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Quality Education and Gender Equality

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AABE	Alternative Approaches to Basic Education
ABEL	Advancing Basic Education and Literacy Project
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
BLP	Better Life Options Program
CAST	China Association for Science and Technology
COBET	Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania
CEDPA	Centre for Development and Population Activities
CFS	Child Friendly Schools
EFA	Education for All
FAWE	Forum of African Women Educationalists
FEMSA	Female Education in Mathematics and Science in Africa
FRESH	Focusing Resources on Effective School Health
FSSAP	Female Secondary School Assistance Program
GEM	Girls' Education Movement
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
INEE	Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOEC	Ministry of Education and Culture (Tanzania)
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NFE	Nonformal Education
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
SSC	Secondary School Leaving Exam (Bangladesh)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNEVOC	International Project on Technical and Vocational Education
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
VTE	Vocational and Technical Education
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

This paper serves as a background reference document for the workshop on “Quality Education and Gender Equality” organized as part of the UNESCO’s IBE 47th International Conference on Education. Following the theme of the conference, “Quality Education for All Young People: Challenges, Trends and Priorities”, this paper first provides a brief overview of the global trends and issues that specifically affect adolescent girls and their right to education. The second section summarizes the benefits of a quality education, formal and nonformal, for adolescent girls, both as a right and as a contributing factor to societal change. A model illustrates the relationship between quality education and girls’ empowerment, and its subsequent effects on behavioural and societal change. The third section of the paper identifies the barriers that most affect adolescent girls in their access to and participation in a quality education in formal, nonformal and alternative options. The fourth section is a brief overview of the statistical trends related to adolescent girls’ participation in post-primary and other education options. The fifth section poses key questions and issues that policymakers and practitioners need to address in providing adolescents with their right to a quality education that aims to achieve gender equality. The final section provides a framework for mainstreaming and integrating alternative approaches to education, and outlines policy options and specific strategies to achieve and quality education and gender equality. Short cases illustrate innovative and good practices of various strategies used in formal and nonformal education.

In an analysis of the issues affecting adolescent girls and their educational options, a rights-based approach shapes the dialogue, strategies and actions taken to provide education for all. Adolescents have the right to: policies and programmes that promote their survival and personal development, including health care, education, life and livelihood skills and vocational training; the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; protection against violence, discrimination and exploitation; and participate in matters that affect their lives and freely express their viewpoints (UNICEF, WHO & UNFPA, 2003 p., 1).

The documents reviewed for this paper included: reviews of research literature on girls’ education, including secondary education, technical and vocational education, nonformal education, and science and technology education; country project and programme documents, including gender reviews, impact analysis, and evaluations; international organizations’ policy and conference papers; and international organizations’ data on indicators for adolescent girls and education.

This analysis of the research, trends, and current innovations suggests the following priorities and issues for programmatic and policy approaches to education for adolescent girls:

- To fulfill the right of all adolescent to an education, mainstreaming and integrating alternative approaches to education must be on the agenda of international organizations, governments, NGOs, and practitioners. Mainstreaming all approaches to education addresses the rights of all youth; it will also help achieve EFA and MDG goals, and will provide support, legitimacy and acceptance of different forms of education. Mainstreaming allows for linkages among formal, nonformal and vocational-technical options, at the same time, it recognizes that the quality of education, and not the form, is the key factor in determining change in adolescent girls’ lives and in turn, change in society.
- The challenge in mainstreaming is to provide quality education in all options, while also addressing the diverse needs of adolescent girls. This challenge is constrained by limited resources of governments that will have to find creative and transparent ways to finance education, while also involving key partners, including international organizations, NGOs, communities, parents and youth.

- Quality education, in any form, must address the life-cycle and age-specific needs of adolescent girls, including their physical and psychological health; knowledge, skills and experience for participation in economic activity and livelihood; and empowerment for participation and leadership in social and civic life. While these needs must be addressed, the specific curricular content and pedagogy to meet these needs must be differentiated for the various sub-groups of adolescent girls.
- Achieving quality education and gender equality is more than the achievement of gender parity. Considerable progress has been made in closing the gender gap at the post-primary level. That said, overall enrolment for girls at the secondary level is low in many countries, even if parity has been achieved. Achieving equity at the post-primary level is an integral component of a quality education. A quality education, one which promotes equality in the learning environment and equality of opportunity, should be the direction for policy, programme and project goals. A quality education would address the issues that pose barriers to girls' access, participation and achievement, and the risks that threaten adolescent girls' well-being and life opportunities.
- Some strategies are better than others in creating quality education and achieving gender equality, and multiple strategies and inter-sectoral approaches are the most effective. Inter-sectoral approaches are necessary to address the barriers and needs affecting adolescent girls. HIV/AIDS, poverty and work, early pregnancy and marriage, sexual abuse and trafficking all must be confronted, while skill development, including an emphasis on science and technology, is important to prepare adolescent girls to participate in meaningful work, along with empowerment and leadership opportunities to participate in social and civil society. Inter-sectoral strategies require partnerships among government social sectors, international organizations, NGOs, business, religious organizations and leaders, communities and adolescents to mobilize support, to provide educational opportunities and to make broader macro-level change.
- Recent innovations that utilize a gender approach involving adolescent girls and boys are showing promise in addressing barriers facing girls' participation in education. Adolescent girls and boys can have an influence on supporting girls to attend school, preventing them from dropping out, and helping them achieve. Adolescent girls and boys also need to learn how to relate to each other in healthy ways. More attention needs to be given to the development of innovative projects that have an impact on changing girls and boys' behaviours and that advance equality in the learning experience and equality of opportunity.
- While there is considerable literature outlining policy directions for post-primary education and alternative options for adolescent girls, there is a lack of research that includes evidence and comprehensive data on girls' participation in alternative approaches to education. Data collection and development of additional indicators to assess the participation of girls in nonformal and alternative educational options are necessary for better policy and programmatic planning and evaluation. Rigorous studies on the impacts of strategies used in, and the cost-effectiveness and comparative advantage of, alternative education programmes are necessary to determine their effectiveness in achieving their goals, and subsequently, in improving adolescent girls' lives and affecting societal change.

1. Global Trends and Issues Affecting Adolescent Girls

About 85 percent of the more than 1 billion adolescents² in the world live in developing countries (UNICEF, WHO, & UNFPA 2003, p.1). Nearly 700 million adolescents live in Asia (South, East and West) and the Pacific, another 150 million live in Africa, nearly 100 million live in South America and the Caribbean, and approximately 90 million live in the Arab States (UNFPA, 2003, p. 2). In many countries, the majority of them are girls. Adolescents face enormous challenges in the transition from childhood to adulthood to learn, form relationships, shape their identities and acquire the social and practical skills they need to become active and productive adults (UNICEF, WHO & UNFPA, 2003, p. 1). While adolescence is a vulnerable time for all young people, this is particularly true for girls. HIV/AIDS, poverty, and trafficking especially affect adolescent girls, as do illiteracy, conflict, and violence. Yet, adolescents, girls and boys alike, can also be agents of change and can inspire hope for a better future.

This age group shares many similar risks, challenges, and opportunities, yet because adolescence cannot be equated with a specific education level, this creates greater complexity in providing quality education in the fluid process of education. The world community recognizes that adolescents have the right to education, life and livelihood skills and vocational training that promote their survival and personal development. They also have the right to be free from violence, discrimination and exploitation, and to attain the highest standard of physical and mental health. Finally, they have the right to participate in matters that affect their lives and to freely express their viewpoints (UNICEF, WHO & UNFPA, 2003, p.1).

1.1. EFA and MDG Goals

Education serves as prevention to many of the risk factors affecting young girls (World Bank, 2003a); it also provides many benefits to adolescents and to the larger society (UNICEF, 2004b).

The right to and the benefits from education for adolescent girls are underscored by the Education for All (EFA) goals reconfirmed in Dakar, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)³. The following EFA and MDG goals relate to the education of adolescent girls:

EFA Goal 3: Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes;

EFA Goal 5: Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality (World Education Forum, 2000).

MDG Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) and specifically Target 3, Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

MDG Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women; and specifically Target 4, eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015 (UN Millennium Development Declaration, 2000; UN & UNDP, 2004).

Despite the growing consensus among international organizations in support of adolescent girls' education (UN & UNDP, 2004), changes caused by global processes present questions and issues

² The term adolescent is used throughout this paper; it refers to The World Health Organization's definition as people between the ages of 10 to 19 years of age.

³ Similarly, The World Summit for Children's Goal 5, Educate Every Child, states that all girls and boys must have access to and complete primary education that is free, compulsory and of good quality as a cornerstone of an inclusive basic education. Gender disparities in primary and secondary education must be eliminated. (UN, 2002, p. 1).

regarding how to provide a quality education for all adolescents. The following features of globalization pose challenges for educating adolescents:

1. economic challenges, including the technological revolution and knowledge as a factor of production;
2. cultural and social challenges, including cultural change and clashes;
3. youth identity development in a global context;
4. political mobilization, and
5. sustainable development (UNESCO, 2004b p. 7-14).

1.2. *Global economy and girls' education and training needs*

These global processes present particular challenges for the education of adolescent girls. The changing economic environment, with its greater emphasis on technology and knowledge (UNESCO, 2004b, p. 7), presents the education community with the question of which knowledge, skills and values girls should acquire to participate in the labour force. The changing global economy is particularly significant for girls in developing countries as females make up a smaller, but growing, percentage of the formal workforce. Specific consideration needs to be given to how a quality education can prepare adolescent girls to be a part of the changing economy, rather than being marginalized even further.

1.3. *Global cultural and social change and girls' identities*

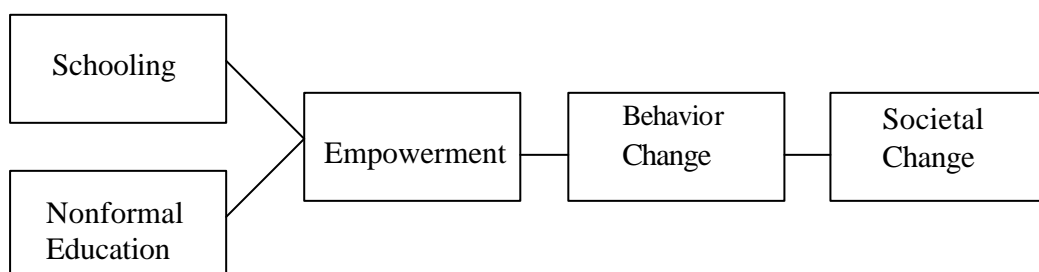
Cultural and social changes, such as mobility, cultural knowledge and values, and conflict, also have implications for adolescent girls' lives, the education they receive and the work they perform (UNESCO, 2004b). Consideration must be given to the kind of education that prepares girls to move within and beyond their own cultural groups and society, especially since the mobility of many girls has been restricted by cultural and social norms. Such an education needs to consider the knowledge that young people have of their own societies and of other societies. For adolescent girls, this also means preparing them to be both carriers of cultural values and agents of change. More attention must also be given to the changing identities of girls as they are educated, and how education can facilitate the development of positive identities that integrate the multiple experiences and roles of young girls (Wolf & Odonkor, 1997).

2. **Benefits of Education for Adolescent Girls**

2.1. *Model of Empowerment, Behaviour Change and Societal Change*

Education for an adolescent girl, and in particular, post-primary education, has important individual benefits in terms of her options and resources over her lifetime. These benefits extend beyond the girl to affect her family and the society as a whole. The benefits to society include enhanced economic development, education for the next generation, healthier young girls and families, and fewer maternal deaths (UNICEF, 2004b, p.17-20).

Figure 1. Model of Empowerment, Behavioural Change and Societal Change



Source: Adapted from Moulton, 1997, p. 4

The benefits of education for an adolescent girl and society can be explained by the effect that education has on empowering girls. Empowered girls acquire and use new personal, social and economic behaviours that, in turn, affect societal change (Moulton, 1997, See Figure 1).

Empowerment, behaviour change, and societal change are all possible outcomes of education. In addition, linkages exist between these various outcomes, with empowerment being the mediating variable between schooling and behavioural change (Jejeebhoy, 1996; Moulton, 1997). This relationship further suggests that the quality of education, one that aims to empower in personal, social, economic and political dimensions, is of crucial importance.

2.2 Effects of Formal Education

2.2.1 Participation in Society

Education for adolescent girls, and particularly post-primary education, contributes to their participation in social, political and economic spheres. Participation in education at the age of adolescence provides opportunities and a space for girls to engage in the world outside their homes (Mensch, Bruce & Greene, 1998, p. 85). This engagement of young girls may provide an impetus to greater civil society development through the creation of women's organizations and community development.

Post-primary education solidifies knowledge and skills and prepares girls for further studies and employment. Girls in post-primary education serve as role models for other girls to pursue further education. Post-primary education of girls is also necessary to build a base of future female teachers. Primary teachers are often trained at the secondary level, and secondary teachers need to complete a secondary education before entering teacher training institutes. Because the need for female teachers, at both the primary and secondary level, is great in many countries that are also struggling with girls' enrolment and parity, girls who enroll and complete post-primary schooling have greater options for work in this field (Mulkeen, Chapman & DeJaeghere, 2004).

2.2.2 Economic Development

Girls who receive a post-primary education have better opportunities as young women in the labour force (Schultz, 2002). Women's participation in the labour force also improves family economy, which in turn has an effect on the education of children. Post-primary education has a higher rate of return for girls than boys (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2002). More years of schooling for girls also has an impact on a country's economic growth, and not just a young women's economic behaviour (Schultz, 1991; Browne & Barrett, 1991). Moreover, a lack of education for girls has an equally negative influence on child mortality, economic growth and fertility rates (Klasen, 1999).

2.2.3 Children's and Young Women's Well-being: Fertility and Mortality

More years of schooling for girls are significantly related to a change in health related behaviours, including child nutrition, use of health resources, and family planning. These behavioural changes translate into improved well-being of adolescent girls. Additional years of schooling have a greater impact on girls' health behaviours than on boys, and in turn, girls' health behaviours also have a multiplier effect on families and children (Cochrane, 1979; Jejeebhoy, 1996; UNICEF, 2004b). A secondary education has a significant relationship to the reduction in fertility, the age of marriage, the use of contraception, a reduction in female genital mutilation, and the use of pre- and post-natal care, all of which influence the survival rates and the well-being of women, and their children (Coombe and Kelly, 2001; Jejeebhoy, 1996; Population Reference Bureau, 2001; UNFPA, 2003).

2.2.4 HIV/AIDS

A quality education for girls serves as a key mechanism for protecting girls against HIV infection, addressing their vulnerability, and mitigating the consequences of HIV/AIDS. Schooling and HIV/AIDS prevention education can increase knowledge, help delay sexual debut, increase condom use, and improve

understanding of HIV testing. The recent research on HIV/AIDS and education show that women with more education have a lower rate of HIV/AIDS infection than those with less education, e.g., in Zambia, the rate of infection for females 15-19 has declined and the decline was greatest among those with secondary and higher levels of education (Coombe and Kelly, 2001). Young rural Ugandans with secondary education are three times less likely than those with no education to be HIV positive. Empowering girls to make decisions about their sexual lives has affects beyond their health and creates healthier families and children. For example, women who have more knowledge about HIV/AIDS are more likely to send their children to school (UNICEF, 2004b, p. 19).

2.3. Impacts of Nonformal Education

The benefits of nonformal education are less known, in part because the methods of these forms of education vary greatly, and the research methods used to determine effects often yield less than conclusive findings (Moulton, 1997). Despite the lack of meta-analyses, nonformal education programmes can empower adolescent girls and women (Moulton, 1997). Changes in behaviour and related societal changes measured by demographic, health, and economic indicators are also a result of nonformal education programmes for adolescent girls (CEDPA, 2001).

2.3.1. Participation in Society

Nonformal education programmes help women to become more economically independent, to work together, to be more actively involved in community leadership roles, politics, and development activities (Burchfield, et. al, 2002; Moulton, 1997). For example, a nonformal education project for out-of-school girls that developed skills for income-generating projects found that they had an impact on the economic lives of girls and the development of the community (Kamel, 1994 in Moulton, 1997).

2.3.2. Health Behaviours

Nonformal education programmes can empower adolescent girls to change and use new health-related behaviours, such as seeking medical advice or using contraceptives (Moulton, 1997). For example, nonformal education programmes targeting out-of-school youth with a focus on life-skills have shown effects on health behaviours, including an increase in the use of contraceptives, decrease in early pregnancy and birth rates, and an increase in age of marriage (CEDPA, 2000, 2001). In addition, impact analysis of these programmes reported a change in knowledge about health issues, such as HIV/AIDS and infant care.

2.4. Conditions for Education's Impact on Behaviour and Societal Change

A quality education, both formal and nonformal, can have an impact on adolescent girls' development, health and well being. Educating adolescent girls also affects their participation in education, and in economic and civil life, which in turn has an impact on the economic and social development of communities and nation-states. The conditions of a quality education for adolescent girls are: 1) education must be linked to social and economic purposes of importance to youth and community (Easton & Moussa, 1996); 2) education should include life skills and skills training; 3) education should involve adolescents in their learning as a method of empowerment; and 4) education should seek to develop connections between adolescents and their communities (USAID, 2000b; World Bank, 2003a). These conditions for a quality education for adolescent girls also must take place in a safe environment, and be gender responsive.

3. Critical Barriers to Adolescent Girls' Access and Participation in Education

3.1. A Framework of Barriers for Adolescent Girls

The barriers to girls' access and participation in school, while not as confirmed by research as the benefits, are nonetheless, well known. Obstacles to girls' education can be found at various levels in a

society, including system and policy level barriers, school-level barriers, and household/community level barriers (UNICEF, 2001a). The specific barriers that affect adolescent girls include:

- 1) system and policy level– lack of employment opportunities for young women; unequal access to tertiary education; armed conflict or crisis situations; unequal access to secondary education through testing and placement; lack of re-admission policies; lack of alternative forms of education, including second chance options, vocational and technical training and workforce training;
- 2) school level– distance from secondary school; difficulty in identifying out-of-school girls; poor sanitation and unsafe environments within and around the school; lack of gender sensitive school environment and curriculum; irrelevant curriculum to girls’ needs and opportunities; poor teaching and learning processes; lack of female role models and teachers; and lack of guidance and counseling services; and
- 3) community/household – early marriage and pregnancy; menarche, or the transition to adulthood; nutrition, health and HIV/AIDS; poverty, opportunity costs and work options; mothers’ illiteracy.

3.2. *System and Policy Level Barriers*

Macro-level underdevelopment, such as a lack of employment opportunities or tertiary education for adolescent girls who complete secondary school, acts as a barrier to girls’ participation in post-primary education. Girls and their families perceive secondary education as less valuable when there are few economic opportunities, or when a young woman’s only role is to be married (Kane, 2004).

The presence of armed conflict or a crisis within the country greatly affects the education of adolescent girls. Girls suffer gender-specific effects such as forced early marriage, which intensifies during conflict, and they often are targeted for sexual violence, rape and forced prostitution. This gender-based violence as a tactic of war perpetrated along with other human rights violations seems to be wide-spread in today’s conflicts and occurs when girls are in their communities as well as when they are displaced or become refugees.

In conflict areas, adolescent girls are more likely than adolescent boys to miss out on an education for a wide range of reasons. These include: the lesser value that is placed on girls’ education, security concerns, family responsibilities, and the lack of attention to specific needs, i.e. proper clothes. The disintegration of families in times of war leaves women and girls especially vulnerable to violence (UNESCO, 2004a, p. 130; Pigozzi, 1999).

Another set of barriers lies at the national policy level. A lack of a positive policy environment and structures for girls’ education, including a lack of coordination between the education sector and other social sectors, inhibits adolescent girls’ participation in education (Bernard, 2002; Chapman, et. al, 2004). The absence of policy to promote education for adolescent girls is a hidden obstacle to achieving gender equality. For example, data collected on attendance, completion, and achievement that are not disaggregated by sex prohibits the formulation of policies for gender equality. Other policies act as specific barriers to girls’ education. For example, policies limit the access and placement of girls in formal secondary school (Wolf & Kainja, 1999). Girls are further limited in their access to post-primary education through exams, both primary leaving exams, and lower secondary exams. In many sub-Saharan African countries, as well as South Asian countries, boys outperform girls on exams. In these cases, exams serve as a “gatekeeping” function to limit the enrolment in formal secondary education (Miske, Moore & DeJaeghere, 2000).

In some countries, vocational and technical education (VTE) policies limit girls’ participation in VTE (UNEVOC, 1996b). A lack of funding and a lack of an integrated plan for VTE constrain the number and

type of courses offered, especially for adolescent girls. (Hoffmann-Barthes, Nair, & Malpede, 1999, UNEVOC, 1996a). Girls' limited access to and low participation rate in vocational and technical education is one factor contributing to low employment of women.

Policies also prevent enrolled girls from continuing their education. For example, in some countries, especially sub-Saharan Africa, but also South America and South Asia, policies prohibit girls from returning to school after pregnancy (Hyde and Miske, 2000; Wolf & Kainja, 1999).

3.3. *School Level Barriers: Environment and Teaching and Learning*

A lack of quality education at the school level comprises many of the barriers to girls' education. These barriers include the overall school environment as well as the teaching and learning processes. A lack of formal secondary schools in close proximity to girls' homes prohibits their participation. The number of schools declines dramatically at the secondary level from that of primary schools. In addition to schools not being in the community, parents' concern for safety of girls as they travel to and/or live at schools away from home is another barrier to girls' access and participation. Unsafe environments, including teachers' and boys' harassment and abuse inhibit adolescent girls from attending and participating in school. A lack of sanitary facilities particularly affects adolescent girls' attendance during menses, and does not provide for their need of increased privacy and security during puberty (World Education, 2001; FAWE, 2004b).

Teaching and learning processes (i.e., teachers, classroom environment, curriculum materials and pedagogy, and learning outcomes) that are not sensitive to gender issues and the needs of adolescent girls influence individual and family decision-making on pursuit of further education. Gender-sensitive teaching and learning requires relevant curricula for girls' needs and post-educational opportunities. Adolescent girls often get tracked into vocational studies, not general secondary education, further limiting their participation in education and their post-education opportunities (Hoffmann-Barthes, et al., 1999). The absence of a gender sensitive pedagogy and materials can also influence girls' participation. A "pedagogy of difference" that stresses gender differences as deficits delegitimizes girls and hinders both girls and boys learning (Wama hui, 1996). A lack of female teachers as role models, particularly in secondary schools and VTE, affects adolescent girls' enrolment in school, as well as their participation in certain subject areas. Finally, the absence of counseling and guidance services for personal issues, and educational and career options all serve as barriers to adolescent girls' participation in education.

3.4 *Community and Household Barriers: Early Marriage and Pregnancy*

Early marriage and adolescent pregnancy are major barriers for girls in sub-Saharan Africa and in some South and Southeast Asian countries. For example, the average age of marriage in Mali is 18; and similarly in India and Bangladesh (UNFPA, 2004). Many of these young girls give birth soon after being married, placing further demands on them as mothers (Population Council, 1998). The fertility rate of young girls ages 15 to 20 is considerably high in several countries that also tend to have low female participation rate in secondary school. For example, Zambia's fertility rate is 146 per 1000 young girls, while their secondary enrolment rate (NER) is 18 percent, and Cambodia's is 97 while their secondary NER is 12 (UNFPA, 2004; UNESCO, 2004a). Cultural values perpetuate these practices of early marriage and adolescent pregnancy. In rural areas of Bolivia and Guatemala, the community and parents perceive girls as adults upon reaching puberty, with new roles of marriage and motherhood, and they no longer need to or are able to attend school (World Education, 1999).

In addition to early marriage, the trafficking of girls has become a problem that not only affects girls' chances for an education, but also their health and work opportunities (Mensch et., al, 1998; UNFPA, 2003). As many as 10 million adolescents are involved in the sex trade (McIntyre, 2004). In many countries, girls who drop out of school are at greater risk of being sold into the sex trade.

3.5. *HIV/AIDS*

The effect of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is undermining recent positive gains in education. In most countries, girls are the most disadvantaged when it comes to school. There are over 10 million young people (ages 15-24) living with HIV/AIDS, and among those living in developing countries, 61 percent are female (UNAIDS, 2002). HIV/AIDS infection is four to seven times higher among girls age 15-19 than boys in some of the worst affected countries in southern African and Caribbean (Human Rights Watch, 2003, p. 12). The growing prevalence of HIV/AIDS among young girls has caused a decline in enrolment in post-secondary education options for girls. In a study of 38 African countries with low and high prevalence of HIV/AIDS infection, the researchers found that girls' GER rates appear to decrease as HIV/AIDS infection rates rise (Enge, p. 11 in USAID, 2000a). Girls also tend to be absent more than boys in order to care for ill family members (Kelly, 2000).

The death of family members to HIV/AIDS has resulted in an increasing number of orphaned children, projected to be more than 42 million by 2010, with 46 percent of them between the age of 10-14 (UNICEF, 2002a). These children are at risk of living in poverty, not being educated, and being sold into the sex trade (McIntyre, 2004).

3.6. *Sexual Violence and Abuse*

One of the facets of girls' vulnerability to HIV/AIDS infection is the occurrence of sexual violence and coercion. The South African Medical Research Council survey found that half of the school girls surveyed in 2000 had been forced to have sex against their will, one-third of them by teachers (Coombe, 2001, p. 8). Male teachers in several sub-Saharan African countries are a real concern for girls' participation because they subject girls to sexual harassment and sexual violence (Chege, 2004). While boys may receive more severe or more frequent corporal punishment, girls tend to be pressured into sexual harassment, or portrayed as the weaker gender.

3.7. *Poverty, Opportunity Costs and Work*

Poverty is a compounding factor, along with culture, school factors and policies, that further reduces the chances of girls being educated beyond the primary level. For adolescent girls, poverty affects their access to and participation in education in several different ways. First, the direct and opportunity costs of attending school become greater for secondary-school age girls, as they may have to travel further to school, pay fees, and forego work opportunities (Kane, 2004). Girls in poverty are more often employed in the informal sector, either in domestic work, paid or unpaid, or in agriculture (Population Council, 2000). Girls, ages 15-19, are more than twice as likely to be employed as those ages 10-14 (ILO, 2000 in UNFPA, 2003). This high rate of employment is directly related to low rates of secondary school enrolment. Girls living in poverty also have a higher chance of being trafficked, working either as domestic servants, sometimes in conditions of mistreatment and abuse, or as sex workers.

4. Trends in Education for Adolescent Girls

An analysis of education indicators related to adolescent girls in developing countries suggests considerable progress has been made in the achievement of gender parity, although less so in achieving gender equality. While the data only reveal part of the story regarding gender equality and a quality education, examining adolescent girls' access, completion and achievement among and within regions also uncovers factors that hinder the achievement of gender equality, and that act as barriers to the right for adolescent girls to a quality education.

4.1. Girls' Secondary Enrolment Ratios⁴

Over the last decade, enrolment in secondary education has risen in all regions⁵, and the rate of growth in girls' enrolment has outpaced that of boys, except in Central Asia and Central and Eastern Europe⁶ (UNESCO, 2004a; UNICEF, 2004b). Such growth rates should alert policy makers and donor agencies to the change in demand for secondary education. The range in the percentage change in GER is a negative 18 percent for Central Asia to 117 percent for South and West Asia (See Table 1). Great progress has been seen in girls' enrolment and achievement of parity in some countries, such as Bangladesh, that have had very low enrolment rates for girls, and have had considerable gender inequalities. Yet, sixteen of the sub-Saharan African countries reported less than 20 percent (GER) of girls enrolling in secondary school, and many of these countries have large gender gaps, some that are increasing (UNESCO, 2004a).

Table 1: Secondary Female GER and NER Rates, 1990 and 2000, and Percentage Change

Regions	GER, 1990	GER, 2000	Percentage Change, GER 1990-2000	NER 1990	NER 2000	Percentage Change, NER 1990-2000
The Arab States	38.1	70.5	85	--	61.5	--
Central/Eastern Europe	--	86.9	--	--	82.0	--
Central Asia	99.4	81.2	-18*	--	73.4	--
East Asia/Pacific	41.7	80.9	94	--	70.7	--
Latin America/Caribbean	58.1	83.6	44	--	69.4	--
South and West Asia	20.7	45.0	117	--	--	--
Sub-Saharan Africa	13.8	23.8	72	--	22.8	--

*Indicates the percentage decrease in female GER.

UNESCO, Global Monitoring Report 2003/2004, Table 7

Despite the progress made in gross enrolment ratios (GER) for girls at the secondary level, net enrolment ratios lag considerably behind GER in many countries (UNESCO, 2004a), suggesting that a considerable proportion of girls beyond secondary school-age are still attending school. Over-age girls are also attending primary school, as indicated by GERs and NERs at the primary level.

Almost two-thirds of the countries with available data have a GER above 100 percent. Yet countries in this group with high GERs are not necessarily close to UPE. Some countries, where the number of

⁴ This section reports gross enrollment ratios (GER) from UNESCO's EFA Global Monitoring Report for 1990 and 2000. Because GER includes the enrollment of any child, regardless of age, NER may provide a more accurate picture of adolescent girls' enrollment and gender parity. However, UNESCO does not have 1990 NER data for regions, and for the purpose of analyzing trends, 1990 and 2000 GER data are used.

⁵ The regional designations in this section are those defined by UNESCO/UIS as most data reported in this section are taken from the UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring report.

⁶ The UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report 2003/4 does not report 1990 data for the Central and Eastern Europe region. UNICEF's State of the World's Children 2004 shows the decline in girls' secondary enrollment in many countries across the CIS/CEE region (p. 36).

repeaters and over-age pupils is high, remain far from having all their school-age children enrolled (UNESCO, 2004a, p. 52).

Transition rates to secondary education also serve as an indicator of progress toward EFA. Transition rates are generally above 50%, except in sub-Saharan Africa where they are considerably lower (UNESCO, 2004a, p 66). Boys continue to have higher transition rates than girls in sub-Saharan African and Arab states, but girls' transition rates tend to be higher in many countries in Latin American and the Caribbean (p. 66, 67).

4.2. Secondary Gender Gap

Many countries also have made substantial achievement in reducing the gender gap. The Arab States and East Asia have made tremendous progress in closing the gender gap. Only South and West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa continue to contend with a considerable gap, though South and West Asia have made considerably more progress than sub-Saharan Africa. Central Asia experienced a reversal in their progress, in 1990 girls enrolled at a higher rate than boys, in 2000 more boys were enrolled than girls. Some countries with a fast growing secondary-school age population, such as China, are experiencing gender gap increases in certain regions of the country.

Table 2: Secondary Gender Gap, Male -Female GER, for 1990 and 2000

Regions	Gender Gap, 1990	Gender Gap, 2000
The Arab States	21.7	-1.9*
Central and Eastern Europe	--	-2.0*
Central Asia	-2.7*	4.4
East Asia and the Pacific	13.6	-7.1*
Latin America and the Caribbean	-10.0*	-5.5*
South and West Asia	26.0	10.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	7.4	5.3

*Note: A negative designator indicates a reverse gender gap in which girls have a higher rate of enrolment than boys.

UNESCO Global Monitoring Report, 2003/2004, Table 7

4.3. Adolescent Girls' Out-of-School and Illiteracy

While rising enrolment ratios and reduction in the gender gap are indicators of progress toward EFA, other indicators continue to show that there is still progress to be made in terms of girls' enrolment, completion and achievement. Estimates of adolescent girls out of school raises considerable concern for girls' education, both in the completion of primary education and in the enrolment and completion of post-primary options. In 2000, according to UNESCO enrolment statistics, an estimated 102 million primary school aged children were out of school in developing countries; 56 percent of them were girls

(UNESCO, 2004a, p. 50)⁷. South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia and the Pacific comprise 83 percent of all girls out of school (UNICEF, 2004b, p. 33). Children who attend some form of nonformal education are also included in the out-of-school data. While regional data on secondary out-of-school girls are not available, many of the girls who are out of school at the primary level continue to be so at the secondary level. The proportion of out-of-school children who are orphans is also growing substantially due to the HIV/AIDS crisis (McIntyre, 2004; World Bank, 2002).

Reasons for girls' drop-out vary across the regions, but a key factor is poverty (UNESCO, 2004a; UNICEF, 2004b, p. 26). Drop-outs are increasing in Central Asia and Central and Eastern Europe often due to increased poverty, especially among women-headed households (UNICEF, 2004b, p. 36). In Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, pregnancy or "family reasons" are causes for girls dropping out at the post-primary level (UNESCO, 2004a, p. 72). In some regions, such as Central and Eastern Europe, girls who have dropped out have fewer second chance options, and are more likely to be trafficked in the sex trade.

Reduction in the illiteracy rate for adolescent girls is another indicator of girls' educational progress. In all regions, young girls' illiteracy has declined, and considerably so in the Arab States, sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. A positive trend in literacy among young women indicates that formal and nonformal education is having an effect on basic literacy. However, some countries with rapidly increasing secondary school-age populations have seen an increasing gender gap in illiteracy rates, similar to the trend with secondary enrolment gender gaps in these countries.

Table 3: Female Illiteracy Rates, Ages 15-19 and 20-24, 1990 and 2000, and Percentage Change

Regions	% Ages 15-19, 1990	% Ages 15-19, 2000	Ages 15-19, % change, 1990-2000	% Ages 20-24, 1990	% Ages 20-24, 2000	Ages 20-25, % change, 1990-2000
Sub-Saharan Africa	43.3	31.9	26	49.2	38.1	23
The Arab States	36	26.6	26	43.1	30.7	29
Latin America/ Caribbean	6.3	4	37	8	5	38
Eastern Asia	8.8	4.8	45	12.2	6.4	48
Southern Asia	49.5	38.6	22	55.3	44	20

EFA 2000 Assessment, Thematic Studies, Literacy and Adult Education

4.4. *Girls' Achievement and Opportunity*

Once in school, the aggregate data suggest girls tend to fair well in most regions. Repetition rates suggest that boys generally repeat more than girls, except in sub-Saharan Africa, where repetition rates are higher for girls, in part due to inadequate preparation (UNESCO, 2004a, p. 71), and high absenteeism (Kelly, 2000). However, the high repetition rates (above 10 percent, and more often between 15-25%) for both girls and boys for many sub-Saharan African, a few Arab states, and Brazil indicate inefficiency, which may be a result of poor quality or institutional norms that resist progression. Secondary girls' achievement may be higher in some regions due to a self-selection process in which those who are

⁷ Based on both enrolment and attendance rates, UNICEF estimates the number of out-of-school children at 121.2 million (UNICEF 2004b).

enrolling at this level are already achieving or they come from more privileged backgrounds. While girls who reach secondary education can often do well, many girls do not complete this level nor take the secondary school leaving exam.

In some regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa, girls' enrolment and achievement tends to be lower in particular subjects, such as math, science and technology (Caillods, 2001); and their enrolment in vocational and technical education is not at parity (UNESCO, 2004a, p. 75), which has considerable implications for school to work transition. Central Asia is the one region with a large proportion of girls (35-50 percent in most countries) enrolled in vocational and technical education (UNESCO, 2004a). Furthermore, the fields of study in which girls enroll in technical and vocational education vary greatly across regions, with some regions emphasizing traditional female fields, such as secretarial work, while others have greater enrolment in more technical fields, such as industry or engineering (UNESCO, 2004a, p. 72).

While achieving gender parity may lead to greater achievement for girls (UNESCO, 2004a, p. 150), parity does not necessarily translate into the achievement of gender equality of opportunity. One indication of a lack of equality of opportunity is that in a recent survey in Asian countries, unemployment rates are higher for women than men across all levels of education (UNESCO, 2004a, p. 152). In a large international survey conducted on attitudes toward gender equality, most Arab countries expressed support for equality in education but not in employment. In effect, these countries support the development of young women's capabilities through education, but not their utilization in economic and political sectors (UNDP, 2003, p. 19).

The education of ethnic and religious minority adolescent girls, as well as girls in rural areas, remains a concern in most regions, where they are underrepresented in completion of primary and in participation in formal secondary school (UNESCO, 2004a, p. 134)

The trends regarding adolescent girls' participation in education reveal an array of needs. While some adolescent girls participate in education, many do not participate at all. Others are enrolled but do not complete, in part due to the quality of education available to them. Beyond access and enrolment in education, the educational options may not promote gender equality in terms of participation in the learning environment and participation in livelihood opportunities following completion. Much work is left to be done to improve the quality of education for adolescent girls.

5. Key Issues and Questions

The diverse constituencies of adolescent girls around the world vary considerably in their educational experience. Given the right to education for adolescent girls, several issues and questions arise to fulfill this priority. These questions and issues emanating from them are discussed in the following section on policies and strategies.

- Completion of primary is necessary to provide quality post-primary education for adolescent girls. How can education stakeholders ensure that a quality education is provided so all girls can complete and achieve? What are the educational options for those who do not complete primary or who have not attended school?
- Should there be separate schools and educational opportunities for girls in order to ensure that all girls have access to, complete and achieve success in quality education?
- What are the curriculum and pedagogical requirements for this diverse group of adolescent girls?

- How can core learning requirements be delivered effectively and efficiently in different forms, formal and nonformal, of education?
- What are the essential curriculum elements for a quality education that prepares young girls for the future?
- How can we ensure equivalence and linkages in alternative forms of education for adolescent girls, and all adolescents?
- How can we best prepare adolescent girls to cope with the challenges they face and to achieve success with regard to gender inequalities?
- What type of policies can we use to promote and ensure a quality education for the achievement of gender equality?
- What are the cost implications of educating the diverse needs of adolescents, especially girls?
- What should be the role of different stakeholders in taking this agenda forward?

6. Policy Options and Strategies

6.1. Mainstreaming Alternative Approaches to Education: A Framework for a Cumulative Learning Process

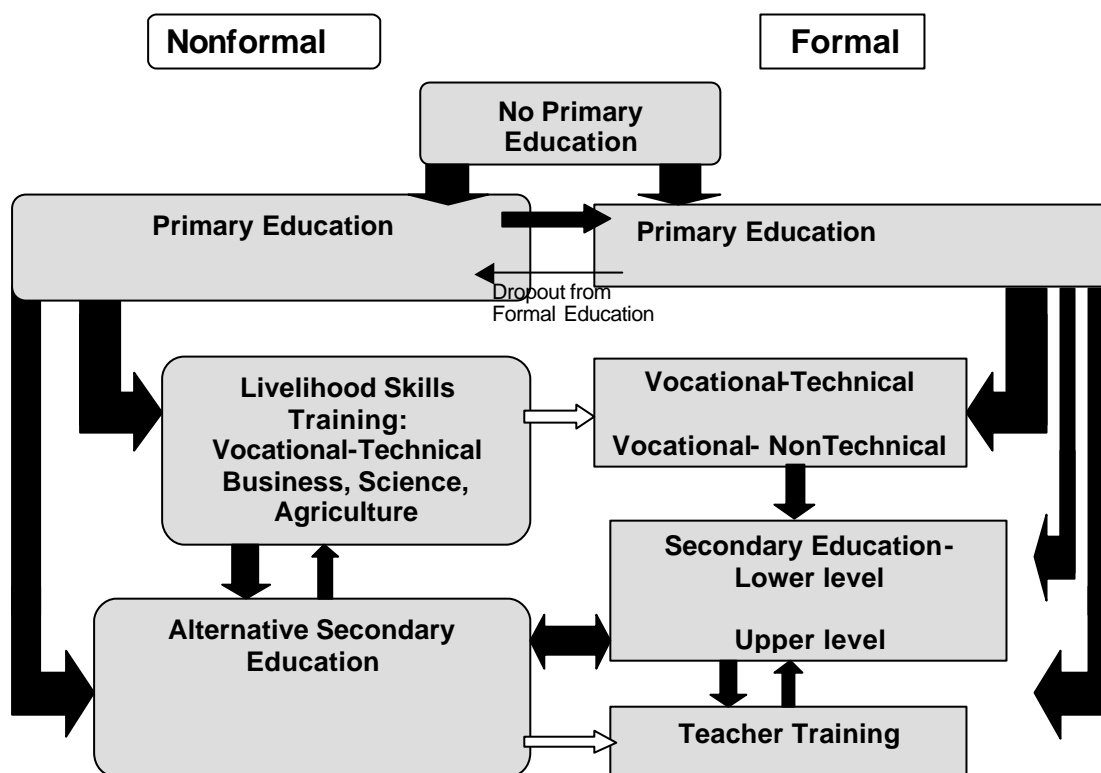
To address adolescent girls' needs and learning experiences so as to ensure that all adolescent girls can complete and achieve in education, especially those who have not enrolled in or completed primary education, alternative approaches to education need to be mainstreamed. Following the ideas of Wright (2001), Thompson (2001), and Hoppers (n.d.) a model for a cumulative learning process through the integration and mainstreaming of alternative approaches to education is suggested (See Figure 2). The rationale for this model is in the emerging consensus that formal and nonformal education should not be regarded as mutually exclusive or competing entities. Rather, all options for learning need to receive official recognition and support, and public acceptance (Wright, 2001).

Mainstreaming alternative approaches to achieve a cumulative learning process allows for flexibility, diversity and integration in formal, nonformal and informal systems of education. Alternative approaches relate to the following aspects of education: 1) the structure of the learning experience (hours and location); 2) the curriculum and pedagogy (local knowledge and methods of learning); and 3) the administration (managed by community, government, or NGOs), with a primary aim of creating a quality cumulative learning experience for participation in society. Mainstreaming alternative approaches to education aims to produce two effects on the education system. First, mainstreaming would transform the traditional formal education system to allow for "new types of programmes, structures, and forms" and to create a system that responds to change and learns from experience (Wright, 2001, p. 11). Mainstreaming approaches also creates legitimacy and acceptance for non-traditional innovations, and promotes equity (Wright, 2001).

Nonformal education and alternative approaches to basic education (AABE) are taking hold in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. NFE units or departments are being established within Ministries of Education, with policy development underway and database and information management being implemented for NFE (e.g. Kenya) (Thompson, 2001). UNICEF, UNESCO and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), among other organizations, support mainstreaming NFE in the education system.

To achieve a quality education and gender equality through mainstreaming alternative approaches, it may be most helpful to think in terms of the different schooling and learning experiences of an adolescent girl. Adolescent girls throughout the developing world could have any of the following educational experiences, and they should be able to move among different educational options.

Figure 2. **Alternative Approaches to Education for Adolescent Girls**



Within in these alternative education options, a girl can move through a system of education that includes formal and nonformal options, allowing for transfer and creating alternatives rather than forced, abrupt endings or “dead-ends” in her education.

6.1.1. *Curriculum, Outcomes and Linkages*

Within a rights-based framework, the curriculum and pedagogy in all forms of education must address the needs and values of the community and adolescents. Quality education must also prepare adolescents with the knowledge, skills, values and behaviours to confront the challenges and risks they, and especially girls, face, and to utilize their learning to create change in society. A gender-sensitive and empowering school environment and curricula, along with participation of adolescents in their learning is essential (UNICEF, 2002b). A participatory and life skills based education aims to teach critical thinking, negotiation, decision-making and leadership, with particular regard to gender inequalities and disparities. Attention must also be given to differentiation in the teaching and learning process to address the age and life-cycle needs of diverse students, and to build on the learning experiences they bring to their education.

Within this broader rights-based framework of quality education, primary education needs to address the tension between teaching core curricula and teaching to achieve literacy, numeracy and life skills. In addition, the subject matter in the core curricula must address the tension between national education requirements and the needs of learners and the local community.

Nonformal basic education is commonly found in three forms: 1) complementary, which aims to link students into the formal system, 2) compensatory, with a focus on basic literacy, numeracy and life skills not learned; and 3) alternative, which aims to be more relevant and suited to the learning needs of students (Hoppers, n.d.). To create a link with the formal system, nonformal education faces the conflict between teaching core curricula and teaching literacy, numeracy and life skills in a way best suited for adolescent girls. Skill training for livelihood options is another curriculum element that may need to be taken up by nonformal programmes, especially in the education of older adolescents, and girls who are head of household (Thompson, 2001). Skill training at this level may also consider linking adolescent girls to additional vocational and technical training and education.

Vocational and technical education must address the tension between traditional vocational studies for girls, such as health programmes, home economics, and commercial fields, and non-traditional vocational and technical programmes, such as industrial programmes and engineering, or computer technology (UNESCO, 2004a, p. 75). Livelihood skills training that provides skill development for income-generating project must also address the needs of young women to work in both the informal and formal economy. Integrating training in technology, sciences, and math for adolescent girls is important to achieve gender equality, addresses changing employment opportunities for young women, and prepares them for additional education opportunities (Hoffmann-Barthes, et. al, 1999). The challenge for both formal VTE and nonformal life skills training is to prepare adolescent girls with the skills to work in the formal labour market, and to create opportunities for life-long learning and training so that young women may adapt to changing social and economic environments (UNESCO, 1999).

Secondary education must address the tensions among its multiple purposes: 1) preparing adolescents for livelihood and employment; 2) preparing adolescents for post-secondary education; 3) preparing adolescents to be participating citizens in society; and 4) creating life-long learning interests and capabilities. To fulfill these multiple purposes, the curriculum and pedagogy of secondary education aims to impart knowledge and skill related to current employment opportunities, but also adolescent girls must be prepared for changing social and employment demands (Braslavsky, 2002, p. 11). As with VTE, the challenge for secondary education is to further incorporate adolescent girls in science, math and technology courses. Secondary education, both formal and nonformal, must also address the tension between life skills and livelihood skill training and broader competencies with higher intellectual thinking that is adaptive to societal and workforce changes (Braslavsky, 2002, p. 13). Alternative secondary education is faced with the challenge of preparing adolescents, and especially girls, for the same multiple purposes, while also creating bridges to employment and formal education.

6.1.2. *Financing*

Achieving access to a quality primary and secondary education for all, and especially adolescent girls, would require an increase in public spending for education (World Bank, 2003c). The cost of an integrated system of alternative approaches for quality education and gender equality may be prohibitive to some governments (UN, 2004). In addition, certain effective strategies necessary for equity, such as stipends or HIV/AIDS education, have high costs (Herz & Sperling, 2004). Other methods for financing this commitment would be reducing unit costs, increasing internal efficiency, and developing cost-sharing mechanisms (Lewin & Caillods, 2001). However, strategies commonly used to reduce unit costs or increase internal efficiency can have a negative impact on quality; for example, increasing internal efficiency through automatic promotion may negatively impact learning. Retaining a focus on quality education while seeking alternative financing options is essential.

In addition to the financial capacity to provide education for adolescent girls, human capacity, and in particular, training sufficient teachers to address the growing demand for education is a concern. For example, in Tanzania where the secondary GER is less than 6 percent, and taking into account the annual secondary-school age growth rate, estimates suggest that more than 4,000 teachers, or nearly one-third the current teacher corps, will be needed in 2005 (Chapman, Mulkeen, & DeJaeghere, 2004, p. 15).

Governments have a responsibility, however, of creating a positive policy environment that allows alternative options to be developed and supported, with the assurance of equity and quality standards. Education stakeholders, particularly international organizations, businesses, NGOs, and communities, play a part in financing educational options.

6.2. Effective Strategies to Address Specific Barriers for Adolescent Girls

6.2.1. *System and Macro-Policy Level Strategies* (See Box 1): Mainstreaming gender into legislation and national education plans is necessary to achieve gender equality (UN & UNDP, 2004). To assist countries with the necessary resources and technical assistance that mainstreaming may require, donor organizations should provide incentives for countries that institutionalize gender in their overall development assistance frameworks, such as the approach taken by UNICEF's Acceleration Strategy (UNICEF, 2004b, p. 3; Wright, n.d.). Cambodia has adopted a five-year strategy for gender mainstreaming in education and has identified four components for integrating gender equity into education policies and programmes. As a result of these efforts, enrolments for girls are increasing and improvements in gender parity are occurring at all levels (Kingdom of Cambodia, Ministry of Education Youth and Sport, 2004).

Through mainstreaming and institutionalizing gender, cross-sectoral strategies can address specific system barriers (Bernard, 2002; Kane, 2004; Williams, 2001; World Bank, 2001). Cross-sectoral

Box 1. Legislation and Policies to Support the Right to a Secondary Education – Chile

During the 1990s, the Government of Chile initiated a series of education reforms aimed at expanding and improving facilities and modernizing curricula. The policy goal was to improve the equity and financing of public education. While Chile has had free universal primary education for more than 80 years, this is not the case with secondary education. In the 1990s, education indicators revealed that one-third of Chilean adolescents were not completing secondary education. Operating from the perspective that all children have a right to an education, a 1998 UNICEF study revealed that those who were from poor families, indigenous, or pregnant girls were most likely to drop out. In addition, adolescents dropped out because the quality and relevance of the education did not meet their needs. The Government concluded that 12 years of schooling was necessary to meet the demands of citizenship and the labour market. The government also recognized that drop out adolescents were vulnerable to other social risks, such as crime and intergenerational poverty.

To mobilize political will for change, the government, with the help of UNICEF, convened a conference with other education stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, a religious organization, child welfare, and parents. This conference suggested solutions to address the various problems and to fulfill Chile's commitment to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The government took action by creating a programme (Liceo para Todos) that aimed to improve equity and quality in secondary education. Multiple interventions were used: curriculum reform, including participatory civic education; scholarships; additional resources for schools to help those with special needs; counseling; tutoring; meal programmes; and the involvement of communities and families.

To institutionalize these strategies and further mobilize political will, UNICEF convened another conference to showcase good practices from the programme. The government confirmed its commitment to the right to education by passing a Constitutional Amendment that ensured secondary education for all adolescents. Allocation of funding as well as continuing support and expansion of the programme Liceo para Todos are the strategies that will help prevent drop out and return drop out adolescents to school. In addition to these Government initiatives, UNICEF has an initiative addressing child labor, which includes other interventions to support adolescents in completing secondary school. These reforms along with other established initiatives have resulted in improved enrollment (17% since 1990) and a reduction in drop-out to 8 percent. These efforts to provide a quality education for all has resulted in the government spending 13 times more on education than they did in 1990. (Gibbons & Crotti, n.d.; UNICEF, n.d.)

strategies need to involve Ministries of Education, Finance, Labour, Gender, Justice, Health and Planning in partnerships to implement interventions for girls (UNICEF, 2004b, p. 73-74). International organizations and NGOs also have a role to play in mainstreaming gender into policy and education plans. For example, the Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE), a pan-African NGO, and the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, a partnership framework for UN entities and other development partners, have worked to change policy and practices to create quality education for the achievement of gender equality. Specific interventions used in combination to improve the education of adolescent girls may include: labour policies to address child labour, including wage increases and policies that promote formal employment for heads of household (Lopez-Acevedo, 2002; UN, 2004), and equal access and pay in the formal labour sector for young women; provisions for child-care, health care options, and specifically HIV/AIDS information and care; and policies and initiatives that provide girls who drop out to return to school, or to have second chance options.

6.2.2. *Strategies in Conflict Areas*

Strategies to respond to crisis situations, from a rights perspective, take a development approach to education rather than viewing education as a relief intervention (Pigozzi, 1999). Again, a cross-sectoral approach to address mental and physical health, economic needs, and educational needs of girls is required. While life skills, such as safety and sanitation, are of utmost importance for adolescent girls in these situations, attention is also being directed to skills training to increase livelihood options and to core knowledge to reintegrate students into the formal education system (Pigozzi, 1999; Sesna, et. al., 2004). Peace education and conflict mediation are also key components of an education in conflict situations to help adolescents build skills for peaceful and productive lives in the post-conflict and transition period (Fountain, 1999). The Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and the UNICEF Emergency Handbook provide guidelines, assessments, and good practices for developing education in emergencies

6.2.3. *Education Policy Strategies*

Education strategies at the policy level are essential to achieving gender equality. A policy environment, including structures, personnel, and policies, must exist to create change for girls' education (Bernard, 2002; Chapman, et. al, 2004). A policy that addresses particular barriers for adolescent girls is readmission for pregnant girls and new mothers. A readmission policy has been adopted and implemented in Malawi and several other sub-Saharan African countries, in an effort to improve the participation of adolescent girls' in secondary education (FAWE, 2004a; Wolf & Kainja, 1999). The policy acknowledged the right of a pregnant girl to an education and aimed to address high drop-out rates of pregnant girls (See Box

Box 2. Policy and Interventions Regarding Pregnant Adolescent Girls - Malawi

In an effort to increase the participation of girls in secondary school, and to eliminate a policy that had discriminatory effects, the Government of Malawi adopted a new policy in 1993 that allowed girls who had become pregnant to return to school one year later. The new policy also dismissed the boy responsible for the pregnancy, and allowed him to return one year later (Mazloun, 2000; Wolf & Kainja, 1999).

This policy aimed to particularly address secondary school drop-out among girls. In 1990, it was estimated that more than 9 percent of secondary school girls enrolled in Year 8 dropped out of school due to pregnancy.

In addition to the new policy, a life skills curriculum was introduced in the school along with guidance and counseling services to assist youth who needed to temporarily drop out, or to assist youth in addressing sexual issues. A community mobilization campaign, including sensitization, community dialogues and youth groups, has been undertaken to create change in attitudes about pregnant girls and schooling, as well as to create change in cultural customs of early marriage and childbirth.

The majority of girls who were suspended were readmitted (541 of 585 from 1997-2000) (Mazloun, 2000). Administration and enforcement of the policy is difficult, both in terms of suspending the boy and in readmitting the girl to school.

Lessons learned for more effective implementation include the need for community mobilization and gender sensitization of school teachers and administrators to develop more accepting attitudes of adolescent girls and their need for an education, and to address attitudes and practices that promote early marriage and pregnancy. "Second chance" options for girls to continue their education while pregnant and caring for a young child are necessary (Mazloun, 2000).

2). This policy provided a favorable environment for other girls' education initiatives to be implemented, such as girls' clubs. In addition, policies create awareness and can change attitudes and behaviours that allow for girls' participation in school (FAWE, 2004a).

Another important area for policy change is in vocational and technical education. Current policies and resource allocations in many countries restrict access and limit fields of technical study for girls (Hoffmann-Barthes et. al, 1999; UNESCO, 1999). Providing sufficient resources and developing a coordinated strategy for VTE is important to increase access for adolescent girls and to achieve parity (UNESCO, 1999). For example, Botswana has established a Technical and Vocational Gender Reference Group to advise the Ministry of Education on guidelines for addressing gender inequities (Nganunu in UNEVOC, 1996a).

Finally, policies addressing the "gatekeeping" function of testing and placement are necessary for equity and quality of schooling for adolescent girls (Miske, Moore & DeJaeghere, 2000). This gatekeeping phenomenon will be dealt with, in part, as access is increased and additional spaces are made available in secondary schools for more adolescents to attend. In addition, the validity and appropriateness of the examinations and the culture and tradition of passing small numbers of students must be challenged.

6.2.4. *Strategies for School Environment and Teaching and Learning*

Many interventions have been used successfully to address barriers at the school level for adolescent girls. Multiple interventions to address the myriad of barriers are more successful than a single intervention (Kane, 2004; Bernard, 2002). Successful interventions that promote gender equity at the school level include:

- building schools, boarding facilities, transportation or satellite schools to reduce the distance adolescent girls travel to school;
- improving water and sanitation facilities, including the provision of sanitary goods for menstruating girls, such as FAWE has done in Uganda (FAWE, 2004b);
- creating single sex schools or classes, which in some cases may include gender relevant curriculum and pedagogy; for example, in southern Sudan, single-sex schools provide hope and female role models to girls who have been greatly affected by conflict (UNICEF, 2001b); adolescent girls in single sex schools in southern Nigeria had significantly higher scores in the IEA math test than their counterparts in co-educational schools (Lee & Lockheed, 1998); and
- creating alternative programmes that allow girls who drop out to continue

Box 3: Second Chance Education for Out-of-School Adolescent Youth - China

This UNICEF-supported project was initiated in 1999 in partnership with the China Association for Science and Technology in poor rural areas of western China. The aim was to provide non-formal education to youth who had dropped out of school, mostly due to poverty. The project initially involved training out-of school adolescents on livelihood skills. From 2001, the design of the project was based on the young peoples' own perspectives and experiences and included life skills through peer education as a method for learning on child rights, self-protection and health issues, including HIV/AIDS prevention. Project staff and youth participants reported that the knowledge and skills acquired gave the young people, and especially girls, new confidence, more options for employment, and a reduced sense of being victimized by others. Other outcomes of the project have included youth participation in the implementation of project activities and youth assistance with agricultural production of families. A secondary effect of increased income has allowed siblings to continue in formal schooling. Computer skills and learning how to cope with communication and transport issues in urban areas are important in some project areas; disaster-preparedness is vital in earthquake prone areas; and a novel experiment in the peer-teaching of livelihood skills is being tried out in Xinjiang, thus encouraging a sense of self direction in comprehensive skills development. This method is proving to be very popular and is spreading to other project counties. In China, a third of the 300 million migrant population are adolescents, representing a growing challenge for the provision of quality educational options. Life skills education helps young people to build their confidence and empowers them to problem-solve their way out of the hardships and vulnerable situations they face in their daily lives. (UNICEF, 2001c and UNICEF country office information)

learning (Bernard, 2002; Chapman, et al., 2004), such as Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET) or UNICEF's (2001c) Second Chance Education Project in China (See Boxes 3 and 4).

A gender-sensitive school environment, curriculum and pedagogy create gender equity and a quality education through addressing the different curriculum and pedagogical needs of adolescent girls. Improving the quality of education by training more female teachers for secondary level, providing gender-responsive textbooks, and developing a curriculum strong in math and sciences aims to achieve gender equality (UN & UNDP, 2004 p. 26.)

The curriculum should be relevant to girls' experiences and their post-educational opportunities. Of particular importance for adolescent girls' participation and achievement in post-primary education is their enrolment and achievement in math, science and technology courses. Parents may be more willing to send their girls to secondary school if there is a good curriculum, and particularly if girls are enrolled in science (Herz & Sperling, 2004, p. 12). FAWE, through its Female Education in Mathematics and Science in Africa (FEMSA) programme, particularly aims to increase girls' participation and achievement in math, sciences and technical subjects through multiple interventions. A gender-sensitive curriculum and pedagogy relates these subjects to girls' daily experiences and the uses of science and math in the local community. It also presents the material in a manner that engages girls, such as problem solving and collaborative learning (Harding, 1996, p. 114).

Gender-sensitive pedagogy aims to empower learners to cope with the challenges they face by helping them develop as critical, creative and flexible human beings (Wamahiu, 1996). Girls and boys must be taught in a way as to understand the social structures and personal relations that perpetuate gender inequalities, and to develop knowledge and skills to make change in society. A gender-sensitive pedagogy differentiates the learning process for girls and boys, as their learning styles, preferences and experiences vary (O'Gara & Kendall, 1996). Furthermore, differentiation in the teaching and learning process should be age and life-cycle specific; for example, attending to an adolescent girl's knowledge, experiences and needs while teaching her basic literacy and numeracy.

Teachers, and particularly female teachers, play an important role in creating gender equity. Female teachers act as role models, and have an impact on girls' attendance and participation by providing safety. Female teachers teaching in non-traditional subject areas for girls, such as math and vocational technical fields, can have an impact on girls' enrolment and participation in these subjects (Hoffmann-Barthes, et. al, 1999). For example, in Thailand a high proportion of female teachers in science gives girls a more positive image of the subject and influences their participation and engagement in the subject (Harding, 1996, p. 120).

The school environment overall must also be gender sensitive. UNICEF's child-friendly schools (CFS) framework focuses on the "child" and her rights to a quality education. This approach emphasizes

Box 4: Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET)

This project was initiated in 1999 by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC), with support from UNICEF Tanzania. It initially operated in 20 centers in 2 districts with the highest drop out rates; in the current phase, the Government of Tanzania is committed to implementing COBET in all its districts. This nonformal education second-chance option fulfills the right for children, including married adolescent girls, who never had the chance to start primary school or who dropped out, to receive an education.

COBET learners are divided into 2 cohorts: 8-13 years old and 14-18 years old. Schooling is adapted to the needs of the learners: classes are 3 ½ hours, allowing for the learners to do their chores or income-generating projects; students acquire numeracy, literacy, and vocational skills, through a complementary, but condensed – 3 year - curriculum that allows transfer to formal education. The curriculum for the older cohort differs to address their needs of livelihood skill training. The curriculum and pedagogy is based on child-friendly principles.

In an assessment, students achieved similar results to those who attended full formal primary education, although girls continue to receive lower marks than boys. Girls are also reported to appear less confident than boys and may not receive attention from the teacher. While the curriculum allowed for transfer into the formal education system, some difficulties arose because students may not have been sufficiently prepared in all the subject matter. (UNICEF, 2004a)

various components that promote gender equity, including the inclusion of girls, gender-sensitive facilities, gender sensitive teachers, quality learning outcomes, and community and family focused (Chabbott, 2004, p. 6). The CFS approach integrated into *Escuelas Nuevas* in Colombia, Guatemala and elsewhere in Latin America has resulted in increased leadership skills and responsible behaviour for girls and boys (Chabbott, 2004, p. 32). Counseling services for girls' personal and social concerns, as well as educational and career guidance are also important interventions to promote gender equity and a quality education (Kane, 2004; Population Council, 2000; UN, 2004).

6.2.5. *Strategies for Community Mobilization and Change*

"Real community participation" (Kane, 2004, p.10) can also be a successful strategy, and can be used to address community and social and cultural concerns regarding girls' education (Rugh & Bossert, 1998; UNICEF, 2004b). The voices of women and girls, and their fathers and brothers, are all important in supporting girls' enrolment, participation, and achievement in school. Girls participating and taking leadership positions in clubs, school activities, and sports further empowers them to make decisions, take action, and be responsible for their lives. Successful interventions used to development community awareness and advocacy include participatory research and action, in which communities and girls' needs are identified and action plans are devised (Kane, 1999); community mapping, to identify out-of-school girls; and PTAs with input in and oversight of the quality of schooling. The Girls Education Movement, or GEM Clubs, in Uganda and South Africa are good examples of the use of peer educators, girls and boys, to respond to the needs of girls. These clubs have conducted community mapping to identify out-of-school girls, used advocacy to keep girls in school or to delay marriage, and taught other children about important health issues, such as HIV/AIDS (UNICEF, 2004a).

6.2.6. *Strategies for Household Barriers*

Interventions that address the direct costs of schooling for households are helpful to improving girls' attendance and retention (Herz & Sperling, 2004; Kane, 2004; UNICEF, 2004a). Scholarship programmes, targeted at direct tuition costs, have been used in various ways with some degree of success to help adolescent girls continue their education. For example, Colombia's secondary school voucher programme, in which poor children receive vouchers to attend private schools has had a significant effect on the number of years of schooling completed, which is greater for girls than boys (Angrist, et al., 2002). Less common

Box 5. Female Secondary School Assistance Programme - Bangladesh

From 1994-2000, FSSAP (Phase 1) was funded by the World Bank, in conjunction with a larger country-wide initiative involving the Government of Bangladesh, Norwegian Agency for Development and the Asian Development Bank. FSSAP is a scaled up programme based on an earlier project funded by USAID and administered by the Asian Foundation from 1982-1994.

The programme aimed to address the large gender gap in secondary school and to increase the participation of girls overall in secondary school, particularly in rural areas. The programme provided stipends directly to girls to continue their education; the stipends were designed to cover the costs of fees, books, transportation and uniforms; additional funding was provided for girls to take the secondary school leaving exam (SSC). To continue receiving the stipends, girls agreed not to marry, to maintain 75% attendance and to obtain a 45% passing grade on the annual exam.

The programme had a tremendous impact on the attendance of girls, increasing their enrollment to over 1 million in the course of the 6 years, which achieved gender parity, and retaining 97% of the girls through grade 10. Moreover, the programme has successfully contributed to delaying marriage, with the proportion of married girls in the younger age group (13-15) falling from 29% to 14%, and in the older age group (16-19) from 72% to 64%. (Bhatnagar, et. al, n.d.). Girls also reported an increased sense of empowerment through controlling their own finances, and making decisions about their education. The girls' stipends also had secondary impacts on their families – increasing their social standing in the community, and changing their decision-making regarding girls' education (Bhatnagar, et. al. (n.d.).

Lessons learned: while girls' achievement as measured on the SSC exams was slightly better than the national average for girls, the proportion of those passing was still low (31 percent in 1999), and the percentage of girls passing in high performing schools was only slightly better than those in low performing schools (Miske, Moore, and DeJaeghere, 2000). Issues of quality, such as teacher training, gender-sensitive curriculum, and additional tutoring in preparation for the exam are now being addressed in the second phase of the programme (World Bank, 2003b).

are interventions targeted at indirect and opportunity costs. Reducing or eliminating school fees, or eliminating uniforms can also reduce costs of schooling for girls. Strategies used to reduce indirect costs and opportunity costs include stipends that provide income to girls or the family, or cover costs in addition to tuition (See Box 5); nutrition and school feeding programmes; flexible school schedules that allow girls to continue in school and perform their domestic/farm work; micro-enterprise programmes, and work or time-saving devices (such as milling machines or wells) (UN & UNDP, 2004, p. 38) (World Bank, 2001).

6.2.7. *Strategies to Address Health and HIV/AIDS*

A quality education that promotes gender equity enables adolescents to acquire knowledge, attitudes and skills which support the adoption of healthy behaviours, creates linkages with school and community services, and provides a healthy, supportive environment. Many innovative strategies are now being used to address girls' health concerns, and in particular HIV/AIDS. The FRESH – Focusing Resources on Effective School Health - Framework, a collaboration of WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, and The World Bank, aims to fulfill the right for all adolescents to have programmes that promote their development in life skills and to attain the highest standard of physical and mental health. FRESH calls for the following four core components to be implemented together: health-related school policies; provision of safe water and sanitation as essential first steps toward a healthy learning environment; skills-based health education; and school-based health and nutrition services (WHO, UNICEF, & UNFPA, n.d.; UNESCO, WHO, UNICEF & The World Bank, n.d.).

Life skills and particularly HIV/AIDS education, has been mainstreamed into the school curriculum in many countries, especially in Africa. Youth groups operate in schools and communities to provide peer education about these issues (e.g., GEM, UNICEF, n.d.). In-school and out-of-school life skills programmes ensure adolescent girls' right to participate in education and have an impact on girls' behaviours (See Box 6) (CEDPA, 2000, 2001).

The mere teaching of life skills or HIV/AIDS education does not necessarily ensure, however, improved participation of girls and a quality learning experience. Girls are often seen as "objects" in life skills and HIV/AIDS classes, which further inhibits their participation and learning of these issues (Chege, 2004). Therefore, the methodology, such as peer education, and the training and sensitivity of the teacher are important in creating a quality education for adolescent girls.

Box 6. Better Life Options Programme (BLP)– India

The Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA), with its partners, initiated the Better Life Options Program for adolescents in rural and peri-urban areas in 1989. The programme was initially designed to address out-of-school girls who were most likely to be married early, be pregnant, or have health concerns, including HIV/AIDS.

The programme used multiple strategies, including linkages to formal education, vocational training, and community mobilization, to expand young people's life choices with regard to education, health, employment and civic participation. A main component of BLP was a curriculum called "Choose a Future!", which included sexual and reproductive health, sexually transmitted infections, nutrition and hygiene, goals and future plans, gender relations, human rights, life skills development and civic responsibilities. In addition to the curriculum, the programme also provided general and gynecological health care, as well as nutrition and health counseling. The programme became more acceptable to families when it included a strong vocational skills component.

BLP has made considerable impact on the lives of girl participants, as well as on boys, communities and schools. The programme expanded beyond its original design as a nonformal educational programme, to the inclusion of its curriculum in the formal schools. Furthermore, a similar curriculum for boys has been developed in an effort to promote gender equality and changed behaviour on behalf of boys and girls.

Specific outcomes, evaluated in an experimental design, include: 21 percent more girls in formal schooling than those not in the program; 66 percent of girls completing secondary as compared to 46 percent of girls not in the program; 99 percent of girl participants had learned a vocational skills compared with 22 percent of girls not in the programme; 40 percent more of girls who completed the programme were earning an income than those who were not in the program. Other outcomes for participants included a decrease in marriage age, lower fertility rate, better health knowledge and behaviours for self and children, and increased self-esteem and decision-making (CEDPA, 2001).

7. Conclusions

The right to education for adolescents requires new thinking, policies and strategies to address the various barriers to and trade-offs in providing a quality education for the achievement of gender equality. Adolescents, and girls in particular, face many challenges and a changing world, including armed conflict; health concerns and especially HIV/AIDS; sexual abuse and trafficking; pregnancy and early marriage; fewer and changing economic opportunities; and changing family life.

These issues require re-imagining the education system to mainstream and integrate alternative approaches to education so that a quality education for all adolescent girls is possible. Current education policies and practices can create dead-end opportunities for girls. An education system that builds cumulative learning experiences allows girls to move through both formal and nonformal educational options, to receive an education after dropping out of school, and to gain additional skills through life-long learning and training opportunities.

A quality education that aims to achieve gender equality must be equated with equality in the learning experience and equality of opportunity. Access to education is not sufficient in creating empowerment, behaviour change and societal change for girls; rather the quality of the education is crucial for girls' further participation and achievement in the education system and in society. A quality education must address the needs of diverse learners, the barriers girls face, their potential and changing opportunities, and the skills to participate in them, and their changing identities as adolescents, young women, mothers, citizens and workers.

From a rights based perspective, policy makers and practitioners must confront the trade-offs in providing a quality education for all adolescents. The human, material and financial resources and capacity need to be identified and creatively allocated to implement cross-sectoral strategies to achieve a quality education for all. All education stakeholders, and most importantly adolescents, must be involved in the initiation and implementation of quality education for gender equality.

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