

**Gender Analysis
for USAID/Rwanda
Learning Enhanced Across Rwanda Now! (LEARN) Project
July 2014**

EXTERNAL VERSION

Introduction

Project LEARN seeks to improve the quality of education for all students in primary school - including girls, students with disabilities, children living in extreme poverty, and other vulnerable groups – so as to increase the ability of Rwandan children to succeed in school. Attention to gender analysis is essential for Project LEARN to strategically influence the experience of primary school so that it will support continued learning and opportunity for children who are currently vulnerable.

This Gender Analysis was conducted June-July 2014 and is intended to inform the design of Project LEARN and subsequent activities/implementing mechanisms. Gender analysis is a requirement in project development and recommendations stemming from its findings should be integrated throughout associated activities. This analysis is based on previous gender analyses, other relevant reports, stakeholder consultations, and discussions with the USAID/Rwanda gender team.

Key findings include the following:

Gender parity has achieved in primary education in Rwanda since 2001, and more women than men favor primary teaching. However girls are less likely than boys to continue school through higher education, to be high academic achievers, and to assume leadership positions in the education sector.

Policy in Rwanda is gender progressive but a general distance between Ministry of Education (MINEDUC)/Rwanda Education Board (REB) and the decentralized level has hindered full communication, implementation, and monitoring, namely of the *Girls' Education Strategic Plan*. This issue has been widely acknowledged in the education sector in Rwanda and reforms are under discussion.

Some of the most influential factors that hinder girls' achievement and advancement include the gendered norm of female responsibility for household tasks that diverts time and attention from school/teaching, unplanned pregnancy which leads to increasing childcare responsibilities, and environments that discourage the participation of girls. Expectations for the high academic achievement of girls may be lower than for boys, and some teacher behavior is not conducive to the active participation and comfortable attendance of girls. In a counterproductive cycle, the lack of female role models in high-level and decision-making positions reinforces the tendency

of girls not to pursue these positions, and the low number of women who complete higher levels of education limits qualifications necessary to reach higher positions in employment.

Major recommendations include the promotion of gender-sensitive and inclusive teaching environments and methodology, the implementation of school-based clubs supporting gender equality, and the incorporation of mentoring/counseling programs to support the professional development of female teachers.

Background

Rwanda has achieved gender parity in access to education at the primary school level since 2001 (in 2001, net enrollment was 76.1% for girls, and 74.5% for boys). In 2013 net enrollment in primary school was 97.5% for girls, and 95.7% for boys. Similarly, female staff (52.8%) outnumber male staff (47.2%) at the primary school level. Girls progress through primary grades with less repetition and dropout than boys and tend to complete primary school in greater numbers at the correct age (MINEDUC, 2014).

While Rwanda is commended for these achievements in support of gender equality, present attention needs to refocus on the academic performance and transition rate of girls, which lag slightly behind that of boys. The pass rate on the 2011 P6 national exam was 81.6% for girls and 84.1% for boys. Though the completion rate, reflecting students enrolling in P6, was higher for girls than boys (74.1% girls, 62.8% boys), the transition rate of then moving on to secondary school was slightly higher for boys: 73.8% for girls and 74.1% for boys (MINEDUC, 2013).¹ Dropout and retention remain overall challenges in the education sector; less than 30% of pupils enrolled in P1 in 2007 sat for P6 exams in 2011,² and dropout rates are on the rise (MINEDUC, 2013; Tabaro, 2014). For adults (people over age 15), the illiteracy rate is reflective of greater gender disparity among older generations; 34.1% of women self-report that they do not know how to read in any language, compared with 24.1% of men (NISR, 2012).

In addition, access remains limited for children with disabilities. Those with disabilities are four times more likely to be found not attending school than those with no disabilities, and disabilities tend to hinder girls' access to school more than boys: 33.4% of males with disabilities have no education, while 50.2% of females with disabilities have no education (NISR, 2012).

Also, while gender parity has been achieved at the primary school level, males account for a higher percentage of students than females at upper secondary school and beyond, and the percentage of female teachers declines at the higher levels of education: at the secondary level school staff are 72.6% male, 27.4% female. Student enrollment at University of Rwanda College of Education (URCE), which trains the trainers of primary school teachers in addition to secondary school teachers and other education professionals, was 67% male, 33% female (MINEDUC, 2013).

¹ Completion rate concerns students entering P6 (the last year of the primary cycle) from P5. The transition rate refers to students entering S1 after P6. Again, the higher transition rate for boys exists in spite of the greater number of slots reserved for girls at the secondary school level.

² While about 550,000 pupils were enrolled in P1 in 2007, only 154,954 pupils sat for P6 exams in 2011.

The lower academic achievement of females becomes more pronounced at higher levels of education, particularly in the areas of science and technology (MINEDUC, 2013). In the 2013 national examinations at the Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs), which provide pre-service education to primary school teachers, the majority of students who passed with distinction were male (71% male, 29% female); though overall, of the 88.1% who passed, 29% were male, 51% were female (URCE, 2014). In short, females are passing but males are excelling. Males are also more likely than females to complete teacher education program; 92% of male students completed all 3 years of the program compared with 82% of female students (URCE, 2014). In primary school classrooms, slightly more male than female primary school teachers are certified (97.1% of male teachers, 94.1% female), and males are more likely than females to engage in professional development opportunities (MINEDUC, 2013; Nock & Dusenge, 2012).

Females are also underrepresented in administrative and decision-making roles. At the primary school level, administrative staff is 70% male, 30% female. Again, these ratios become even more skewed toward males at higher levels (secondary head teachers are 81% male, 19% female) (MINEDUC, 2014). District education officers (DEOs) are overwhelmingly (90%) male, as are Rwanda Education Board (REB) inspectors (80% male) (Jones, 2015). Sector education officers (SEOs) are 77% male, 23% female (REB, 2014). Parent-Teacher Associations (also known as General Assembly Committees) are observed to include many women (both mothers and teacher/student representatives), but they are almost exclusively chaired by men who have the final say on any decisions taken by the committee (Jones, 2015; Nock & Dusenge, 2012).

In summary, while girls enter school on par with boys, girls are less likely than boys to continue with high-achievement through higher education and assume leadership positions in education.

This gender analysis seeks to address the following key questions and their implications for programming:

- Are current education policies and laws inclusive? To what extent are they implemented?
- What are the barriers to access, performance, and completion for both boys and girls, including people with disabilities, at the primary level and beyond? To what extent/how does the gender of the teacher/school leader influence school enrollment/attendance? To what extent/how does the gender of the teacher/school leader influence student achievement?
- What are the barriers to access, performance, and completion for both men and women to complete initial teacher training, develop skills through continuous in-service professional development, upgrade their qualifications, and serve in positions of leadership and decision-making in education?
- What are the barriers to female participation in leadership roles in education, such as Head Teachers (HTs), chairs of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), University of Rwanda College of Education (URCE) and Teacher Training College (TTC) faculty, and District/Sector Education Officers (DEOs/SEOs)?
- To what extent are teachers, staff, and curriculum gender-sensitive? To what extent are teachers, staff, and curriculum inclusive of marginalized populations (such as people with disabilities, LBGT, etc.)?

- How does school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) vary by level, geographic region, and/or economic status of a community? To what extent does SRGBV account for suboptimal access and academic performance?

Existing Gender Assessments

- Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe and VSO Rwanda published a participatory qualitative research report titled *Gender Equality in Teaching and Education Management* (2012). This gender analysis draws heavily on those findings.
- Education for All is in the process of reporting on progress made in Rwanda toward the goal of gender parity and equality (2014).
- Girl Hub, a member of the nationally commissioned Girls' Education Task Force responsible for developing the Girls' Education Policy and Strategic Plan and monitoring its implementation, is working with MINEDUC to conduct a situational analysis of girls' education in Rwanda, including recommendations for revisions to *Girl's Education Policy 2008* and *Strategic Plan*. That report may be used to corroborate these findings.

Stakeholder Consultations

Further insight and validation was provided through consultation with stakeholders, including the University of Rwanda College of Education (URCE) and various NGOs. Refer to *Annex A* for a complete list of the stakeholders consulted.

Main Findings by Domain

1. Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Context

Rwanda is actively engaged in initiatives for gender equality. Rwanda has ratified and adheres to many conventions, charters, and declarations that highlight the importance of gender equality in sustainable development, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Convention Against Discrimination in Education.

Vision 2020, Rwanda's long-term planning document, proposes that a harmonious and prosperous Rwanda can only be realized when each citizen, regardless of sex, is empowered to contribute to the development process. National policies and plans reflect this understanding that special attention needs to be paid to girls. The *Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy* (EDPRS 2) and *Education Sector Policy* have identified gender as a cross-cutting issue, and the *Education Sector Strategic Plan* (ESSP) has a distinct budget line to support specific initiatives to address barriers facing girls. This support for girls' participation and achievement at all levels of education is elaborated in the *Girls' Education Policy (2008)* and the *Girls' Education Strategic Plan (2009-2013)*. Priorities identified in the *Girls' Education Strategic Plan* include:

1. Strengthening gender sensitive and learner-centered methodologies;
2. Training of educationalists, trainers, and education planners in gender issues;
3. Regular review of education curricula and learning materials from a gender perspective;
4. Sensitizing families and local communities about the importance of girls completing and improving achievement in formal education;
5. Promoting affirmative action policies, where appropriate, to ensure equal opportunities for girls;
6. Strengthening integration of girls' education into plans and budgets at all levels.

According to the MINEDUC Action Plan, a reviewed and updated *Girls' Education Policy and Strategic Plan* is anticipated by mid-2015.

Specifically, the *Girls' Education Strategic Plan* includes affirmative actions to 1) work toward 50-50 balances of appointments of females as Head Teachers; 2) identify and train women with potential at entry and middle management levels and fast-track them into education management positions; 3) provide remedial courses for girls seen at risk of failing or dropping out, and procedures for re-entry for girls who become pregnant during their education; 4) review teaching methods and assessment of learning achievement to ensure girl participation is not inhibited; 5) sensitize families and local communities through PTAs about the importance of girls completing formal education, and 6) provide mentors to girls. The Joint Action Forum for Girls' Education is responsible for ensuring that girls' education issues and indicators are integrated into District Development Plans, and includes among others the district's Vice-Mayor in charge of Social Affairs and a PTA representative. Unfortunately, only one of the six districts visited in a 2012 study had an operational Joint Action Forum (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 64). Head Teachers and Sector and District Education Officers were asked about their knowledge of the affirmative actions included in the *Girls' Education Strategic Plan* and what they were doing to implement them, and it was revealed that the full details had not reached these education managers and in general the strategic plan was not being implemented (Nock & Dusenge, 2012).

In Rwanda's system of decentralized government, the responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) policies lies with District and Sector Education Officers (DEOs and SEOs), who are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC). Competencies in managing information, and in monitoring and evaluation, have been identified as key capacity gaps of DEOs and SEOs. The disconnect between policy and its implementation has been well-noted in the sector and MINEDUC is aware of the need for effective communication and coordination systems between MINEDUC, REB, and the district education offices, and similar effective communication and coordination between districts and schools (Mott MacDonald, 2012; Charlie Goldsmith Associates, 2014).

While the *Girls' Education Strategic Plan* is regarded overall as a positive initiative that should be implemented in full, the National Union of Disabilities Organizations of Rwanda has identified a lack of affirmative action to support girls with disabilities to become teachers. A suggested area for affirmative action is the examination framework, to incorporate elements such as extra time and different pass marks (NUDOR, 2014).

The Girls' Education Task Force, not currently active, was established in 2005 to provide strategic leadership on the issue of girls' education at the national level, and the 2014 JRES

report indicates that REB has hired a Girls' Education Specialist. Today Rwanda Education NGO Coordinating Platform (RENCIP) is serving as an effective network and the Girls Education Working Group under its mandate is functioning and contributing to policy discussion.

USAID/Rwanda and implementers have the opportunity, through advocacy and programming, to support the full implementation of the *Girls' Education Strategic Plan* as it supports increased opportunities for Rwandan children and youth to succeed in schooling and the workplace (USAID/Rwanda Development Objective 4).

Pedagogical Context

A national review and revision of the primary and secondary school curriculum is currently underway, and MINEDUC/REB's plan is to introduce a competency-based curriculum with objectives and materials that support learner-centered methodologies, rolled out with a phased approach 2016-2018. The shift to learner-centered methods has potential to support improved learning outcomes for all children, both boys and girls, but particularly girls and children with disabilities who are not excelling under the current system.

The intent is also for the new curriculum and accompanying textbooks to be gender-sensitive; gender equality is framed as a cross-cutting issue to be embedded throughout the new curriculum. Additionally a comprehensive program of sexual/reproductive health and rights is intended to be integrated into the curriculum. Gender-focused organizations such as Forum of African Women Educators (FAWE) and UNFPA, among others, have provided technical expertise in the design process.

In addition, inclusion, or providing students with disabilities access to education, is a stated pillar of the new curriculum, and organizations such as Handicap International are providing input related to inclusive pedagogical principles. MINEDUC has identified disability/inclusion as cross-cutting issue as well as a distinct outcome with a budget in the ESSP, and the Rwanda Education Board (REB) has adopted Norms and Standards for Quality Inclusive Education and tools that school inspectors and District Education Officers can use to monitor relevant teaching practices (GoR, 2013). In complement to the realization of these standards, URCE has developed a "School of Special Need" to train specialized tutors to TTCs, which is intended to launch September 2014.

The University of Rwanda College of Education (URCE) and affiliated Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) have reviewed their curricula for gender sensitivity and added modules on gender-sensitive pedagogy. One initiative toward this development has been the USAID-funded Women's Leadership Project, which aims 1) to increase the number of highly qualified and gender-sensitive female teachers in Rwanda by promoting and supporting women's access to URCE and affiliated TTCs, 2) to better inform URCE's institutional policies and practices through gender-focused research and capacity building, and 3) to improve the capacity of URCE to train teachers and faculty in the integration of gender equity in the classroom through pedagogy, course content, and classroom management techniques. Activities include outreach and recruitment, mentoring and counseling, development of flexible distance learning programs for upgrading teachers' credentials, integration of gender-sensitivity and lessons on female

empowerment in curricula, and integration of adolescent health into URCE programs. This work is ongoing, and stakeholder interviews revealed lack of awareness of any gender-sensitive approaches in education at the TTCs.

Teacher training will be necessary to enable teachers to fully implement the new curriculum as intended. **Project LEARN should capitalize on the opportunity to support systems of pre-service and in-service teacher education to promote implementation of the curriculum, including its expected identification of the need for gender-sensitive instruction and inclusion of children with disabilities.** The curriculum should be assessed when it is in a more complete stage; if it is found not to adequately address gender and inclusion, there should be advocacy to revisit it. Teachers should be equipped to provide quality education for all vulnerable groups.

2. Cultural Norms and Beliefs

Although policy in Rwanda is gender progressive, cultural norms and beliefs may negatively influence girls' academic performance and advancement (Sleggh & Kimonyo, 2010). First, cultural attitudes dictate that girls should be passive, deferential and less confident and outspoken than boys (Bell & Payne Consulting, 2011). These societal expectations may negatively influence girls' performance in class and on exams. For example, particularly in large classes, teachers may give more attention to students who are assertive – a traditionally male trait – than to students who remain silent, traditionally girls (Leu, 2005). Most teachers have not received training in how to respond to the different needs of girls and boys in the classroom and the wider school environment, for example by employing strategies to increase the active participation of girls in class (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 11). It is also possible that tests and assessments themselves contribute to differences in performance observed, such as in gendered differences in student responses to high-stakes summative assessments as compared to low-stakes formative assessment (Elwood, 2006; Jones, 2014).

Furthermore, girls may be hindered by lower expectations for their achievement compared with boys - from their teachers, their parents, and/or themselves (Mugabe, 2013). For example, teachers may express an expectation for a male student to outperform a closely competitive female peer, and parents may demand higher academic performance from their son than from their daughter. While girls, irrespective of age or background, tend to value getting an education and express a desire to finish school (Bell & Payne Consulting, 2011), they may simultaneously internalize lower performance expectations for themselves. Low performance in turn puts women at a disadvantage professionally and for university enrolment (MINEDUC, 2008, and cited by Jones, 2014).

The lack of female role models in advanced education levels, in the fields of science and technology, and in leadership positions may reinforce an idea that men are more high-achieving or skilled in leadership than females, or that females are in less of a position to make decisions or advocate for change. This perception could negatively influence both female teachers and students (Eckman, 2010). Similarly, there are few teachers with disabilities and this has an impact on providing positive role models. In addition, the lack of opportunity for women and people with disabilities to reach higher levels of education limits qualifications necessary to

reach higher positions in employment. Mothers are influenced by the same gendered context described above, and so female participation on PTAs is hindered by a perception of men, rather than women, as opinion leaders, as well as by women's lack of available time and self-confidence. The lower literacy rate among women may also be contributing to confidence and perception of their ability to participate in PTA activities.

The declining academic performance of girls correlates with the declining percentage of female teachers in higher education. Some international studies have shown a positive effect of female teachers on girls' test scores (Muralidheran, 2014) and on decreased female drop-out rates (Michaelowa, 2001).

Finally, discrimination may hinder the career longevity of females that is necessary for advancement. Society considers it shameful for unmarried female teachers to become pregnant, and unmarried pregnant teachers tend to leave their jobs and not return. Though there is official policy prohibiting discrimination, there are reports that teachers can be refused work because of the shame associated with childbirth out of wedlock (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 10). None of the Head Teachers, Sector Education Officers, or District Education Officers interviewed in a qualitative, nation-wide study had received any training in gender issues, which could explain lack of knowledge or enforcement of anti-discrimination policy (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 12).

Female teachers significantly outnumber men at the pre-primary and primary school levels, and this too reflects an inequality stemming both from the unattractiveness of conditions of service in primary school teaching and from gendered norms. There is a prevailing cultural view that females are more nurturing of young children and better suited to work as teachers at lower levels. In contrast, a stakeholder expressed a view that male primary school teachers are less patient and do not relate as well to their students as female teachers. Often men enter into primary school teaching because they have no other options, whereas a greater number of female teachers enter the profession because they have an affinity toward it.

People with disability in Rwanda face are high levels of stigma and discrimination. Many people believe that education is pointless for children with disabilities because they are not confident they can succeed (NUDOR, 2014). In response, Handicap International has held awareness/mobilization campaigns for children with disabilities, parents, and local and educational institutions to reduce stigma and discrimination against children with disabilities.

National sensitization programs exist to encourage parents and communities to send and keep their girls in school. These programs include the Imbutu Foundation/First Lady's national awards for the best performing girls on national examinations, especially in sciences. This initiative identifies young female role models who are then further supported to motivate other girls to stay in school and achieve high results. Also, the National School Campaign gives out annual awards to schools for the best proposals for tackling gender inequality.

School-Based Clubs

Many entities have organized extra-curricular clubs in an effort to reorient cultural norms and beliefs that hinder the advancement to women - to empower girls with life skills, knowledge, and

self-confidence, and to encourage families to support the studies and maintain high expectations for their girl children.

Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE) sets out a model for gender responsive schools, provides a checklist for assessing a school for gender responsiveness, and suggests ways to promote a gender sensitive academic environment, social environment, physical environment, and school management system. The aim of the FAWE model is to ensure that girls from disadvantaged areas have access to schooling and that once they are in school the gender constraints that could lead to dropping out or poor performance are either eliminated or minimized (FAWE, 2005). One particularly noteworthy component of the FAWE Centers of Excellence model is the development of Tuseme (“Let’s Talk” gender empowerment) clubs, which support the development of self-confidence and effective self-expression for girls and are intended to serve as a model for schools nationwide. These clubs are implemented at FAWE Centers of Excellence and UNICEF Child-Friendly Schools, but wider implementation of Tuseme clubs is low with the success of the clubs depending largely on the enthusiasm and good will of the teachers who are charged with organizing the clubs (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 12). The Tuseme program has been reviewed and the lessons and good practice examples are available (Arlesten and Leijon, 2011; Sutherland-Addy, E., 2008).

Many other organizations have also designed school-level clubs to support girls’ health, education, and empowerment.

- Abahizi clubs, developed by the USAID-funded Higa Ubeho activity, promote peer mentoring and support life skills development among secondary school students. The clubs are intended to help young people set and achieve their personal goals, especially academic success, and members of Abahizi clubs are more likely than their peers to be successful in academics, self-confident, and showing positive behavior (Mukabutera & Kabayiza, 2013).
- Care International and YWCA Rwanda are working to combat the high dropout rate of girls prior to entering upper secondary school with their Keeping Girls at School Program. The approach includes school-based clubs, mentoring, voluntary saving and loans clubs, and a community scorecard.
- Sara Clubs, an initiative of Action Aid, began as anti-violence clubs and have evolved into spaces to educate children about their rights.
- Girl Hub’s 12+ program is a mentorship and safe-space program that enables 12 year-old girls to become informed decision makers. The Government of Rwanda is committed to nation-wide scale up by 2018.
- Anti-GBV clubs involve both girls and boys and empower youth to fight GBV in schools, especially sexual harassment and abuse by teachers and fellow students, by promoting attitude and behavior change (Mugabe, 2013).
- Anti-AIDS clubs have been initiated by the government, though adult support and stewardship of the clubs is reported to be insufficient because of lack of knowledge, confidence, and materials (Jones, 2014).

In addition, Plan International is implementing Boys for Change clubs, using RWAMREC’s model of positive masculinity, in secondary schools in Nyaruguru and Bugesera districts. Club members are guided to analyze their own schools and take actions such as creating a non-

gendered system for chores around the school, inviting girls to participate in their games, volunteering to share notes with peers who have missed class, encouraging each other to regard female peers as sisters rather than in a sexual way, and encouraging gender-sensitive pedagogy among teachers.

As a grantee of the DfID-funded Girls' Education Challenge, Health Poverty Action and Teach a Man to Fish have been setting up Mother-Daughter Clubs in target communities for the most marginalized girls at risk of dropping out. The objective of these support groups is to encourage the girls to stay in school and to cover school costs by engaging in income generating activities. They are also increasing awareness among girls and parents about the importance of girls' education through the Urunana radio soap opera, and sensitization of the community on the importance of girls' education.

Project LEARN has the potential to build on successes of these clubs and extend and adapt them according to its specific programmatic reach. For instance, while most of the current gender empowerment-related clubs are focused at the secondary school level, they could be adapted to support the needs to future primary school teachers at TTCs, who could also be trained to bring an adaption of the club to children at the primary schools where they will teach. The recurrent critique of current clubs is that they are not institutionalized, which highlights opportunity to strengthen systems for empowering girls in school and for sensitizing boys and teachers to the various barriers addressed throughout this analysis (i.e. SRGBV, disability, teen pregnancy, MHM, etc.).

3. Gender Roles, Responsibilities and Time Use

Females are generally responsible for the vast majority of household chores and childcare, and for care of the sick and elderly in their families, and this **gendered division of labor in the home is suggested to be the main underlying cause of the underrepresentation of women in education management and career advancement.** Women busy with domestic and agricultural duties have less time to spend on study or work outside the home and flexibility is constrained compared with men, often leading to trade-offs between their teaching responsibilities and their other responsibilities. Male teachers generally have more time to plan lessons, have fewer absences due to home responsibilities, and are less tired while at work (Mugabe, 2013; Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 10; Sleggh & Kimonyo, 2010). This unequal division of labor between the sexes at home also impacts students. Domestic responsibilities may reduce the time girls have to study after school compared with boys, and could interfere with getting to school on time and contribute to absenteeism. Parents in rural areas may withhold their daughters from school to care for their younger siblings during harvesting periods, and this lapse in attendance disadvantages their exam performance (Bell & Payne Consulting, 2011; Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 11; Mugabe, 2013).

Pregnancy and childcare responsibilities also impede women's advancement in teaching and education management. These responsibilities often require women to take much more time off work than men, and interfere with continuing education, giving men an advantage in terms of networking and mentoring opportunities, and career advancement. Pregnant or nursing mothers can be subject to discrimination in the recruitment process for new teaching posts or in

the allocation of additional jobs such as supervision duties during national exams. Pregnant or nursing mothers also may not attend or complete training courses or other professional development opportunities because of health problems associated with their pregnancy, training providers who don't allow time for breastfeeding, inability to afford daycare while they attend the course, or discrimination in access to courses (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 10).

Childcare responsibilities may prevent female teachers from continuing to work outside the home, or prevent students from continuing their studies. For instance, after female teachers who become pregnant have given birth and completed their maternity leave, they may be unable to afford to employ someone to help with housework or childcare (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 10).

On the student side, parents may reject a pregnant daughter, or decide to stop paying her school fees. According to policy girls are welcome to return to school after childbirth, but in practice it is difficult if families are not willing or able to help with childcare, or if the community frowns upon unmarried mothers going to school. Also, it is likely that a girl who becomes pregnant has to miss at least six months of school while she gives birth and nurses her infant. When this happens girls have to repeat the entire year, as a system for them to catch up on the lessons they have missed has not yet been implemented (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 11). Girls who attend school pregnant may be particularly prone to harassment, which would also deter attendance.

Unwanted pregnancies are most common for girls in lower secondary school (Basinga, Moore, Singh, Remz, Birungi, & Nyirazinyoye, 2012). While 6.1% of young women between the ages of 15 and 19 have already begun childbearing (5% are already mothers; 1% are pregnant for the first time), only 3.6% of women ages 15-19 are married (NISR, 2010). Ninety-two percent of adolescents self-reported being sexually active, with an estimated age of sex debut of 12 for girls and 15 for boys (MoH, 2010).

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Unwanted pregnancy can be disruptive to school and career advancement. As noted above, there is movement to integrate a comprehensive program of sexual/reproductive health and rights into the curriculum, and there are many NGO-based school club initiatives to support girls in being assertive and making informed decisions about sex. MINEDUC urges schools to keep records and follow-up on pregnant girls to return to school. It also proposes communication between parents and children on reproductive health using existing channels like parents' meetings, locally called *umugoroba w'ababyeyi* (Kaitesi, 2013; MINEDUC, 2014).

Gender-Based Violence

Rape and cross-generational/transactional sex contribute to unwanted pregnancy. 12% of women aged 15-19 have experienced sexual violence, and almost half of experiences occurred before the girl reached age 15 (MoH, 2010). The biggest perpetrators of sexual violence which leads to unwanted pregnancies are older men, fellow students, teachers, and motorcyclists (Kaitesi, 2013), and child sexual abuse occurs most frequently at home (50.8%), on the street/roads/village paths (26.5%), and at school (5.8%) (Mugabe, 2013). One out of 10 girls has had her first sexual experience with a man more than 10 years older (MoH, 2010). Girls,

particularly girls living in poverty, are widely susceptible to the practices of “sugar daddies,” older men who give attention and money or gifts to girls, so that girls feel obliged to have sex with that man (Berrih, Manirakiza-Lamot, Dusabugilimbabazi, & Uwibona, 2013; Bell & Payne Consulting, 2011).

Sexual exploitation disproportionately affects women and children, and particularly women and children with disabilities, and violence is underreported. Around the world, women and girls with disabilities suffer from sexual violence twice as often as girls and women without disabilities (UN, as cited by NUDOR, 2014). Children with mental disabilities and young children may not identify the violence as something to report. Many adolescent victims have fear of being humiliated and stigmatized, and may wait to report until they show signs of pregnancy. The penalty for sexual violence against children, which is life imprisonment, is largely unknown to the public, and crimes are frequently explained away by citing excess alcohol. Parents may not go to the police but rather negotiate settlement (although this practice is technically illegal); negotiation is especially common when the perpetrator is a family member, teacher, an authority, or someone richer than the victim. Because of the lack of reporting and prosecution, it is likely that sexual violence is more common than the above statistics suggest, and it can be inferred that services to support victims are underutilized (Berrih, et al., 2013).

In an effort to reduce HIV infection, and unwanted pregnancy that leads to school dropout, the Rwanda Biomedical Center, Imbuto Foundation, and the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab are partnering to implement the Sugar Daddies Risk Information Program at school-level. The Program has proven successful in Kenya in reducing cross-generational sex and childbearing among adolescent girls by increasing their understanding of its role in the spread of HIV (Nsanzimana, 2014).

Other Violence in Schools

International literature considers bullying a form of school-related violence that is important to address in order to ensure safe schools for boys as well as for girls. 15.8% of women aged 15-19 have experienced physical violence; among never married women who have experienced physical violence, 13.2% reported that the perpetrator was a teacher (DHS, 2010). Primary school pupils (both girls and boys) reported that the effects of violence of all types (physical, psychological, sexual, or economic) were significant on their school performance in terms of failures, repeating class, and school abandonment (Mukarugomwa, 2007). Slegh & Kimonyo (2010) asked men to report their own violent behavior when they were in school: 33% abused girls sexually, 22% got into school fights, and 35% participated in bullying. Forty-four percent of the males surveyed reported being teased at school (Slegh & Kimonyo, 2010). In contrast, in some interviews, stakeholders dismissed bullying as a problem in the Rwandan context, indicating a potential lack of awareness of surrounding the issue (Eckman, 2010).

In addition to physical violence, teasing, for instance about not being clever, could lead to a feeling of inadequacy, which could contribute to a decision to drop out, perhaps particularly for girls who are lacking in self-confidence in general (Bell & Payne, 2011). Also, sexual harassment affects a significant percentage of girls in school, and comes from both peers and

teachers. Constant advances from peers, teachers, and community members could be a factor that distracts girls from their studies.

In theory, bullying could disproportionately affect students and teachers who identify with LGBT community, though self-identification into the LGBT community in Rwanda is rare and there is a general lack of acknowledgement of its existence. Leaders of LGBT associations in Kigali reported that harassment does force LGBT students out of school. LGBT students face differential enforcement of general rules prohibiting and punishing violence and harassment in school, particularly if the violence/harassment is explicitly linked to their sexual orientation. Head teachers may view students who do not identify as heterosexuals as mentally ill and refer them to police or hospitals instead of offering support and protection.

Drug-use is another factor affecting the attendance/performance of a limited number of girls and boys in school. About 7% of youth are alcohol dependent, and 2.5% of youth depend on cannabis (Knayoni, Gishoma, & Ndahindwa, 2011, as cited in MINEDUC, 2014; MoH, 2010).

Hygiene and Menstruation

Menstruation is a potential barrier to the attendance and academic excellence of pubescent girls, if girls do not feel comfortable being at school during their periods and therefore do not attend. The shortage of adequate washing facilities and lack of means to manage menstruation prevents girls from being able to stay in school during their periods. The government has highlighted its attention to gender-friendly school infrastructure. To promote menstrual hygiene management (MHM), dedicated sanitation and hygiene facilities are provided for girls in all newly constructed schools and the ESSP calls to extend them to existing schools by 2018. In 2008, 93% of schools had separate toilets for women, but only 66% of schools had access to water (World Bank, 2008). The government is striving to increase safe water access in primary and secondary schools, with coverage of over 50% with rain water harvesting systems, and more than 30% with tap water (MINEDUC, 2014).

MINEDUC also provides funding to schools to create girls' rooms, which are stocked with items for menstruation management, such as painkillers to relieve period pain, sanitary napkins, soap and spare underwear, and a mattress to allow girls who are in pain to rest and recuperate at school, rather than having to return home and miss more lessons than necessary. However, the sample of teachers and head teachers interviewed by Nock & Dusenge (2012) complained that the funding was insufficient or late. Stakeholders noted that further work is needed to ensure that girls' room are fully equipped and properly used. According to the 2014 MINEDUC Action Plan, the government is in the process of developing girls' room guidelines. That will be followed with an awareness campaign targeting decentralized entities including schools.

Girls reported that sometimes male teachers did not understand why they needed to leave the class, and refused them permission to leave. The potential for humiliation if girls are not allowed to leave class to discreetly manage menstruation could deter girls from attending school when their period is due, and exemplifies a need for increased gender-sensitivity in the classroom (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 11). Girls' rooms also offer an opportune setting to respond to cross-cutting health and safety issues. In 2012, teachers in charge of so-called "safe spaces" were

trained to deal with victims of violence, particularly GBV, though Berrih, et al. (2013) noted that there was high turnover among these teachers.

In a different vein, one of the main reasons why children with disabilities do not attend school is that toilets are often extremely inaccessible (NUDOR, 2014).

4. Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Poverty-related barriers impede women's advancement in teaching and education management. First, **the inadequacy of teachers' income limits their ability to pay tuition fees for further education for themselves or their children.** Secondly, resource use and allocation is still widely the domain of the males in the community (Mugabe, 2013). Female teachers may not have equal say in the management of the household budget, and men often retain control of the family's finances. Sometimes women who wish to study to upgrade their teaching credentials are forbidden from using money from the household budget to pay for their studies (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 10). Women's autonomy and decision-making power in relationships are often linked to their earning power and educational attainment (DHS, 2010), which leads to potential frustration when women earning low salaries with minimal educational qualifications are looking to upgrade their credentials.

On the student-side, there may be a gender dimension to the allocation of scarce family resources, such that **boys are given preference by their parents when it comes to informal fees in education** such as uniforms and materials, and that particularly girls living in poverty do not enter higher levels of education (Nock & Dusenge, 2012, p. 11; Bell & Payne Consulting, 2011). Mugabe (2013) found that while the majority of respondents (61.7%) believed that both female and male children can be given the same priority even if money is lacking, a significant proportion of respondents (26.3%) said that they would give priority to male children if they did not have sufficient means. MINEDUC (2013) found that less than 5% of girls in rural areas from poor families completed lower secondary school, due in part to their family's inability to spend a higher proportion of their income on their daughter's education (as cited by Jones, 2014).

Dropout or lack of attendance for economic reasons is an issue affecting both boys and girls. Jones (2014) reported on a recent REB study that indicated that students drop out for many of the following reasons: 1) possible repetition, 2) household costs beyond the family's ability to pay, 3) student's domestic responsibilities, 4) parental attitudes around the value of education, 5) low achievement as national examinations approach, 6) long-term illness, 7) employment pull, 8) lack of interest, 9) teacher attitudes and behaviors, and 10) pregnancy.

Nyakoojo (2010), as cited by Bernard (2011), raised concern about boys falling back in cases where work interfered with school, such as not attending school and instead engaging in farming activities during peak production, harvesting and marketing seasons. A DEO in Rubavu District, which has one of the highest dropout rates in Rwanda, reported that some children go to work in tea plantations, others provide care for younger siblings while their parents cross the border to work in the DRC, and others help with household tasks. In response, Rubavu District built a day-care center for children of mothers with low income, and intervened with tea plantations and construction companies to communicate the prohibition of child labor and enforce penalties

(fines) on companies that fail to comply. They also employed community education volunteers to monitor education activities in their respective villages, for example following up on truancy cases, and the district council decided to fine parents found responsible for their child's absence from school. The Ministry of Public Service and Labor has expressed political will to fight child labor; the challenge remains with parents who use children in domestic work (Tabaro, 2014).

Stakeholder consultations suggested that while families living in extreme poverty may encourage child labor for their sons, it is more frequent for poor families to marry their daughters early to ease economic burdens. The quality of education and lower performance of girls may also contribute to dropout. Dropout spikes at P5, which is notable because it avoids students sitting for the P6 national exam. School personnel may use P5 as a filter for children who they don't see as capable of passing P6 exams. Low scores reflect negatively on the school, while high promotion rates reflect positively (Jones, 2014; Kamugisha, 2008).

Poverty is also directly associated with boys and girls being undernourished and without adequate health care, which hinders learning. Also, PTAs who respond to the call to provide incentives for teachers by asking contributions from students' families are in effect charging a school fee that has potential to be discriminatory against the poorest families.

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Gender Issues in Project Design

Project Goal: Increased opportunities for Rwandan children and youth to succeed in schooling and the modern workforce.

Project Purpose: Improved literacy outcomes for children in primary schools – including girls, students with disabilities, children living in extreme poverty, and other vulnerable groups.

Potential Gender Issues	Recommendations
<i>Sub purpose 1: Improved quality of instruction</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service teachers entering the practicum classroom reality will face challenges such as gendered differences in classroom behavior of students, learning differences, and large class sizes. If pre-service teacher training is mainly theoretical, practicum students will struggle to implement of learner-centered pedagogy in that reality. • If host teachers are not modeling gender-sensitive, learner-centered pedagogy, their example/expectations of girl and boys’ participation and learning, could be a barrier to pre-service teachers’ implementation of said gender-sensitive pedagogy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a strong program within the teacher training system to provide effective guidance, feedback, and support for pre-service teachers during the practicum. The program should anticipate issues involving implementation of gender-sensitive pedagogy and inclusion; such as, different needs and demands of boys and girls that may impact learning, how to deal with mixed-aged, multi-leveled, and large classes effectively, non-violent child guidance, etc. (Please refer to <i>Annex B</i> for further description of gender-sensitive pedagogy.) • Pre-service teacher education should address GBV and in particular SRGBV, and its impact on girls’ education. This component should target male teachers, and provide statistics that showcase the problems that SRGBV in their communities. • Include measures reflecting gender-sensitive pedagogy on tools used for pre-service teacher observation/feedback. • Consider implementation of learner-centered, gender-sensitive teaching skills in the selection criteria for mentor teachers. If skills are lacking, consider the participation of mentor teachers

	<p>in in-service training in gender-sensitive and learner-centered pedagogy. For example, gender-sensitive teaching skills may include: ensuring that girls and boys are equally participating in the classroom, having equal expectations of girls and boys, being sensitive to MHM needs for pubescent girls, discouraging teasing and violence in and outside the classroom from students and teachers-to-students (SRGBV), encouraging girls to remain in school, addressing barriers of disability that may impact access and learning for girls and boys, etc. (Please see <i>Annex B</i> for details.)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and others from disadvantaged population are not enrolling, performing well, and graduating from TTCs and URCE. Therefore the tutors at TTCs and educational leadership (HTs, etc.) will not be representative of these groups. • TTC faculty and supporting URCE faculty are primarily male, reinforcing the perception that men belong in higher-level positions and reflecting a lack of female role models in positions that require advanced education. • PTAs have potential to support gender equality in the school and community, for instance by spreading positive messages, and training of pre-service teachers/school leaders in community involvement can help to improve PTAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively support the recruitment and retention of females, people living in rural areas and/or in poverty, people with disabilities, and other disadvantaged populations. Support could include mentoring/counselling services (career, as well as personal and academic), peer-support clubs (see next 2 points), environment conducive to learning particularly within the boarding house, etc. TTCs should include reasonable accommodation for the needs of pre-service teachers with disabilities. Career mentoring may also be helpful for people with disabilities. • Encourage clubs and discussion about gender issues at the TTC level, including discussion about positive masculinity, expectations/stereotypes that can be barriers to equal access and participation in TTCs and URCE for women, and how future teachers can be positive role models for their students. • Encourage the institution of self-expression/life skills/gender equality clubs at TTCs, in order to support pre-service teachers and to encourage them to bring the clubs (adapted) and their messages to the primary schools where they will teach and support. Students participating in clubs can transmit information and attitudes to others in their homes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include gender-sensitive pedagogy, discussion on gender issues in education, and adolescent sexual/reproductive health in the pre-service curriculum. A training component on support for students with disabilities/meeting individual student learning needs should also be required for all pre-service teachers. • Ensure that the program at URCE to train TTC tutors adequately prepares them to implement gender-sensitive pedagogy at TTCs, as well as to instruct TTC students regarding its implementation. • Integrate a module about the importance of community involvement in education (i.e. to support reading, reduce dropout) in pre-service education. • Education should equip teachers to fully implement the new curriculum, and include practical examples of gender-equality and inclusion within that curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers for women’s participation (esp. women living in poverty) in in-service training and opportunities to upgrade their credentials may hinder their ability to advance in their careers and improve their livelihoods. • If teachers in poorer or rural areas are less effective, educational inequality could increase between rich/poor, urban/rural, and other vulnerable populations. • Fewer female role models in positions of management and leadership reinforce the status quo perception that men belong in higher-level positions. • If assessment is not adapted to reflect the revised competency-based curriculum, and if the new approach lacks buy-in and understanding by the community, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively support the recruitment and retention of females, people living in rural areas and/or in poverty, and other potentially disadvantaged populations. Educate education managers responsible for commissioning in-service training, and training providers, to ensure that they are aware of pregnant and nursing teachers’ needs and rights, and make necessary accommodations to provide equal access to training. • Ensure that training venues have adequate facilities for nursing mothers, and are accessible to people with disabilities. Consider arrangements to support female teacher attendance of trainings, including childcare and conducive timing. • Monitoring should disaggregate participation by sex, and further disaggregate to count the participation of pregnant women and nursing mothers.

<p>teachers may be pressured away from implementing learner-centered pedagogy and toward what the community views as most effective for test preparation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design flexible distance education programs that are sensitive to and accommodating of women’s competing responsibilities. • Ensure that all in-service teacher training providers use gender-responsive teaching methodology in training the teachers who attend their courses. The strengthened systems for teacher education can help ensure that providers have this capacity. • Pre-service and in-service training should be linked closely with the national curriculum, and national curriculum resources and assessments should complement and reinforce the learner-centered teaching movement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women lack role models, time, and self-confidence. Also, the literacy rate is lower among women than among men. Thus women are not participating fully and equally in PTAs, and in administrative/management and decision-making positions. • Most DEOs/SEOs are male, which reinforces the perception that men belong in higher-level positions. Males are more likely to work hard to become decision makers, while there is a sense of normalcy around women taking less active/decisive roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider advocating (during PTA training) to reserve half the seats on PTAs for women, and establishing a rotating chair, alternating between male and female incumbents. Also, consider community sensitization to gender issues within communities, and flexible meeting times to encourage women to strive to take up positions within PTAs. • Reading material provided to parents should consider reading abilities and language barriers, so both men and women can fully engage in their duties within the PTAs. Consider differences in literacy levels between male and female parents. • Work with PTAs should include special and inclusive schools (i.e. for the blind, deaf, etc.). • Men within PTAs can be trained to advance gender issues, in line with the concept of positive masculinity, and to recognize women’s contributions in a way that builds the self-confidence of women. Care should be given not to disenfranchise men within PTA, so as to lessen unintended consequences within

	<p>households (i.e. domestic violence), or segregate men and women from engaging jointly in their children’s education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a component of system-strengthening, support capacity-building in the education sector to ensure communication and implementation of policies to promote the participation of women community members in school committees, and appointment of women as head teachers. • Training of DEOs and SEOs has potential to support PTAs, if work with PTAs is prioritized and monitored. • Inform parents about the new curriculum, and that education is relevant and important to both their girls and boys, so as to encourage retention in school. This can be done by emphasizing how financial autonomy will help their daughters in leading healthier and more stable lives.
<p><i>Sub purpose 2: Increased use of high quality, relevant teaching and learning materials</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials that are not gender-sensitive reinforce negative stereotypes. • Materials that don’t reflect/promote gender-sensitivity and learner-centered pedagogies will hinder implementation of the promoted pedagogies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that materials are reviewed for gender-sensitivity and aligned with the new national curriculum, including the competency-based, learner-centered approach. • Consider ways that materials can support students with disabilities who are mainstreamed in community schools.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If teachers do not have skills or inclination, they will not be able to effectively use ICT to support their instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include training on basic ICT skills to increase use of ICT in schools. • Teach teachers how to self-evaluate information created/obtained through ICT for gender-sensitivity. • Ensure that female teachers have access to ICT training, so they are also competent in this area.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider ways that ICT can support students with disabilities who are mainstreamed, and how teachers can be encouraged to use ICT to support learners with different needs and abilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If parents distribute limited resources/allot study time preferentially to boys, girls will not have equal opportunity to advance in their schooling/careers. • Girls are more likely to lack self-confidence, which negatively affects their participation in class, performance, and drop-out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use PTA meetings to raise awareness about gender roles, gender equality, the importance of sharing domestic and agricultural work equally between their daughters and sons, and the importance of reporting sexual violence. • Advocate the importance of providing girls and boys with time to engage in reading and learning outside of school. • PTAs also have opportunity to highlight the rights of all people, including people with disabilities. • PTAs can encourage/support the formation of school-based clubs that empower and build the self-confidence of girls. Consider potential for parental involvement in these clubs. • Strengthen cross-sector collaboration within USAID/Rwanda for improved nutritional status/knowledge in schools and among primary school children.

Annex A – Stakeholders Consulted

University of Rwanda, College of Education
FAWE Rwanda
Plan International Rwanda
Action Aid Rwanda
RWAMREC (Rwanda Men’s Resource Centre)
Handicap International
Girl Hub
Never Again Rwanda
Pride Art Organization (PAO)
My Right Association (MRA)
Safe Friendly Society (SFS)
Horizon Community Association (HOCA)
Right for All Women (RIFAW)
Rwanda Rainbow Rights (RRR)
Health Development Initiative (HDI)

Annex B - Defining Gender Sensitive Pedagogy

Throughout this analysis, the effective implementation *gender sensitive pedagogy* at all levels of education has been highlighted as a key recommendation. This description is intended to clarify the concept, gender-sensitive pedagogy, to facilitate its integration in the Project LEARN PAD.

Overall, gender-sensitive pedagogy refers to teaching and learning processes that pay attention to the specific learning needs of girls and boys (Mlama, et al., 2005).

For example, teachers who practice gender-sensitive pedagogy:

- ensure that girls and boys participate equally in the classroom
- have equal expectations of girls and boys
- are sensitive to menstrual hygiene management (MHM) needs of pubescent girls
- discourage teasing and violence in and outside the classroom, both among students and between teachers-to-students (SRGBV), including SRGBV against the LGBT community
- encourage girls and students with disabilities to remain in school
- encourage/support boys and girls to explore their interests/potential, including in non-traditional activities, such as math/science/technology and male-dominated professions for girls, and traditionally female-dominated professions for boys (i.e. primary school teaching and ECCD)
- review teaching and learning materials and are able to recognize (and address/avoid, as appropriate) gender stereotypes
- use inclusive language in the classroom, and avoid verbal and non-verbal language that may reduce the participation on girls (i.e. sexual remarks, etc.).

The following is a helpful reference:

Mlama, P., Dioum, M., Makoye, H., Murage, L., Wagah, M., & Wahika, R. (2005). *Gender Responsive Pedagogy: A Teacher's Handbook* . Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE).