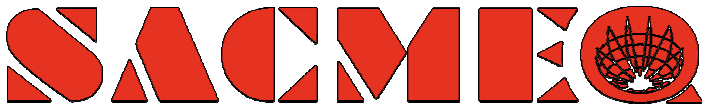


Policy Brief

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Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium
for Monitoring Educational Quality

Progress in Gender Equality in Education: Tanzania Mainland

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Introduction

This policy brief deals with progress in 'gender equality' in primary education for the eleven zones in Mainland Tanzania by seeking answers to the following specific questions:

- What were the changes in the **proportion of girls' enrolment** at the Standard 6 level for the eleven zones in Tanzania between 2000 and 2007?
- What were the changes in the **size and the direction of the gender differences** in reading and mathematics scores for the eleven zones in Tanzania between 2000 and 2007?
- What were the changes in **selected gender-related school environment information** between 2000 and 2007 that could be further investigated in order to improve gender equality in education for Tanzania?

Answers to the above questions are expected to guide policy decisions regarding the gender-related interventions in education.

Tanzania's Participation in SACMEQ

The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) is a network of 15 ministries of education (Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland,

Tanzania (Mainland), Tanzania (Zanzibar), Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe).

SACMEQ's mission is to: (a) expand opportunities for educational planners to gain the technical skills required to monitor and evaluate the quality of their education systems; and (b) generate information that can be used by decision-makers to plan and improve the quality of education.

SACMEQ undertook three large-scale, cross-national studies of the quality of education: SACMEQ I (1995-1999, reading) with seven ministries; SACMEQ II (2000-2004, reading and mathematics) with 14 ministries; and SACMEQ III (2006-2010, reading, mathematics, and HIV and AIDS knowledge) with 15 ministries. Tanzania participated in SACMEQ II in 2000 (2,854 Standard 6 pupils in 181 primary schools); and SACMEQ III in 2007 (4,194 Standard 6 pupils in 196 primary schools).

The Importance of Gender Equality in Education

The importance of gender equality in education within the process of international goal-setting has been emphasized in the Education for All (EFA) Goals (UNESCO, 2000) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (United Nations, 2006).

The gender equality issue in education has been a major concern in many countries, because of its link

with health and nutrition, economic development, and civic responsibilities. For the purposes of this policy brief, the concept of ‘gender equality in education’ follows the UNESCO (2003) interpretation, which refers to the notion of boys and girls experiencing the same advantages or disadvantages in attending school, receiving teaching methods, curricula, academic orientation, and producing equal learning achievements and subsequent life opportunities.

Gender-Related Policy in Tanzania

It was not until 1974 that the government formulated the Policy on Universal Primary Education (UPE) and the Musoma Resolution. The two addressed the issue of gender equality across the various social sectors including education. Some of the features of the policy and the resolution included free and compulsory enrolment for both boys and girls of primary school-going age. Gender equality was later renewed in the Education and Training Policy of 1995. Since then, the gender equality issue in education has been among the top priorities of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. As a result, a ‘gender desk’ was established in the ministry’s head office. It looks after gender issues including: access and parity in education, girls’ retention in school, gender-sensitive curricula, the protection of girls against violence.

As regards the status of women in all aspects of life beyond primary education, The Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children is responsible for formulating policies as well as monitoring progress (WMJWW, 2000)

Gender Balance in Standard 6 Participation

Figure 1 shows the proportion of girls enrolled at Standard 6 level for each zone and Tanzania as a whole in both 2000 and 2007. Throughout all the SACMEQ studies, the use of a ‘scientific’ sampling

method with an internationally required level of sampling accuracy ensured that the proportion of girls at the Standard 6 level in the sample reflected the entire Standard 6 target population.

Figure 1 illustrates, that for Tanzania Mainland, the proportion of Standard 6 girls’ enrolment did not change very much between 2000 and 2007, maintaining a gender balance of slightly above 50 percent. Across the zones, many revealed a balance in the gender levels, even in Central and Northeast, where the proportion of girls was over 55 percent in 2000. Exceptions to the gender balance occurred in Kilimanjaro and the Western zones, where girls enrolment outnumbered that of boys. A very positive improvement was seen in the Kagera zone, where the Standard 6 girls constituted 45 percent of the enrolments in 2000 and by 2007 this figure rose to slightly over 50 percent.

Gender Differences in Learning Achievements

While there was some improvement in Tanzania towards greater gender equality in enrolments between 2000 and 2007, policy-makers should be concerned about whether this enrolment trend was accompanied by greater gender equality in terms of learning achievements.

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the gender and time differences in the learning achievements in reading and mathematics by zone. The standardized scores with a pupil mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100 were established during SACMEQ II, based on the calibration of test items from the SACMEQ I and SACMEQ II studies. During SACMEQ III, use of the sub-set of these test items along with the Rasch-measurement approach permitted valid comparison of scores over time.

Reading

In Tanzania Mainland as a whole, the reading achievements for both boys and girls improved by about a 32-score-point increase in 2007, but there were still gender differences in favour of boys. In all the zones, boys and girls improved. Most zones maintained the same direction and magnitude of gender differences in favour of boys, with the exception of the Eastern zone where, in 2000, girls performed better than boys, but by 2007, the gender difference had virtually disappeared.

Mathematics

As with reading, in Tanzania Mainland as a whole, there was considerable improvement in mathematics for both boys and girls with about a 30-score-point increase during 2007. The overall achievement level dropped only in the Kilimanjaro and Northern zones. The same gender difference in performance was maintained in favour of boys during 2000 and 2007 across most of the zones. While gender differences in performance in the Eastern zone were notable in 2000, these almost disappeared in 2007, due to the large improvement by girls. In the Kilimanjaro and Northern zones, although the direction and magnitude of the gender differences did not change between 2000 and 2007, it is disturbing that the performance of both boys and girls declined in 2007. It is, therefore, conclusive to say that boys continued to overachieve in both reading and mathematics compared to girls during the period under review.

Other Information through the 'Gender Lens'

The above sets of results illustrated two contrasting pictures regarding gender equality in education. Firstly, Tanzania Mainland had been making great progress in the implementation of the gender-related policy regarding access to and participation in primary school, especially for girls. Secondly, it appeared that the learning dimension of gender equality had been overlooked (Saito, 2010). To

understand the context of these results, a set of selected gender-related indicators has been provided in Table 1. All the indicators shown in Table 1 should be interpreted in relation to the Standard 6 pupils.

Female Staff

Increasing the female staff has been seen as a strategy for girls' success, since female teachers and school heads are considered to be good role models as leaders. Among the SACMEQ countries, some had 'general' teachers who taught all subjects, while others had specialized subject teachers. In Tanzania, Standard 6 pupils were taught by general teachers for reading and mathematics. As shown in Table 1, there were different gender trends for different subjects and positions. The percentage of Standard 6 pupils taught reading by female teachers increased from 52 percent in 2000 to 60 percent in 2007, suggesting that more female teachers were teaching reading. In contrast, the number of female mathematics teachers decreased from an already very low 24 percent in 2000 to 16 percent by 2007. Furthermore, Standard 6 pupils who were in schools with female head teachers remained at the same very low level of 18 percent for both years.

School Safety

Certain school resources are very critical in order to keep girls at school. Such resources, for example, include school safety (school fences) and sanitation measures (separate toilets for boys and girls). In Table 1, the percentage of Standard 6 pupils going to schools with fences decreased from 35 percent in 2000 to 22 percent in 2007. The decline is worrying and could most likely be due to the failure by government to keep up with the enormous increase in newly built schools, as planned under the Primary Education Development Program Phase One, 2002-2006 (MoEC, 2006).

Overall, the results suggest that the practice of fencing schools declined during 2007. Pupils were more insecure when at school during 2007, than they

had been during 2000. Since safekeeping forms part of pupils' human rights, the fact that local authorities were not fencing schools, meant they were undermining pupils' protection. Moreover, it indicated non-adherence to the ministry's directive requiring all schools to be fenced.

Sanitation

In Table 1, the average numbers of pupils per toilet in 2000 and 2007 are shown separately, namely, boys per boys' toilet and girls per girls' toilet. Only a small percentage of Standard 6 pupils in Tanzania Mainland went to schools with no toilet at all in both 2000 and 2007. These average numbers of girls and boys per toilet reflected only those schools with at least one gender-separated toilet. If the average number of pupils per toilet had decreased in 2007 compared to 2000, this would have indicated that the situation regarding the provision of toilets had improved over time. This was not the case for Tanzania Mainland.

In fact, there was a slight deterioration in the situation concerning boys' toilet facilities during 2007. The pupil per toilet ratio increased from 79 to 82. The situation for girls remained constant for both 2000 and 2007 at 82 girls per toilet. In both cases for boys and girls, however, the ratio was much higher than the ministry's norm of 25 boys per toilet and 20 girls per toilet.

In conclusion, the situation regarding the availability of toilet facilities in 2007 declined slightly for boys, but remained the same for girls. However, compared to the ministry's norms, by 2007, the ratio of boys and girls per toilet was more than three times higher than the desired norms. Therefore, local government has a lot to do to improve this alarming situation.

Summary of Results

This policy brief focused on gender equality issues regarding the participation and learning achievements

(reading and mathematics) for Standard 6 pupils in Tanzania. Additional information concerning female staff, security, and sanitary issues was also presented to understand the context.

The results indicated that:

- There was an overall improvement in gender equality in participation at the Standard 6 level, but in Kilimanjaro and Western zones, girls were in the majority.
- A remarkable improvement was seen in terms of overall learning achievements in reading and mathematics for both boys and girls. However, concerns remain for the Kilimanjaro and Northern zones where there was deterioration for both boys and girls in mathematics. In terms of gender differences, the situation had not changed in that boys continued to outperform girls in both subjects.
- Although the numbers of female teachers of reading were increasing, this was not the case for mathematics teaching, or for school leadership positions, where men were by far in the majority.
- The provision of school fences deteriorated during 2007. Consequently, pupils were more insecure when at school in 2007 than they had been in 2000. There were no improvements in the provision of toilet facilities during 2007. In fact, the numbers of pupils per toilet that year were more than three times higher than the ministry's benchmark pupil/toilet ratio.

Policy Suggestions

To overcome some of the above-mentioned shortcomings, it is suggested that:

- The Department of Primary Education in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Office-Regional Administration and Local Government (PMO-RALG) should: examine why the majority

of female teachers did not teach mathematics, and prescribe the necessary interventions.

- The PMO-RALG (including the District Education Officers and Ward Education Officers) should enforce the primary school head-teacher-appointment policy, to ensure that gender equality is achieved.
- The School Inspectorate Department in collaboration with the PMO-RALG (including District Education Officers, Ward Education Officers, and head teachers) should examine the physical learning environments, in particular toilet facilities and school fences. They also need to look into classroom teaching practices to test for gender sensitiveness, so as to ensure equality in learning opportunities for both boys and girls.
- The ministry's gender desk should ensure that the gender strategy incorporates interventions that will improve the learning achievements of girls, especially in mathematics, to reach parity with boys.

Conclusion

To attain the gender-related objectives within EFA, it is necessary to go beyond gender parity. The SACMEQ III Project's research results for Tanzania Mainland indicated that there was a significant increase in girls' enrolments. Improvements were also seen in the reading and mathematics learning achievements of both boys and girls. However, girls tended to underachieve, especially in mathematics. Furthermore, men predominated when it came to teaching mathematics and school leadership positions. Pupils' security and sanitation facilities deteriorated over time.

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, in collaboration with the PMO-RALG, should take the various shortcomings seriously, and seek ways to implement the above-listed suggestions on a short-, medium, and long-term basis.

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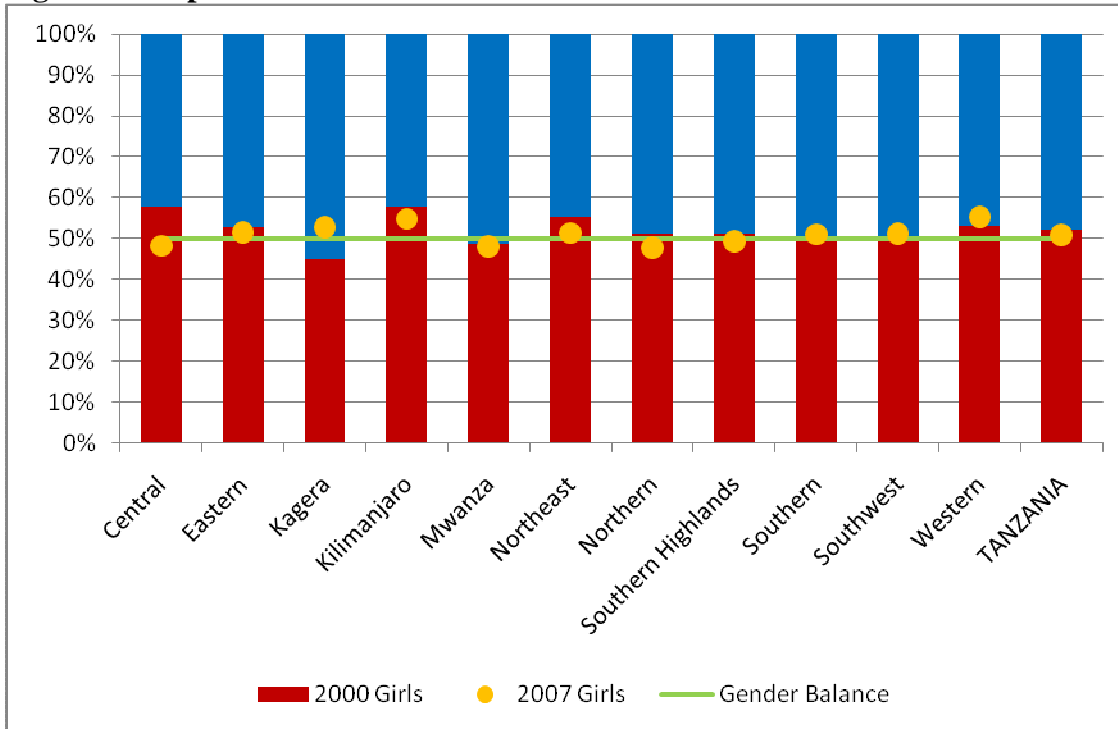
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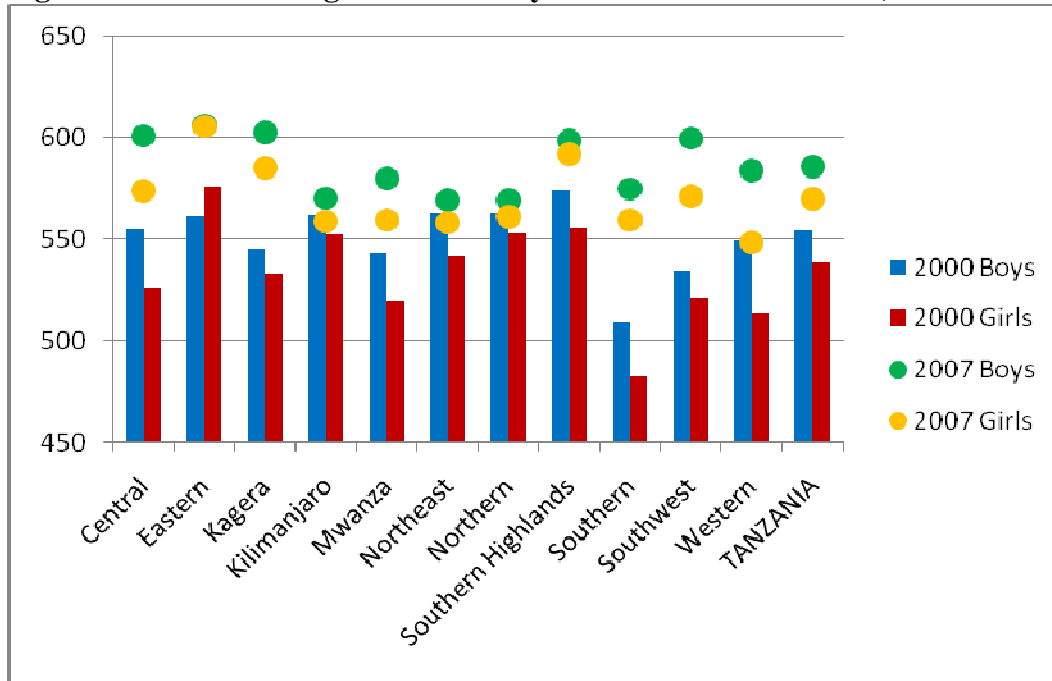
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Figure 1: Proportion of Standard 6 Girls out of Total Standard 6 Enrolments in Tanzania (2000 and 2007)



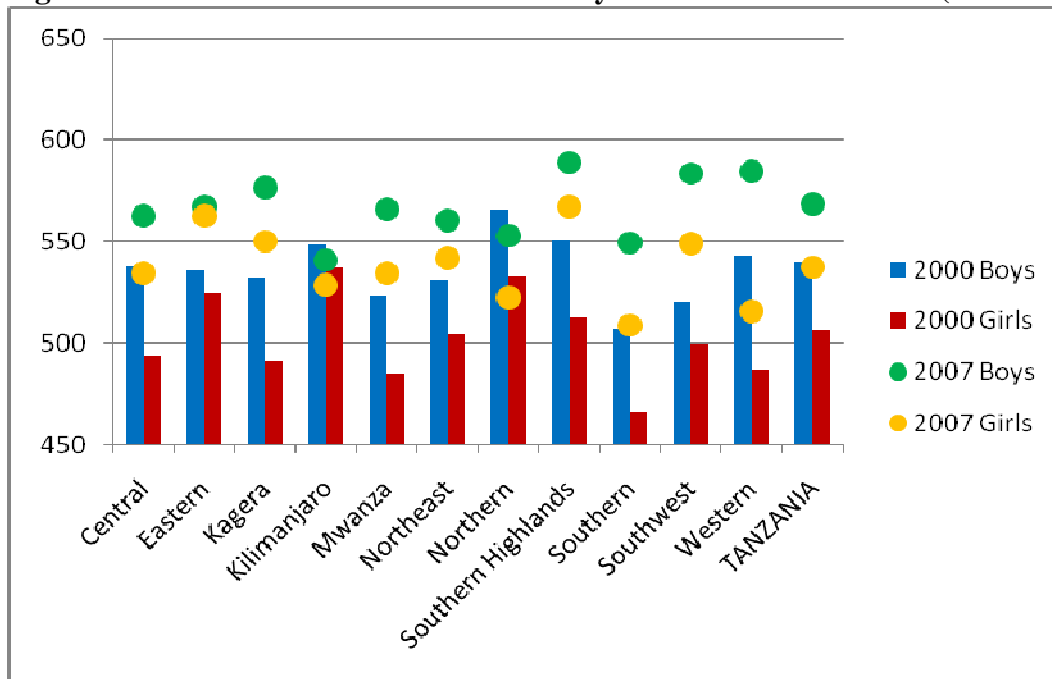
Source: SACMEQ Data Archive.

Figure 2: Mean Reading Scores for Boys and Girls in Tanzania (2000 and 2007)



Source: SACMEQ Data Archive.

Figure 3: Mean Mathematics Scores for Boys and Girls in Tanzania (2000 and 2007)



Source: SACMEQ Data Archive.

Table 1: Selected Information through ‘Gender Lens’ in Tanzania (2000 and 2007)

Selected Indicators	2000	2007
Female Reading Teacher	52%	60%
Female Mathematics Teacher	24%	16%
Female School Head	18%	18%
Schools with Fences	35%	22%
# Boys per Boys' Toilet	79	82
# Girls per Girls' Toilet	82	82

Source: SACMEQ Data Archive.