnered with other civil society organizations to raise public outrage and demand governmental intervention on violence against women and girls. To this effect, the coalition has made various submissions and participated in preparatory work for the landmark laws criminalizing violence against women.

Pakistan Coalition for Education; UNESCO Institute of Statistics (<http://www.uis.unesco.org>); A Khan (1998) Female mobility and access to health and family planning services, Islamabad: Ministry for Population Welfare and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

CASE STUDY 4: TANZANIA

Legislative and policy context

Tanzania ratified CEDAW in 1985, and has taken various administrative and other measures to give effect to the convention. Tanzania's education Act makes it an offence to deny access to education on the grounds of gender, and the Education and Training Policy (1995) addresses the enforcement of bylaws and regulations and retention of girls in schools. The Educational Material Approval Committee is responsible for, among other things, ensuring there is no gender bias in school materials. Strategies in the education sector plan to reduce gender discrimination include requirements for construction of schools and sanitary facilities, training and support for teachers, and curriculum review.

The numbers

One third of women in Tanzania – more than 4 million women in total – are not literate. The net enrolment rate for girls at primary level is now an impressive 97%, slightly higher than that of boys. But the rate of transition to secondary school is extremely low: just 32% in 2008, compared to 40% for boys. The proportion of girls completing a full secondary education was a drastically low 0.8% in 2010. Almost 1.2 million adolescent girls are out of school. The pattern is repeated for women in adult and non-formal education, with only 55% making it to mainstream schools.

Exclusion of pregnant girls and mothers

One of the many aspects of gender discrimination towards women and girls in education is the treatment of girls who become pregnant whilst in school. Government figures show that 25,000 girls left school because of pregnancy just from 2007 to 2009 (the true number of course may be higher), and that at secondary level this was a more common reason for leaving even than financial needs. The government statistics describe this as “dropping out”, but the reality is that many girls are excluded from school when they become pregnant, despite the widespread prevalence of teenage motherhood in Tanzania. The legislative picture is murky: a 2002 regulation allowed for the expulsion of girls, and although a 2004 circular from the Ministry of Education set out legal processes to avoid pregnant girls leaving school, the Ministry still acknowledges on its website that “expulsion of pregnant school girls continues to be a cause for concern.” Until this practice is fully addressed, the combination of social norms that lead to young motherhood and discrimination in education will continue to deny an education to huge numbers of girls in Tanzania.

Land ownership

Girls and women's education is also severely affected by discrimination against women with respect to access and acquiring land. Despite CEDAW's provisions of equality before the law, customary laws and traditions have conspired to block women from accessing and acquiring land. This denial of women's economic independence, and increase in their vulnerability, often makes them unable to send their children, particularly girls, to school. There is a need to align customary laws so that they are declared repugnant if they conflict with CEDAW's provisions, while at the same time struggle for effective free public education.

Civil society action

TENMET, the national education coalition, has joined forces with the Tanzania Gender Network to scale up the campaign on the right to land for women and its impact on girls' education. Further, TENMET and various civil society organizations as well as UNICEF and UNESCO are engaged in campaign and advocacy for improved education and girl friendly policies. There have been some successes, to the extent that the plight of girls has been highlighted and a re-entry policy for pregnant girls has been instituted. Communities have also started demanding implementation of education plans by participating in budget tracking initiatives aimed at following resources towards empowering girls and women in education.

Tanzania Education Network (TENMET); UNESCO Institute of Statistics (<http://www.uis.unesco.org>); Tanzania Ministry of Education annual statistics

ANNEX 1: Availability table

How successful are countries at ensuring availability of education for women and girls?

Country	Adjusted NER for girls (%)	GPI for NER (ratio)	Girls transition from primary to secondary (%)	GPI school life expectancy (ratio)	Female students in tertiary (% of total students)	Girls survival to G5 (% of enrollers)	Change in girls primary NER over last decade (% change)	Change in girls transition from primary completion to secondary enrollment (% change)
STRONG PERFORMERS								
Armenia	94.4	1.03	98.3	1.08	56.1	—	0.5	0.5
Bangladesh	93.3	1.08	100	1.03	35.1	66.1	—	—
Bolivia	92.3	1	94.1	0.97	45	84.6	-3.6	5.2
Burundi	99.8	1.01	22.6	0.87	30.5	75.9	203.2	16.8
Ecuador	100	1.03	76.9	1.03	52.9	83.1	0.3	11.6
El Salvador	96.5	1.02	91.8	0.98	54.6	81.6	7.8	4.7
Georgia	92.9	0.97	99.1	1	54.9	95.4	—	0.7
Ghana	76.6	1.01	91.6	0.93	37.3	77.6	29.7	9.5
Honduras	98.3	1.02	86.2	1.11	60	80.3	10.6	—
Jordan	94.4	1.01	98.2	1.04	51.3	—	-0.4	1
Kyrgyz Republic	91.1	1	99.6	1.06	56.4	—	-3.3	2.4
Lesotho	75.5	1.06	66.4	1.05	55.2	69.2	23.8	20.9
Madagascar	99.8	1.01	55	0.96	47.5	50.2	49.4	16.4
Mongolia	99.4	1	98.9	1.12	60.6	95.4	2.2	0.5
Paraguay	88	1	88.9	1.03	56.7	85	-9	-4
Philippines	93.2	1.02	98.1	1.04	54.4	82.5	3.5	0.7
Senegal	76.3	1.04	57.1	0.92	37	70.8	52.1	35.2
Tanzania	97.3	1.01	32.3	0.95	32.3	89.2	93.8	40.7
Tunisia	99.9	1.01	85.8	1.07	58.8	96.3	5.7	10.4
Ukraine	89.6	1	99.6	1.05	54.4	—	—	0
MIDDLE PERFORMERS								
Burkina Faso	60.5	0.89	50.7	0.84	32.1	77.6	109.8	31.4
Guatemala	94.9	0.97	89.7	0.93	50.8	69.8	19.1	-2.8
Indonesia	—	—	92.7	0.98	47.4	89.3	—	14.9
Malawi	93.7	1.05	74	0.97	33.6	42.5	-4.1	-0.7
Mali	69.8	0.83	68.2	0.76	28.9	85.1	87.7t	31.1
Mauritania	78.8	1.07	30.8	1	28.2	83.5	27.1	-16.7
Moldova	89.5	0.99	97.7	1.06	57.3	—	-2.8	0.4
Morocco	88.5	0.97	78.1	0.88	46.9	84.5	36.4	-6.1
Mozambique	89.8	0.94	54.7	0.84	33.1	53.3	93.9	27.2
Rwanda	97	1.03	—	0.99	43.5	50.5	27	—
Sri Lanka	95.6	1.01	97.1	—	—	98.1	—	-2.6
Swaziland	83.7	1.02	—	0.92	49.8	87.9	16.9	—
Thailand	89.4	0.99	88.8	1.07	54.3	—	—	—
The Gambia	71.9	1.03	83.2	0.97	—	72.1	0.6	23.9
Uganda	93.7	1.03	55.3	0.97	44.3	59.4	—	22.4
Uzbekistan	88.8	0.98	98.9	0.97	40.5	—	—	1.9
West Bank and Gaza	77.5	1	97.4	1.09	55.6	—	-22	-0.3
Zambia	93.8	1.03	67.4	—	—	70.4	36.9	25.9
WEAK PERFORMERS								
Cambodia	86.7	0.96	78.6	0.88	34.4	64.8	9.2	10.5
Cameroon	85.6	0.88	45.5	0.85	43.9	79.2	—	44.1
Congo, Rep.	61.6	0.93	62	—	17.3	79.3	—	18

Country	Adjusted NER for girls (%)	GPI for NER (ratio)	Girls transition from primary to secondary (%)	GPI school life expectancy (ratio)	Female students in tertiary (% of total students)	Girls survival to G5 (% of enrollers)	Change in girls primary NER over last decade (% change)	Change in girls transition from primary completion to secondary enrollment (% change)
WEAK PERFORMERS (cont.)								
Egypt, Arab Rep.	93.4	0.96	—	—	—	96.5	10.2	—
Eritrea	34.4	0.88	81	0.75	25	72	11.2	1.9
Ethiopia	81	0.94	87.3	0.82	23.8	48.8	169.9	—
Guinea	67.8	0.87	40.2	0.72	24.4	64.3	90.6	-33.9
India	88	0.96	81.1	0.9	39.1	70	14.1	-4.3
Kenya	84.2	1.01	—	0.94	41.2	—	32.6	—
Lao PDR	80.7	0.96	76.9	0.86	43.2	67.7	8.9	7.8
Nepal	—	0.98	81.4	—	39.7	63.6	—	10.8
Nicaragua	93.8	1.01	95.7	—	—	55.2	16.1	-2.8
Niger	51.3	0.81	62.1	0.77	29	66.3	147	51.9
Pakistan	60.2	0.84	71.9	0.82	44.5	59.5	31.5	—
Tajikistan	95.6	0.96	97.7	0.85	29	—	3.7	0.7
Timor-Leste	81.8	0.97	87.5	—	40	79.4	—	—
FAILING								
Central African Republic	56.8	0.74	44.7	0.67	30.5	48.5	—	—
Chad	—	—	65.4	0.62	14.7	33.6	—	33
Congo, Dem. Rep	—	0.9	75.7	0.73	26.1	76.7	—	—
Côte d'Ivoire	52	0.83	45.1	—	33.3	66	7.2	18.5
Iraq	82	0.88	—	—	36.2	—	1.3	—
Nigeria	59.6	0.91	44.1	0.82	40.7	—	7.9	—
Togo	89	0.91	57.8	0.71	—	50.5	18.2	-7.6
Yemen, Rep.	66	0.83	—	0.62	28.7	—	58.9	—
SHADOWS								
Afghanistan	—	0.78	—	0.6	18	—	—	—
Angola	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Benin	86.5	0.87	—	—	—	—	—	—
China	—	—	—	1.05	49.2	—	—	—
Guinea-Bissau	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Haiti	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Korea, Dem. Rep.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kosovo	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Liberia	—	—	60.2	—	—	—	—	—
Myanmar	—	—	72.8	—	57.9	—	—	10.5
Papua New Guinea	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sierra Leone	—	—	—	0.83	—	—	—	—
Somalia	—	—	—	0.53	—	—	—	—
Sudan	—	—	98	—	—	100	—	15.5
Syrian Arab Republic	—	—	95.6	0.96	—	—	—	27.8
Turkmenistan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vietnam	—	—	—	—	49	—	—	—
Zimbabwe	—	—	—	—	39.5	—	—	—

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