



Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium
for Monitoring Educational Quality

Progress in Gender Equality in Education: Zanzibar

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Introduction

This policy brief deals with progress in 'gender equality' in primary education for the five regions in Zanzibar 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 five regions in Zanzibar 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 five regions in Zanzibar 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 Zanzibar?

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

Zanzibar'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. Zanzibar participated in SACMEQ I in 1995 (2,286 Standard 6 pupils in 128 primary schools); SACMEQ II (2,514 Standard 6 pupils in 145 primary schools); and SACMEQ III in 2007 (2,791 Standard 6 pupils in 143 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, and academic orientation, and producing equal learning achievements and subsequent life opportunities.

Gender-Related Policy in Zanzibar

The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar is very concerned about equal participation and achievements from pre-primary to university levels. While Zanzibar has made remarkable achievements in terms of gender access, with girls outnumbering boys at all levels of education, there is concern about achievements, since girls performed less well in most curriculum subjects compared to boys (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2006; Salim, 2011). Equality in terms of quality education in Zanzibar has been an important priority (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2006, The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2007).

Within the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), the gender focal point is responsible for gender equality issues covering equitable access, girls’ retention in schools, a gender-sensitive curriculum, a gender-responsive teaching methodology, and the protection of girl students against violence. The Division of Science and Technology is also responsible for girls’ performance in science and mathematics. As with some Sub-Saharan African countries – Uganda, for example, (Saito et. al., 2011) – there have been a number of non-governmental organizations (NGO) that have dealt with the above-mentioned aspects of gender issues targeting mostly basic education. Some of these NGOs were: the Forum for African Women

Educationalist (FAWE Zanzibar); the Zanzibar Youth Education, Environment and Development Support Association (ZAYEDESAs); the Association of Non-Governmental Organisations, and many others. Regarding the status of women in all aspects of life beyond basic education, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Youth, Children and Women Development (MSWYCWd) is responsible for formulating policies and monitoring youth, children and women’s progress.

Gender Balance in Standard 6 Participation

Figure 1 shows the proportion of girls enrolled at Standard 6 level for each province and Zanzibar 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.

In Zanzibar as a whole, the proportion of Standard 6 pupils increased from about 50 percent in 2000 to almost 60 percent in 2007. At the regional level, in all the regions, the proportion was around 50 percent in 2000. In North Unguja and Urban West, the proportion increased to around 60 percent, while other regions remained the same.

Gender Differences in Learning Achievements

While more girls were enrolled at the Standard 6 level in Zanzibar in 2007 than there had been in 2000, policy-makers may be concerned about the trend in learning achievements.

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the gender and time differences in the learning achievements in reading and mathematics by region. The standardized scores

with a pupil mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100 were established during SAQCMEQ 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 Zanzibar as a whole, reading achievements were much higher in 2007 than they had been in 2000, with boys registering an increase of around 45 score points and girls about 60. Girls outperformed boys in reading at the national level in 2007. The trend in rising achievements was also reflected at the regional level in South Unguja and Urban West, with a large gender difference in favour of girls. In North Pemba, North Unguja, and South Pemba regions, both girls and boys improved, and the gender differences had almost disappeared by 2007.

Mathematics

The results for mathematics were very different from those of reading. At the national level, there was not much improvement, and while the gender gap was much reduced, it was still slightly in favour of boys. This pattern was also seen at the regional level in North Unguja. In South Unguja, both boys and girls improved, and the gender difference had disappeared by 2007. In Urban West, both boys and girls improved reasonably (25 and 30 score-point increases, respectively) resulting in a smaller gender difference. Both boys' and girls' achievements deteriorated in North Pemba and South Pemba, and the gender differences remained marginally in favour of boys.

Other Information through the 'Gender Lens'

The above sets of results illustrated two complementary pictures regarding gender equality in education. Firstly, in some regions, girls appeared to be in the majority at the Standard 6 level, whilst in

others, there was more gender balance. Secondly, it appeared that the learning dimension was moving either in favour of girls (reading) or towards reduced gender differences in favour of boys (mathematics). To understand the context of these results, a set of selected gender-related indicators has been provided in Table 1. All the indicators expressed in Table 1 should be interpreted in relation to the Standard 6 pupils.

Female Staff

Having a gender balance of teachers and school heads has been seen as a strategy for attaining gender equality in school performance, since 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 Zanzibar, different teachers taught the Standard 6 pupils reading and mathematics.

As shown in Table 1, there was an increase in the percentages of Standard 6 pupils being taught reading by female teachers, from 63 percent in 2000 to 73 percent in 2007. The increase was smaller for the mathematics teachers (58 percent in 2000 and 62 percent in 2007), but female teachers continued to outnumber males. In contrast, the percentages of Standard 6 pupils attending schools with female school heads increased only slightly to 21 percent in 2007, indicating the absence of gender equality in managerial positions. Such inequality could give the wrong impression to both boys and girls, namely, that female teachers are incapable of being school heads (Hungu, 2010). Likewise, female teachers may perceive that their gender is a barrier to their professional advancement, which could in turn lead to a dampening of their morale.

School Safety

Certain school resources are very critical to the well-being of both pupils and teachers. Such resources, for example, include school safety (school fences)

and sanitation measures (separate toilets for boys and girls). Table 1 illustrates that the percentage of Standard 6 pupils going to schools with fences was already very low in 2000, at only 11 percent, and this decreased to 7 percent in 2007. This drop can be explained by the construction of new schools without fences in the less advantaged areas (built since 2000, within the context of EFA). It was a very unpleasant situation and resulted in both pupils and teachers being insecure whilst at school.

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. About 5 and 3 percent of Standard 6 pupils in Zanzibar went to schools with no toilet at all in 2000 and 2007, respectively. 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. No improvement occurred in the provision of toilets for boys, and the situation for girls had actually worsened since 2000 — this was attributed to the increase in enrolments — even though extra toilets were being constructed across the regions. Unfortunately, there is no ministerial norm concerning the provision of toilets, and the ratios are extremely high, indicating that, for both boys and girls, far too many continue having to share toilets.

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 Zanzibar. Additional information concerning female staff, security, and sanitary issues was also presented to understand the context.

The results indicated that:

- The Standard 6 enrolments, which used to be gender balanced in 2000, changed in 2007, with girls outnumbering boys, especially in North Unguja and Urban West.
- The reading achievements in South Unguja and Urban West were in favour of girls, while in other regions, there were no gender differences.
- The mathematics achievements showed a small gender difference in favour of boys in all the regions, except in South Unguja, where the performance was exactly the same for boys and girls. Of concern is the overall deterioration in mathematics achievements for both boys and girls in North Pemba and South Pemba regions.
- The teaching position was becoming more feminized, while school leadership positions remained male dominated.
- The provision of school fences and toilets continued to be extremely problematic.

Policy Suggestions

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

- To overcome the problem of fewer boys at the Standard 6 level, the regional education officers and school heads should involve school management committees (SMC), parents, and other community members in dealing with the problem of boys dropping out.
- The Office of Chief Inspectorate of Education in collaboration with the Board of Assessment and Evaluation should develop indicators for monitoring and evaluating, so as to measure the performance of the system, including pupils' learning achievements. They should consult with the regional education officers of North Pemba and South Pemba to deal with the problem of the deterioration in mathematics achievements there.
- The Department of Administration and Personnel may wish to consider a demands-based teacher

deployment policy to reduce gender inequality in terms of teachers distributed across regions, which resulted in a shortage of role model teachers for girls in some regions. Currently, many female teachers are based in the Urban-West region.

- To cope with the co-education system in Zanzibar schools, the Principal Secretary should promote gender equality in school leadership.
- The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training should establish a standard benchmark for the number of pupils per toilet. Since privacy is an important issue for girls, there should be separate benchmark figures for each of the genders, with the number of girls per toilet being less than that for boys. The construction of toilets in schools should be based on these standards.

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 Zanzibar indicated that more girls than boys were enrolled in Standard 6 in 2007. Gender equality in learning achievements had also not been attained. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training should review and prioritise the policy suggestions above, in order to draw up policy strategies aimed at improving the quality of education for both boys and girls.

Authors

Khadija Ali Mohammed, Ministry of Education.
(khadijamohd@hotmail.com)

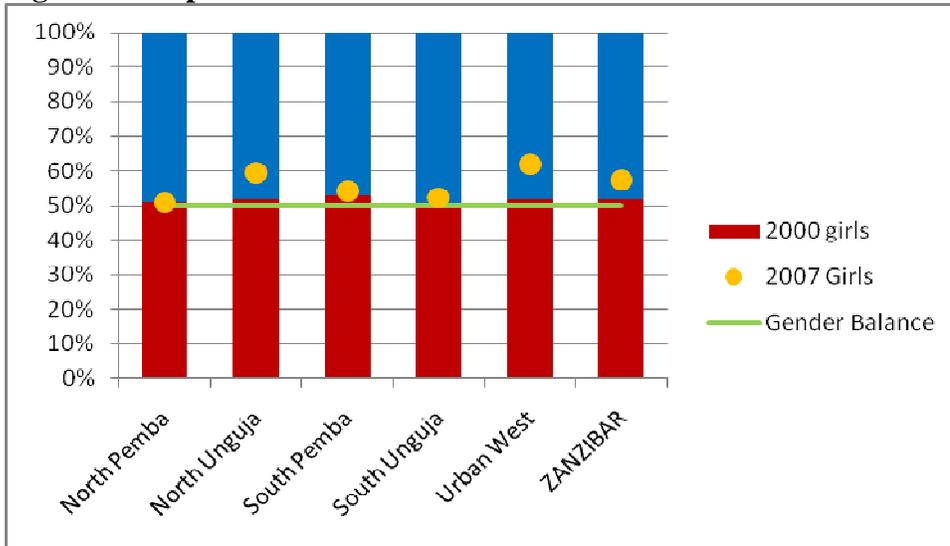
Massoud Mohamed Salim, Ministry of Education
(massoudsalim17@hotmail.com)

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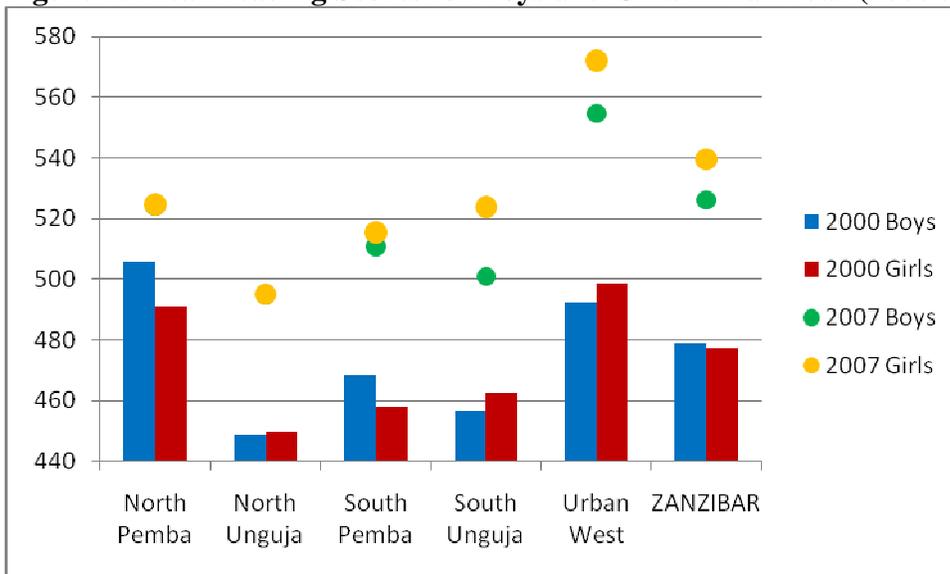
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Figure 1: Proportion of Standard 6 Girls out of Total Standard 6 Enrolments in Zanzibar (2000 and 2007)



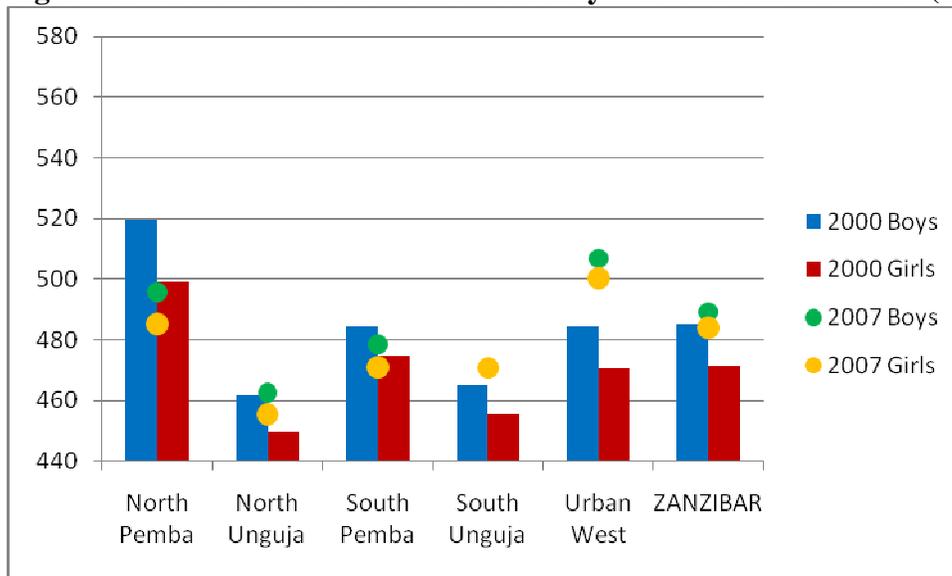
Source: SACMEQ Data Archive.

Figure 2: Mean reading Scores for Boys and Girls in Zanzibar (2000 and 2007)



Source: SACMEQ Data Archive.

Figure 3: Mean mathematics Scores for Boys and Girls in Zanzibar (2000 and 2007)



Source: SACMEQ Data Archive.

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

Selected Indicators	2000	2007
Female Reading Teacher	63%	73%
Female Mathematics Teacher	58%	62%
Female School Head	20%	21%
Schools with Fences	11%	7%
# Boys per Boys Toilet	178	175
# Girls per Girls' Toilet	166	176

Source: SACMEQ Data Archive.