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**INCLUSIVE,  
QUALITY  
EDUCATION:  
AN ANNOTATED  
BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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# ACRONYMS

- ALP – Accelerated learning program  
BRIGHT – Burkinabé Response to Improve Girls’ Chances to Succeed Programme  
CbM – Community-based monitoring  
CBM – Christian Blind Mission  
CCT – Conditional cash transfer  
CT – Cash transfer  
DFID – UK Department for International Development  
EMIS – Education Management Information System  
ERIC – Education Resource Information Center  
FAWE – Forum for African Women Educationalist  
GBV – Gender-based violence  
GPE – Global Partnership for Education  
GRP – Gender Responsive Pedagogy  
GRP4ECE – Gender-responsive pedagogy for early childhood education  
GSDRC – Governance and Social Development Resource Centre  
HEART – High-Quality Technical Assistance for Results  
HES – Household economic strengthening  
IGA – Income-generating activities  
ILO – International Labour Organisation  
IZA – Institute of Labour Economics  
JICA-RI – Japan International Cooperation Agency Research Institute  
KJEP – Korean Education Development Institute Journal of Educational Policy  
NFE – Non-formal education  
NGO – Non-governmental organisations  
ODI – Overseas Development Institute  
OOSC – Out-of-school children  
PPP – Public private partnership  
RCT – Randomized control trial  
RISE-WP – Research on Improving Systems of Education Working Paper  
SABER – Systems Approach for Better Education Results  
SBM – School-based management  
SDG – Sustainable development goals  
SDP – School development planning  
SG – Savings group  
SRGBV – School-related gender-based violence  
STRIVE – Supporting Transformation by Reducing Insecurity and Vulnerability with Economic Strengthening Program  
UCL – University College London  
UCT – Unconditional cash transfer  
UN – United Nations  
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
UNGEI – United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative  
UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund  
VSLA – Village Savings and Loan Associations  
WASH – Water, sanitation, and hygiene  
3ie – International Initiative for Impact Evaluation



# INTRODUCTION

Plan International has developed its new Global Strategy that includes what are referred to as “Areas of Global Distinctiveness” to guide the organisation’s work as a global leader in these areas over the next five years. *Inclusive Quality Education* is one of these “Areas of Global Distinctiveness” under the thematic area of “learn”. Plan International seeks to understand more thoroughly the various aspects of inclusive, quality education—such as participation of family, communities, and civil society in guaranteeing access to equitable and inclusive education and ensuring gender transformative education in and around schools—to inform the development of a comprehensive theoretical framework for Plan International’s work in this area.

To this end, Plan International commissioned the present Annotated Bibliography to review and compile existing literature and evidence related to inclusive quality education. Plan International’s objectives of this annotated bibliography are: (1) address current knowledge gaps related to how to promote positive participation in education for the most vulnerable children and how gender transformative programming influences participation and experience of vulnerable children in their education; (2) identify related tools and resources for effective inclusive quality education programming; and (3) inform Plan International’s research agenda related to inclusive quality education. Accordingly, the four specific areas of enquiry are gender transformative programming and access to and experience of education for vulnerable children, particularly girls, as relates to social protection schemes, public accountability measures, and innovative financing.

Literature for the annotated bibliography has been identified and reviewed through a three-prong process between November 15 and December 15, 2017: (1) working with the Plan International team to obtain existing sources to which they have access; (2) conducting an exhaustive search via Internet, including searches on Google and/or Google Scholar, Ebsco, including Education Resource Complete and Education Resource Information Center (ERIC) databases, (3) conducting a scan of organisation websites such as UNICEF, Global Partnership for Education (GPE), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) websites such as CARE, Oxfam, and Save the Children; (4) manually searching reference lists of particularly relevant documents. To ensure the most relevant literature is included, the search was limited to sources published in the last five years (2013-2017). The type of literature reviewed includes peer-reviewed articles, systematic reviews and other literature reviews, books, UN and other international agency reports, research institute working and discussion papers, research and practice notes, and NGO and donor reports.

# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A number of salient overall findings and research gaps and/or opportunities emerged for each of the six research questions:

- 1 What is known about the most effective models for gender transformative education approaches within schools in terms of content, materials, teacher development, school policies, school governance?
- 2 What is known about how gender transformative programming with parents, including fathers, effects access to and experience of education for children, especially girls?
- 3 What is known about children and young people's participation in school and school governance to promote gender transformative approaches?
- 4 What is known about how social protection schemes promote participation for the most vulnerable, especially girls, child mothers and children with disabilities (including both community level and government level interventions, such as savings and loans groups, cash transfers etc.)?
- 5 What is known about how public accountability measures improve provision of and experience of education for the most vulnerable and marginalized?
- 6 What is known about how innovative financing models (decentralisation, non-formal education, private funding sources), promote inclusion?

The following is a brief overview of the main findings and a list of research gaps and/or opportunities for each inquiry area. An expanded discussion of findings, gaps, and opportunities can be found in the Annex: Detailed Summary of Findings.

## Gender transformative programming within and around schools<sup>1</sup>

In regards to research question one, limited data still exists on what are the most effective models for gender transformative approaches within and around schools. A lack of consensus on what makes education gender transformative versus gender-sensitive or responsive also exists. Available evidence indicates only a handful of interventions have been effective in changing power dynamics, gender roles, and gendered social norms—in other words are gender transformative. These interventions include (1) girl-friendly schools that encompass a “quality mix” of interventions such as girl-friendly spaces that are private and safe and girls' clubs, especially when combined with outreach to parents on gender norm changes and larger behaviour and attitude change campaigns, (2) comprehensive sex education that includes gender equality content, and (3) interventions that seek to enhance the capacity of poor or marginalised women and girls to participate in discussing school practices, (4) communications activities aimed at changing gender discriminatory norms. A research gap exists for question two related to gender transformative programming with parents and how it affects education outcomes for children, especially girls. Only a handful of cases studies shed light on the latter sub-topic. Likewise, limited literature emerged for research question three related to children and youth participation in school governance to promote gender transformative approaches. Only one study (Mnubi, 2017) from Tanzania on gender-sensitive student councils provides insight.

The major gaps and/or opportunities for research are:

- Best practices in gender transformative education programming in general and measuring its impact on participation and experience of education for the most vulnerable, notably interventions that aim to change gender norms.
- Impact of textbooks on gender norms and relations once revised to be gender transformative.
- Impact of gender-responsive pedagogies, related teacher training, and teachers' modelling of gender equality in the classroom on transforming discriminatory gender norms, roles, and power dynamics in education.
- Role of female teachers and mothers on school management committees and their impact on gender transformative education.

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1 For the purpose of this annotated bibliography school-related gender-based violence has not been included given its specific relationship with another commissioned annotated bibliography related to gender sensitive child protection.

- Engagement of boys and men as partners for achieving gender equity and equality in the school setting.
- How to change gender norms that assign household chores to girls.
- Innovative and effective measurement of the impact of girls' empowerment activities in the school setting on education outcomes.
- Impact of combined infrastructural interventions, classroom improvements, and changing policy institutions and culture on girls' and women's rights and gender equality.
- Interplay of religion, shifting gender norms, and education.
- How intersectionality (i.e. compounded discrimination) impacts educational outcomes.
- Gender transformative programming with parents and how it affects education outcomes for children, especially girls.
- Children and youth participation in school and school governance to promote gender transformative approaches.

## Social protection schemes

The reviewed literature on social protection schemes focused principally on cash transfers and savings and loans groups. Highlights of cash transfer findings are (1) Conditional cash transfers (CCTs) appear to be more effective than unconditional cash transfers (UCTs) in promoting girls' attendance; (2) UCTs found to be effective in preventing early marriage and pregnancy, which are common drivers of girls' dropout; (3) CCTs are particularly effective in increasing girls' transition from primary to secondary school and decreasing dropout rate for girls; (4) Cash transfers have statistically significant impact on all school participation outcomes (enrolment, attendance, dropout, and completion) for girls and boys alike; (5) Cash transfers do not appear to have statistically significant impact on learning with the exception of merit-based scholarships. However, fewer studies have been conducted on the impact of cash transfers on learning and achievement; (6) Some data suggest that social protection schemes like cash transfers and universal child benefits are powerful ways to improve access to education for those living with disability when accessed. However, much of the latter evidence related to children living with a disability is anecdotal without experimental or quasi-experimental studies to back it up.

The evidence on village savings and loan associations (VSLA) and other similar types of programming indicates mixed or uncertain impact on improving school participation and experience of children; in fact, this type of programming may be detrimental to education outcomes when children, especially girls, are absent because of increased participation in household income-generating activities. Overall, there is limited evidence on the relationship between VSLA and education outcomes for children, especially girls, child mothers, and children with disabilities.

The major gaps and/or opportunities for research are:

- Impact of all types of social protection on education outcomes for children with disabilities and child mothers.
- Impact of cash transfers on gender relations, power dynamics, practices, and norms in the household and/or in schools.
- Role of VSLA in gender transformative programming that impacts children's education outcomes.
- Relationship between savings groups implemented directly with children and youth and improved education outcomes, particularly for child mothers and other girls.
- Mediating factors (e.g. gender of recipient, focus of conditionality, adolescents/youth as direct beneficiaries) for success of economic strengthening interventions.

## Public accountability measures

Some evidence is available that public accountability measures improve participation and experience of education for the most vulnerable children, particularly girls. These include bottom-up community management and accountability, presence of school management committees, information-based accountability, and gender-sensitive school councils. Overall, there is tentative evidence that community-based monitoring could improve inclusion of children with disabilities.

The major gaps and/or opportunities for research are:

- Student voice and child-led accountability/school governance and its impact on education outcomes for the most vulnerable.
- Impact of all types of public accountability measures on education outcomes of children with disabilities and other marginalised children.
- Conditions that make community-based monitoring most effective in improving education participation and experience of most vulnerable children.

## Innovative financing models

Evidence from the literature reveals that the impact of decentralisation is multiplied when accompanied by school-based management and when the decentralised budget is used on teaching and learning. Furthermore, strong evidence exists that school autonomy/decentralisation is beneficial in wealthier contexts while having negative effects on student achievement in developing countries. However, some evidence exists that decentralisation has a positive effect on girls' academic performance. Evidence on impact of financing through public private partnership (PPP) models on education outcomes for children, notably girls, remains limited and inconclusive. The impact of private schools is, at best, mixed with evidence of philanthropic schools increasing girls' enrolment and religious schools showing the opposite. Furthermore, no evidence emerged on how private schools impact school participation and experience of children with disabilities. However, some compelling evidence indicates that school choice and availability of private schools increases gender inequalities as often the better option is chosen for sons versus daughters; though, limited evidence of this exists. With respect to non-formal education (NFE), most of the existing evidence on how non-formal education improves access to education is largely linked to adults, lifelong learning, and/or children and youth in crisis and conflict. There is, however, some limited data that finds NFE programs generally effective in improving participation of girls in both contexts of crisis and conflict and non-crisis situations.

The major gaps and/or opportunities for research are:

- How decentralisation, NFE, and PPPs improve education participation and experience for children with disabilities.
- How NFE programmes help girls transition back into formal education.
- Impact of NFE and PPP on education outcomes of child mothers.
- Conditions under which PPP could promote gender equality and increased inclusion for the most vulnerable children.
- Providing school fee loans to parents and promoting savings for education as well as providing loans to private schools.

## Additional gaps in evidence/opportunities for further research on children with disabilities

Caution should be taken when applying the inclusive education approach—a concept that originated in the Global North—to ensure equitable participation and experience of children with disabilities in developing countries. One study on Botswana found that inclusive education was imposed without taking into account indigenous concepts (e.g. “Bothos”—humanness and respect for all human beings) that could have made implementation of inclusive education more effective for teachers. Furthermore, disabilities are often associated with the devil and witchcraft in Botswana. As one interviewed teacher also noted, the latter was not considered and could lead to further stigmatization of these children once included in the regular schools. Additional research is needed to understand how to best contextualize the application of inclusive education to local cultures in developing countries.

# INCLUSIVE AND QUALITY EDUCATION

This section includes several systematic literature reviews and/or studies that provide evidence that cut across all six sub-topics of this annotated bibliography or do not relate directly to the six-topics but are nonetheless important literature related to inclusive, quality education. Relevant findings are specifically highlighted for each of the four main areas of inquiry of this annotated bibliography: gender transformative education, social protection schemes, public accountability measures, and innovative financing.

**Conn, K. 2014. “Identifying effective education interventions in Sub-Saharan Africa: a meta-analysis of rigorous impact evaluations.” New York: Unpublished manuscript, Columbia University.**

Conn presents a comprehensive systematic literature review that includes 56 articles comprised of 66 separate experiments, 83 treatment arms, and 420 effect size estimates of education interventions or programs in Sub-Saharan Africa. This review provides a comprehensive analysis of twelve different types of education interventions or programs, their relative effectiveness on student learning and performance, and why certain interventions seem to be more effective than others. The author finds that on average, interventions in pedagogical methods are the most effective. Specifically, those that utilize adaptive instruction and teacher coaching techniques are particularly effective.

Findings and/or research gaps relevant to Plan International's research questions:

## **Gender Transformative Education**

- Only two types of gender-sensitive/gender-transformative interventions are included for measurement: (1) awareness campaign on importance of girls' education; (2) girl-friendly construction (e.g. separate latrines for girls and boys).
- These two interventions are only measured as complementary components to other interventions like infrastructure improvement; therefore, they are not measured independently for their relative impact on student performance.

## **Social Protection Schemes**

- Evidence from two studies show student performance incentives (merit-based scholarships) had statistically significant impact on girls' academic achievement.
- Evidence shows that conditional cash transfers have greater positive effect on girl student learning and dropout than unconditional programs.
- Unconditional cash transfers had positive effects on reduction of teenage pregnancy and early marriage.



**Evans, D. K. & Popova, A. 2015. What really works to improve learning in developing countries? An analysis of divergent findings in systematic reviews. Policy Research Working Paper No 7203. World Bank Group Africa Region Office of the Chief Economist.**

In this World Bank report, Evans and Papova provide a sound analysis of how six systematic reviews<sup>2</sup> conducted between 2013 and 2014 provide divergent conclusions related to what works best to achieve improved student learning in developing countries. The analysis finds that differences are related to insufficient representation of all relevant studies in the systematic reviews. The most inclusive systematic review incorporates less than half of the total 229 existing studies with student learning results. Evans and Papova find overall that across the reviews only two types of interventions are consistently shown to be significant to improving student learning as measured by test scores: (1) pedagogical interventions that tailor teaching to student learning levels—either teacher-led or computer-facilitated and (2) individualized and repeated teacher training that is associated with a specific method or task.

Findings and/or research gaps relevant to Plan International's research questions:

- Despite evidence that links cost-reducing interventions (e.g. cash transfers (CTs), scholarships, and other reduction of fees, or monetary grants) to increased enrolment and attendance, three reviews show cost-reducing interventions to be the least effective programs at improving student learning while another three systematic reviews did not find them effective at all. These findings are not disaggregated by gender.
- No mention of how gender-equitable, responsive, and/or transformative teaching fits into the equation of pedagogical interventions and individualised and repeated teacher training.

**Ganimian, A.J. & Murnane, R. J. 2016. Improving educational outcomes in developing countries: lessons from rigorous impact evaluations. Working Paper No. 20284. National Bureau of Economic Research. (Originally published in July 2014 and revised in February 2016).**

In this working paper, Ganimian and Murnane provide a comprehensive revision of their original work by the same name published in July 2014. The revision appears to be in response to the original paper's inclusion in the analytical critique of six systematic reviews by Evans and Papova (2015). In this revision, Ganimian and Murnane expand on Evans and Popova's analysis and update their own of the most recent systematic reviews related to what works to improve education outcomes in low- and middle-income countries. Their analytic approach involves (1) including all relevant studies for a total of 223 rigorous impact evaluations of educational initiatives conducted in 56 low- and middle-income countries; (2) categorising interventions by their theory of action, or how problems are being resolved; (3) using narrative review of evidence versus meta-analysis. Their key findings are: (1) that cost reduction measures and/or expanding schooling options increases participation but not achievement consistently, (2) providing information to parents on topics like school quality and economic returns of education affect parental action and in turn student achievement, (3) improved resources positively impact achievement only if children's daily experience in school changes, and (4) well-designed incentives increase teacher effort and student achievement while teachers without needed skills require guidance to reach minimum standards of instruction.

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2 The studies are the following: Conn 2014, Glewwe et al. 2014, Kremer, Brannen, & Glennerster 2013, Krishnaratne, White, & Carpenter 2013, McEwan 2014, and Murnane & Ganimian 2014. For the purpose of this annotated bibliography, Conn 2014 is included as it provides evidence relevant to the research questions at hand. A revised version of Murnane & Ganimian 2014 published in February 2016 is included as it also provides particularly relevant evidence to the research questions of this annotated bibliography. Krishnaratne, White, & Carpenter 2013 has been excluded since an updated 3ie comprehensive systematic review has been completed by Snilstveit et al. 2015. Glewwe et al. 2014 is excluded as Glewwe and Muralidharan 2015 provide a more recent review of evidence on the same topic (Improving School Education Outcomes in Developing Countries: Evidence, Knowledge Gaps, and Policy Implications). McEwan 2014 is excluded as it does not provide any additional relevant evidence to the research questions at hand for this annotated bibliography. Note that the author of this annotated bibliography reviewed the 2015 version of the McEwan study published in *Review of Educational Research* in September 2015. See Reference list for full details of this source.

Findings and/or research gaps relevant to Plan International's research questions:

### **Gender Transformative Education**

- Evidence exists that providing safe, private spaces for pubescent girls is a more effective way of curbing menstruation-related absences than improving sanitation technology.
- Building schools with “girl-friendly” facilities consistently increases enrolment, but it does not always result in improved student achievement.

### **Social Protection Schemes**

- Nearly every evaluated conditional cash transfer (CCT) program has increased student enrolment.
- There was no disaggregation of effectiveness of cash transfers for children with disabilities and limited disaggregation for girls vs. boys.
- CCTs have largest impact on enrolment of children transitioning from one level of schooling to the next and children from the poorest families.
- The most effective condition for improving attainment includes giving a portion of the cash transfer conditional on transition of student from primary to secondary or including smaller monthly payments with a larger lump sum given when the child graduates from high school.
- Evidence shows that merit-based scholarships are the only type of CCT that improves student achievement.

### **Public Accountability Measures**

- Mixed evidence exists on how effective community-based school management and participation are as public accountability mechanisms.
- These mechanisms are most effective when communities are provided grants to manage, take part in related capacity building, and have autonomy to make changes to schools accordingly.

### **Innovative Financing**

- In some contexts, targeted vouchers have had positive short- and medium-term impacts on enrolment and achievement of low-income students.
- Some evidence from Pakistan that vouchers increase girls' enrolment in urban areas but not in rural areas likely due to higher number of out-of-school children (OOSC) and more readily available resources in urban areas to start private schools.

### **Glewwe, P. & Muralidharan, K. 2015. *Improving school education outcomes in developing countries: evidence, knowledge gaps, and policy implications*. RISE-WP-15/001. RISE. Oxford: University of Oxford, Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE).**

Like Murnane's and Ganimian's 2016 revised analysis of what works to improve education outcomes in developing countries, Glewwe and Muralidharan's working paper also takes another in-depth look at the evidence because of identified discrepancies in conclusions reached by recent systematic reviews covering similar or same studies (See Evans and Papova, 2015). In efforts to distinguish their analysis from others, Glewwe and Muralidharan's approach involves interpreting the evidence using their own developed theoretical framework. Glewwe and Muralidharan's approach also stands out because it focuses not only on education participation and learning outcomes but also on the cost-effectiveness of the evaluated interventions. Based on the analysis of 118 high quality studies identified through an exhaustive search and vetting process, they conclude that demand-side types of interventions like cash transfers and information campaigns as well as improved pedagogy and interventions focused on teacher accountability/governance can be effective in increasing time in school and learning outcomes. Glewwe and Muralidharan close their study with recommendations about how to design future interventions and how to measure the impact of the interventions to make accurate comparisons across time, regions, and context possible.

Findings and/or gaps relevant to Plan International's research questions:

### **Gender Transformative Education:**

- Good evidence that girl-friendly construction and infrastructure (e.g. construction of more schools to make closer to home in societies in which girls cannot freely travel far from home; construction of facilities such as separate latrines for girls and boys and clean water) produce positive education outcomes in the form of enrolment, attendance, and learning for not only girls but also boys.
- Evidence from India suggests that providing safe transportation like bikes has a positive impact on girls' enrolment and attendance in secondary schools.
- Two interrelated findings include important gaps related to gender: Pedagogy is found to be one type of intervention having the most positive impact on learning outcomes. However, there is neither discussion about the role of gender responsive pedagogy on education outcomes nor analysis of the extent to which gender-equitable teacher attitudes, behaviour, and training impact education outcomes of girls and boys.

### **Social Protection Schemes, Public Accountability, and Innovative Financing**

- The evidence that links cash transfers and public accountability systems (e.g. school-based management, community mobilisation, and top-down monitoring/school inspection) to positive impact on education outcomes is typically drawn from general student populations and not disaggregated by specific sub-groups of vulnerable children like girls, child mothers, children with disabilities.
- There is some evidence that vouchers help poor students access private schools.

### **Kremer, M. Brannen, C. & Glennerster, R. 2013. "The challenge of education and learning in the developing world." *Science* 340: 297-300.**

In this peer-reviewed article, Kremer and Glennersterz provide a simple and condensed review of global evidence across various geographic regions to arrive at conclusions on effectiveness of interventions on both access and learning outcomes for children in developing countries. Overall, they conclude that reducing out-of-pocket costs through interventions like conditional cash transfers and merit-based scholarships has significant impact on school participation with even greater impact when coupled with other interventions like child health care and providing parents with relevant information about education. However, the latter interventions do not have significant impact on learning. They find that pedagogical reforms that match teaching methods to student learning needs and improved accountability measures and incentives to be most impactful on student learning.

Findings and/or research gaps particularly relevant to Plan International's research questions:

### **Gender Transformative Education**

- Limited evidence exists on girl-friendly infrastructure, specifically adapted water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions for menstruating girls, and its impact on access and learning.
- Girl-friendly infrastructure in the form of school construction to be closer to girls' home in places where social norms make travel far from home impossible for girls is shown to have a positive impact on school participation for girls.

### **Social Protection Schemes**

- CCTs are particularly effective in increasing girls' transition from primary to secondary school and decreasing dropout rate.
- Merit-based scholarships have a positive impact on access and student achievement because of the incentives they produce.

## Public Accountability Measures

- Public accountability measures in the form of (1) provision of information to parents and (2) empowering local communities to have representative decision-making roles in schools have positive impacts on student learning.

## Innovative Financing

- Little evidence exists on how to improve performance of low-cost private schools, including the potential role of government in supporting and regulating them.

## Masino, S. & Niño-Zarazúa, M. 2016. “What works to improve the quality of student learning in developing countries?” *International Journal of Educational Development* 48: 53–65.

Masino and Niño-Zarazúa provide a compelling systematic review of 38 experimental and quasi-experimental studies that use standard deviations of student achievement test scores to measure policy impact on student learning in low- and middle-income countries. Based on the examined evidence, the authors identify three drivers of improved student performance, achievement, and learning: (1) supply-side capabilities interventions (e.g. material resources for schools and teachers; supplies for students; school feeding; better conditions for teachers; new school construction); (2) incentives for changing preferences and behaviours (e.g. teacher incentives and conditional cash transfers (CCTs), vouchers, and scholarship for students); (3) participatory and community management interventions. The authors present a theory of change based on the related findings of these identified drivers of change for improved student learning. The authors conclude that interventions have the most impact on student learning when more than one driver of change is taken into account in education policy, notably when social norms and intertemporal choices are factored in the design of education policies through incentives for changing preferences and behaviours.

Findings and/or research gaps relevant to Plan International's research questions:

## Social Protection Schemes

- Girls, low-income children, and vulnerable groups including ethnic and religious minorities are the most frequently targeted groups for financial education support such as CCTs due to gender and other biases, discrimination, and their often-high risk for school dropout.
- Cash transfers are most effective when conditional and unanticipated (i.e. the first time a cash transfer is received) by the family. The unanticipated aspect operates in such a way that both the cash transfer and other family resources already designated for education remain allocated to education. When anticipated (i.e. subsequent times receiving a cash transfer), there is higher probability of resource reallocation of existing resources for education towards other household expenses and/or investments.
- Merit-based scholarship programmes awarded to primary school girls for continued education to secondary school both increased their access to education and improved their academic performance while also having positive spill over effects among boys.

## Public Accountability Measures

- Bottom-up community management and accountability structures are found to improve test results among all students in two case studies in El Salvador and Honduras.
- Bottom-up community management and accountability interventions are also found to be effective in changing discriminatory social norms that “restrict demand for educational services” among girls and other vulnerable groups because these interventions help generate conducive environments for social change.



## Innovative Financing

- Mixed results have emerged about effectiveness of voucher programs on student achievement and learning with some programs showing improved test scores and others with either inconclusive change or a decrease in test scores. Additionally, cheating among students emerged as a negative by-product of student incentive programs linked to their achievement on tests.
- Reviewed studies documenting top-down decentralisation found that it did not have any impact on student performance. In fact, one reviewed study on Argentina found that top-down decentralisation actually made exclusion worse by failing to reach the poorest students with improved learning outcomes. The author of this study posits this may be because “decentralisation can also degrade service provision in poor communities that lack the ability to voice and defend their preferences<sup>3</sup>.”

## **Nishimura, M. 2017. *Effect of school factors on gender gaps in learning opportunities in rural Senegal: does school governance matter?* JICA-RI Working Paper No. 141.**

In this working paper, Nishimura provides an important contribution to the body of research on the impact of school-based management on educational outcomes in developing countries. Drawing on data from 306 primary schools in rural Senegal, collected by the Japan International Cooperation Agency Research Institute (JICA-RI), this paper examines various school factors that affect the gender gaps in internal efficiency and learning achievement. The key findings are all directly related to Plan’s research questions:

### **Gender Transformative Education**

- The presence of both female teachers and female peers in the classroom is negatively correlated to the exam pass rate of girls while percentage of female board members on the schools’ parent association is associated with a higher gender gap in repetition rate that disfavours girls. This is of particular relevance because as the author notes, the finding related to female teachers contradicts other global evidence, warranting further research on the status and roles of female teachers in Senegal and beyond. The author also notes that the findings on female peers and board members require further research on the overall role of women in school management and the female peer effect to understand if these are context-specific findings only or could be applied more generally.
- It is also important to note that the amount of contribution made by the school management committee is positively associated with improved exam pass rate for girls.
- Remedial lessons are associated with more of a gender gap in the repetition rate. This may be due in part to lack of gender-sensitive approaches to remedial type programs in terms of schedules, for example, that may disfavour girls versus boys in the after-school hours when girls often are expected to complete chores.

### **Public Accountability Measures**

- Overall, the presence of school management committees with strong community participation is associated with lower dropout rates for boys and girls.
- Implementing information-based accountability (i.e. providing parents with periodic reports on students’ learning achievements and attendance) is associated with more of a gender gap in repetition rate. The authors posit that school reports may provide basis for decisions about whom accesses remedial lessons and other learning interventions, causing a gender gap at those levels and in turn contributing to the gender gap in repetition rates.

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3 Masino and Niño-Zarazúa did not provide the detailed explanation about why it did not reach the poorest students. The explanation comes from the abstract of the original study include in Niño-Zarazúa’s systematic review: Galiani, S., Gertler, P., Schargrodsky, E., 2008. School decentralization: helping the good get better, but leaving the poor behind. *J. Publ. Econ.* 92 (10–11), 2106–2120.

**Snilstveit, B., Stevenson, J. Phillips, D., Vojtkova, M., Gallagher, E., Schmidt, T., Jobse, H., Geelen, M., Pastorello, M.G. et al. 2015. *Interventions for improving learning outcomes and access to education in low- and middle-income countries: a systematic review*. 3ie Systematic Review 24. London: International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie).**

Arguably the most comprehensive and useful systematic review completed to date, Snilstveit et al. seek to review studies published between 1990 and June 2015 that address primary and secondary school children in mainstream education in low- and middle-income countries. To be included in this systematic review, studies had to use an experimental or quasi-experimental study design and measure school participation (enrolment, attendance, drop-out, completion) or learning outcomes (cognitive skills, maths, language arts and composite score). In a departure from other systematic reviews, qualitative studies, descriptive quantitative studies, process evaluations and project documents linked to the interventions were evaluated as well to provide additional insight into their research questions. Also, unlike the other systematic reviews covering similar time periods, it specifically seeks to disaggregate impact based on gender, age, socio-economic status, and rural/urban. They included 420 papers corresponding to 238 different studies that assess 216 different programmes. Their main findings are that cash transfer programmes have the largest and most consistent effect on school participation but with limited or mixed results on learning improvement. They also conclude that school participation outcomes improve through community-based monitoring, low-cost private schools, new schools and infrastructure, and school feeding. For learning outcomes, improved structured pedagogy, merit-based scholarships, school feeding, extra time in school and remedial education provide the most consistent results.

Findings and/or gaps relevant to Plan International's research questions:

### **Gender Transformative Education**

- Only two of 238 studies involved any type of gender sensitisation with parents and both studies were conducted on the same project in Burkina Faso (Burkinabé Response to Improve Girls' Chances to Succeed Programme (BRIGHT)). Furthermore, the gender sensitisation was just one element of this multilevel interventions and not analysed for impact as a stand-alone activity. The program, however, showed very positive results for improvement in enrolment, attendance, and learning.
- The exhaustive quantitative and qualitative examination of studies related to school-based management (SBM) and community-based monitoring (CbM) make reference to neither any gender equality/responsive/sensitive work nor children's and/or young people's participation.

### **Social Protection Schemes**

- Cash transfers have statistically significant impact on all school participation outcomes (enrolment, attendance, dropout, and completion) for girls and boys alike. The positive impact on dropout, however, is notably higher for girls than boys.
- Cash transfers that are provided to households or parents have larger overall positive impact than those given directly to mothers or students for girls and boys without any statistically significant distinctions between impact on girls and boys.
- Cash transfers do not appear to have statistically significant impact on learning, regardless of gender; however, fewer studies have been conducted on the impact.

### **Public Accountability Measures**

- The exhaustive analysis of studies on both SBM and CbM provide evidence that both participation and learning are improved by these interventions; though, diverse design make comparison across contexts difficult.
- No evidence found that specifically shows these public accountability measures are particularly useful for improving participation and learning of the most vulnerable, including girls and children with disabilities in particular.

## Innovative Financing

- Public private partnerships (PPP) defined as interventions that include vouchers, publicly funded low-cost private schools and construction of low-cost private schools with public funds did show statistically significant impact on girls' enrolment; however, variations in project design make it necessary to take precautions when interpreting the results.
- Overall, results for all participation and learning outcomes improved for children in these PPP schools. However, beyond enrolment, there is an insufficient number of studies to draw concrete conclusions disaggregated by sex. No disaggregation or analysis of impact on inclusion for children with disabilities and/or special needs.

### **Srivastava, M., Boer, A. & Jan Pijl, S. 2015. "Inclusive education in developing countries: a closer look at its implementation in the last 10 years." *Educational Review* 67 (2): 179–195.**

In this peer-reviewed article, Srivastava et al. provide an important contribution to the limited body of research related to interventions that aim to improve school participation and experience of children with disabilities in developing countries. The methodology involved conducting an exhaustive search of relevant databases and websites for studies and reports and implementing a vetting process using four key criteria (peer-reviewed; focusing on regular primary school; focusing on students with disabilities in developing countries; focusing on implementation of inclusive education in low- and middle-income countries). Only 11 studies and four reports remained. After adding another criterium that required the study or report to measure effect of the intervention, only two studies remained. They find that inclusive education projects seeking to improve educational outcomes for children with disabilities can be categorised into four types: (1) policy revisions; (2) school-based interventions like providing special provisions in neighbourhood schools; (3) teacher-focused interventions to improve quality of teaching children with disabilities through training; (4) parent-oriented interventions to change negative attitudes of parents and their information. The majority of projects focused on policy changes and school-based interventions. Of those, only two reported effects on increased attendance of children with disabilities primarily through teacher training and community involvement. Overall, the authors note that there is insufficient evidence to make any general conclusions about what works best to improve education outcomes for children with disabilities. Specifically, no interventions were found that related to social protection schemes and innovative financing.

### **Wapling, L. 2016. *Inclusive education and children with disabilities: quality education for all in low- and middle-income countries*. CBM.**

In this systematic review, Wapling identifies available literature on interventions that seek to impact the education outcomes for children with disabilities in developing countries, analysing 131 different academic, peer-reviewed articles in full. This review identifies two additional categories of interventions beyond policy, school, teacher, and parent/community focus: child-focused and mixed focused. This review of literature confirms what Srivastava et al. (2015) found as being an overall absence of studies that measure impact of these interventions. Similarly, this review also found no evidence of social protection schemes, public accountability measures, and/or innovative financing as specific interventions to improve participation and learning among children with disabilities.

# GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMMING & GIRLS' EDUCATION

This section presents relevant literature on the most effective models of gender transformative education within schools, including programming that targets parents to improve school participation and experience of children, especially girls, and children and youth participation in school governance to promote gender-transformative approaches. Literature that specifically treats effective models of girls' education are also included given the close link with gender transformative education.

**Bisiaux, R. and Griffiths, S. (Coffey International Development Ltd). 2017. *Mid-line evaluation report: innovation window final version. Evaluation Manager Girls' Education Challenge Fund/ UK Department for International Development.***

This donor report is the mid-line evaluation of the Girls' Education Challenge Innovation Window funding that encompasses 19 projects in 12 countries (Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia) aimed at testing and piloting new approaches to enable marginalised girls to achieve education outcomes that improve their life chances. The evaluation methodology involved conducting a meta-analysis of all 19 projects' reports, datasets, and outcome spreadsheets and triangulating the project data with secondary data and literature. The projects include diverse combinations of interventions, depending on each specific context: reduction to the cost of going to school (e.g. income-generating activities, in-kind support or loans), teacher training in areas such as literacy and numeracy, inclusive classroom strategies and gender-sensitive pedagogies and support, improved school facilities; work with communities; extra-curricular and non-formal education, school governance and management structure strengthening, and activities to empower girls, tackle marginalisation and/or reduce violence. Highlights of overall findings are (1) activities that aim to improve girls' learning have to be context-specific and tailored to girls' specific needs given the great diversity of barriers to equitable education that oftentimes are not gender-specific; (2) while some improvement in learning occurred across programs mainly through on-the-job training of teachers and in turn improved pedagogy, the difference between treatment and control groups is relatively low; the out-of-school girls had larger gains in learning than those that were already in-school; (3) attendance improved across projects typically because of interventions that reduced the cost of education; though, the result could change once more accurate attendance records become available. Findings and/or gaps specific to Plan's research questions include: (1) across projects, household chores in particular have an effect on girls' attendance and learning as girls grow older, yet few projects seem to have been successful in changing this trend; (2) sanitary pads and girl-friendly toileting facilities improve attendance; (3) interventions such as promoting income-generating activities with parents and caregivers can increase household income and may eventually lead parents to invest in girls' education; however, no clear causal link emerged from project evidence. Where increased investment in girls' education did take place, it was not always clear that it was solely because of increased income or if it was because of a combination of increased income with behavioural and attitudinal change activities aimed at changing gender norms that discriminate against girls; (4) providing school fee loans to parents and promoting savings for education as well as providing loans to private schools are starting to show promising impact on girls' participation; (5) evidence of extra-curricular activities, non-formal education and empowerment/self-esteem interventions impact on addressing barriers to girls' aspirations and decision-making in hopes of improving girls' attendance or learning was inconclusive or shown to be unsuccessful; however, this may only be an issue of inadequate measurement methodologies and/or that behaviour and attitude changes take time; (6) effectiveness of community-based interventions like community dialogue and media campaigns have limited impact while parent visits to other households to conduct outreach had promising impact on changing attitudes towards girls' education. Overall, however, these types of activities had minimal impact on attendance and no direct impact on learning; (7) there is inconclusive evidence about the impact of school management and governance on girls' attendance and learning.



**Marcus, R. 2015. *Communications to change discriminatory gender norms affecting adolescent girls*. Research and Practice Note of the Knowledge to Action Resource Series 2015. London: Overseas Development Institute.**

This research and practice note is both a useful review of evidence related to effective ways to use communication to change discriminatory gender norms affecting adolescent girls and a provision of useful advice on how best to put in practice successful communications activities. The evidence comes from a systematic review of 61 communication programs globally and fieldwork conducted directly in Ethiopia, Uganda, Nepal, and Vietnam. Although this document is not related to education exclusively, it provides helpful tips on how communication can be integrated into education programming to change gender norms. Furthermore, many of the campaigns were directly aimed at impacting gender norms that prevent girls' from enjoying their right to quality, inclusive education. Interventions that change gender norms was also an area of intervention identified by Unterhalter et al. (2014) as lacking in number overall despite evidence of its effectiveness in impacting education outcomes positively, making this document particularly salient. The systematic review for this research and practice note revealed that 71% of reviewed programmes had a positive impact on changing discriminatory norms and attitudes. Notable findings related to best practices are (1) combining one or more communication interventions; (2) TV and radio campaigns reach more audiences but may not be the most appropriate for adolescents as they often have restrictions placed on their viewing and listening and/or are unable to afford a TV or radio; (3) interventions that provide a forum for dialogue about gender norms like community dialogue/theatre, non-formal education classes, and interactive radio are the most effective; (4) materials must be adapted and be age-appropriate; (5) the most effective communications activities are those that are coupled with other interventions that improve service delivery of services like education. Notable changes to gender norm, attitudes, and practices found in reviewed literature include girls better able to negotiate household chores and school attendance with their parents and change of community norms about teenage and child mothers attending school in Uganda and Vietnam.

**Marcus, R. and Brodbeck, S. 2015. *Girls' clubs and empowerment programmes*. Research and Practice Note of the Knowledge to Action Resource Series 2015. London: Overseas Development Institute.**

Marcus and Brodbeck present a useful research and practice note for implementing girls' clubs—an intervention type identified in Unterhalter et al. 2014 as having strong evidence of its impact on larger gender equality in education and empowerment of girls. This tool provides an overview of what works best with girls' clubs and other empowerment programmes, pulling evidence from various case studies and other studies identified through their literature review. Highlights of what works best include (1) conducting targeting of the most vulnerable girls; (2) engaging with girls' families to multiply impact of gender norm changes that impact the girls' lives; (3) ensuring girls' clubs are part of larger education interventions, behaviour and social norm communication campaigns, economic opportunities for women, and legal and other institutional changes that favour gender equality.

**Mnubi, G.M. 2017. "Improving the quality of basic education through the use of gender-sensitive student councils: experience of six selected districts in Tanzania." *Journal of Learning for Development* 4(2): 161-168.**

With this insightful peer-reviewed article, Mnubi begins to fill a gap in literature around children and youth participation in school governance in favour of gender transformative practices. Using a qualitative methodology, he conducted in-depth interviews with 29 school directors, 35 mentor teachers, 24 champions, and 54 student leaders from schools in Tanzania. Focus group discussions with an additional 590 student leaders complemented the data. This research reveals that the democratically-elected, gender-sensitive student councils play a major role in strengthening school leadership, accountability, and increasing the ability of students, particularly girls, to voice their needs and concerns about topics such as sexual harassment, the right to quality education and health services and the elimination of corporal punishment. Other findings include the presence of important spill-over into home life with social norms being altered because of increased sensitisation on gender equality and leadership skills among female and male students. Notably, attendance of girls improved due to shifts in expectations of household duties and a decrease in the incidence of early pregnancy. Overall, the use of these gender-sensitive student councils

helped to improve the delivery of quality education in schools and increase gender equality in school and at home. Related to accountability, the study noted anecdotes from school principals that attributed school management's increased accountability and responsibility to the student councils as well as greater student accountability as student leaders grew in their capacity for leadership and self-advocacy.

**Naylor, R. and Helen Mobey. 2015. *HEART helpdesk report: evidence on girls' secondary education*. Department for International Development (DFID).**

Naylor and Mobey provide a rapid review of literature on the particular situation of education for secondary-age girls in developing countries; it is based on three days of desk-based research. This rapid review outlines the most critical barriers to enrolment, attendance, attainment, and learning. It also presents existing evidence on the most effective interventions for improving these educational outcomes. Although it draws primarily on the reviews conducted by Unterhalter et al. (2014) and Sperling & Winthrop (2016), its value-added includes a brief review of literature on education for girls with disabilities and those from language minorities. The review also provides an overview of existing literature on non-formal education (NFE) and finds that NFE programs are generally effective in improving participation of girls in both contexts of crisis and conflict and non-emergency situations. Specifically, it provides some tentative insight on how to improve educational outcomes for pregnant girls and/or child mothers: (1) NFE programs such as home-schooling and others that are coined "second-chance" accelerated learning programs (ALPs) and (2) community engagement aimed at challenging discriminatory attitudes that act as barriers to young mothers' participation in school.

**Njambi Wanjama, L. & Wanjiru Njuguna, F. 2016. *UNGEI case study: documentation of gender responsive pedagogy as a best practice by the Forum for African Women Educationalist (FAWE)*. UNGEI.**

In this UN report, Njambi Wanjama and Wanjiru Njuguna present an interesting case study of FAWE's Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) model in six countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Gambia, and Zambia.), providing a clear analysis of the needs it addresses, the interventions used to address those needs, and the impact of the interventions on education outcomes. The GRP approach was developed in response to highly gender inequitable teaching practices and overall school environments throughout the African region. GRP includes three key elements: (1) gender assessment and policy analysis in the target institutions and countries; (2) GRP training of teachers targeting their knowledge, attitudes, and practical skills; and (3) GRP training of the school management team. Outreach and gender equality awareness-building with the larger school community, notably parents, is also an integral part of the model that cuts across the other elements. Overall, the case study finds that GRP implementation had the following impact: (1) change in teachers' attitudes and practices towards girls' and boys' with notable changes in gender bias that previously disfavoured girls; (2) behaviour and attitude change among girls and boys with more girls' participation in the classroom and improved dynamics between girls and boys leading to improved performance overall; (3) increased participation, especially among girls; (4) improved management that included school directors giving more autonomy and leadership space to female teachers and becoming more aware of particular challenges that girls and women face in their institutions, leading to finding solutions to minimize the challenges; (5) retention in part related to girl-friendly WASH practice, including provision of menstruation supplies and adequate toilet facilities; (6) changed attitudes among parents about equitable distribution of chores in home and importance of girls' education whose impact was in turn multiplied when parents began to sensitise other parents after they had received gender sensitisation through this initiative.

**Sperling G.B. & Winthrop, R. 2016. *What works in girls' education: evidence for the world's best investment*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.**

In this five-chapter systematic review book, Sperling and Winthrop make the compelling case that investing in girls' education is the world's best investment. The first chapter puts girls' education in context, highlighting the importance of evidence in investment and the need to include boys in interventions. The second chapter provides ten key arguments of why girls' education is such an important investment, outlining the impact that girls' education has on economic growth, improved wages for women, health outcomes for mothers and children,

smaller and more sustainable families, healthier and better-educated children, reduction in malaria and HIV, reduction in child marriage, and women's empowerment and increased political participation and leadership, and increased family resilience in the context of conflict and disaster. The third chapter provides a thorough overview of the progress made to date in girls' education while emphasising a continued crisis, notably for the most marginalised girls in the poorest countries, living in rural areas, and/or who come from ethnic or linguistic minorities. The fourth chapter presents the current evidence based on the authors' in-depth review of 138 studies and other systematic reviews. Overall, they find the following interventions to have the strongest evidence for girls' education: (1) interventions that make schools affordable (e.g. scholarships, stipends, cash transfers, and in-kind transfers); (2) interventions that help girls overcome health barriers (e.g. meals/take-home rations, deworming, improved WASH infrastructure); (3) interventions that reduce time and distance to school (e.g. more schools closer to girls' home, community schools, flexible school schedules); (4) interventions that make schools girl-friendly (e.g. girls' club, reduction in school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), gender-sensitivity training, provisions for young mothers); (5) interventions that improve school quality (more qualified teachers; improvement of how teachers teach); (6) interventions that increase community engagement around girls' education; (7) interventions that ensure girls' education during emergencies. Like other systematic reviews, the book identifies specific ways that these interventions must be designed to have the greatest impact and avoid unintended negative consequences (e.g. cash transfers most effective when conditional, when provided to girls out-of-school at the baseline, and from the poorest households). The study notes that using gender-sensitive pedagogy and eliminating gender discrimination and bias among teachers is a promising practice, but there is scarce research on its impact on participation and experience of education for girls and should be explored and analysed further. Furthermore, studies on gender bias in textbooks and curriculum are numerous while studies on impact of making these gender-transformative changes to textbooks are scarce.

**Unterhalter E., North A., Arnot M., Lloyd C., Moletsane L., Murphy-Graham E., Parkes J., & Saito M. 2014. *Interventions to enhance girls' education and gender equality. Education Rigorous Literature Review*. London: Department for International Development (DFID).**

Unterhalter et al. provide an exhaustive systematic review of the evidence from interventions that focus on both improving education outcomes for girls and achieving larger gender equality outcomes through education. This review is particularly useful for identifying models of gender transformative education that are working currently. The evidence comes from 169 studies conducted between 1991 and 2013 and are analysed according to a theory of change that divides interventions into three categories: (1) interventions that focus on resources and infrastructure; (2) interventions that focus on changing institutions; (3) interventions that focus on changing norms and including the most marginalised in education decision-making. For each intervention, the authors provide an analysis of its impact on three education outcomes (participation, learning, and empowerment) and rank them according to the evidence as strong, promising, limited, and more needed. From their analysis, they find several types of interventions with strong and promising evidence of impact on participation, learning, and empowerment. Among them are conditional cash transfers, information-related interventions, construction of schools, teacher training with emphasis on pedagogical content knowledge and gender equality, girl friendly schools and "quality mix" of interventions, girls' clubs, women's literacy, women's participation in school governance, community, and leadership activities that seek to engage marginalised girls' and women in conversations about school practices. In addition to a thorough discussion in the body of the report, they provide a reader-friendly summary in table form of these findings. Important research gaps are identified for each of the categories and also around the links between girls' education, gender equality, and social norms. Highlights of these gaps include school choice type interventions/private schools; adolescent girls and participation at junior and senior secondary levels; gender training for teachers; gender mainstreaming efforts in school governance; associations of gender equality with different forms of state provision; how classroom strategies and pedagogical practices have particular gender effects; overall research on interventions to change gender norms (e.g. influence of faith communities, learning spaces outside the formal school curriculum/timetable, tackling gender-based violence (GBV), working with men and boys, marginalisation and intersectionality); the impact of networks of women's rights activists on gender equality in schooling globally, nationally, and locally; and effects of combined empowerment strategies on gender-based violence beyond school. Overall, the authors found more studies that explored infrastructure and institutional change than those that tackled changes in social norms; similarly, many more studies focused on overall expansion of girls' education, thereby improving both participation and learning outcomes, than on the links between girls' education and gender equality more generally in society.

## Gender Transformative Education Tools

A number of useful tools and resources related to promising practices or in need of further intervention and evaluation have been developed since 2013 (last five years). This is not an exhaustive list but rather a compilation of those that emerged during the literature search process.

- CARE. 2015. Common Indicator Framework Toolkit. A useful toolkit outlining a common indicator framework for measuring four related indicators of girls' education – attainment, equality, quality, and empowerment to must be assessed in order to determine education and empowerment change across programs and social contexts.
- Frei, S. & Leowinata, S. 2014. Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for Teachers and Teacher Educators. Commonwealth of Learning. A useful toolkit on various aspects of gender mainstreaming in the school environment.
- GPE/UNGEI. 2017. Guidance for developing gender-responsive education sector plans. A comprehensive toolkit for national governments to ensure their education sector plans are gender-responsive.
- Marcus, R. & Harper C. 2015a. How do gender norms change? Research and Practice Note of the Knowledge to Action Resource Series 2015. Overseas Development Institute. A useful complement to *Communications to change discriminatory gender norms affecting adolescent girls* (see above) that maps out more broadly the complex way that gender norms change.
- Marcus, R. & Harper C. 2015b. Social norms, gender norms and adolescent girls: a brief guide. Research and Practice Note of the Knowledge to Action Resource Series 2015. Overseas Development Institute. Another useful complement to *Communications to change discriminatory gender norms affecting adolescent girls* (see above) that maps out the larger connection between social norms and gender norms and how these impact adolescent girls in particular.
- Perezniето, P. 2015. What can gender indices tell us about gender norms that affect adolescent girls? Research and Practice Note of the Knowledge to Action Resource Series 2015. Overseas Development Institute. This is a helpful tool for understand the multiple uses of global indices that measure gender equality and empowerment. The note reviews five of these global indices (the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI); the Gender Inequality Index (GIE); the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI); the African Gender Inequality Index (GEI); and the African Gender Development Index (AGDI). It gives guidance on these indices can be useful for benchmarking, advocacy, motivating governments to do better to move up the ranking, and accountability.
- UNESCO. 2015. A guide for gender equality in teacher education policy and practice. A comprehensive toolkit that provides guidance on a number of areas related to teacher education policy and practice such as gender-responsive policy and plans, institutional culture and environment, and pedagogy and teaching materials.
- USAID. 2015. A Guide for Strengthening Gender Equality and Inclusiveness in Teaching and Learning Materials. A useful toolkit on making teaching and learning material gender transformative and inclusive.
- VVOB and FAWE. Forthcoming mid-2018. Gender-responsive pedagogy for early childhood education (GRP4ECE) toolkit. See the following conference paper on this forthcoming toolkit: [http://www.vvob.be/vvob/files/fawe\\_grp4ece\\_papervvob\\_0.pdf](http://www.vvob.be/vvob/files/fawe_grp4ece_papervvob_0.pdf)



# SOCIAL PROTECTION SCHEMES

This section includes additional literature that helps answer the following research question: What is known about how social protection schemes promote participation for the most vulnerable, especially girls, child mothers and children with disabilities (including both community level and government level interventions, such as savings and loans groups, cash transfers etc.)? The literature is divided into three main categories: general social protection, cash transfers/stipends, and household economic strengthening/savings groups (VSLA). The literature in this section complements (1) the systematic reviews that touch on social protection schemes found under the section Inclusive and Quality Education and (2) two studies (Unterhalter et al., 2014 and Sperling & Winthrop, R., 2016) found in the Gender Transformative Education section.

## General Social Protection

**International Labour Office/Social Protection Department. 2015. *Social protection for children: key policy trends and statistics*. Social Protection Policy Papers, No 14. Geneva: International Labour Organization.**

This ILO report provides a useful global overview of existing social protection schemes for children in 183 countries, outlining challenges related to recent fiscal adjustments, analysing trends and recent policies, presenting information on basic universal child and orphan benefits in 57 low- and middle-income countries, and making recommendations on how to expand social protection for children. Although this policy paper does not exclusively address how social protection schemes impact education outcomes of children, it provides some useful information about how social protection schemes like cash transfers and universal child benefits do positively impact school participation and learning for the poorest as well as the converse when these types of social protection benefits are cut. The paper provides examples of programs that are targeting the most vulnerable such as those who are the poorest of the poor, those exploited by child labour, abandoned and orphaned children, and children with disabilities and/or special needs. It also highlights how these programs are crucial for ensuring these vulnerable children access basic services such as education. The paper also includes a discussion on the intimate link between social protection and education with the prevention of child labour.

**Kidd, S. 2014. *Social exclusion and access to social protection schemes*. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Commonwealth of Australia.**

In this donor report, Kidd provides a comprehensive overview of how social protection schemes often exclude eligible groups of vulnerable children and adults, thereby preventing them from enjoying the benefits of improved outcomes in education and other basic services. This report is particularly helpful in understanding often missed nuances of exclusion and inclusion in social protection programs. It highlights that focusing too specifically on groups considered the most socially excluded like children with disabilities and minority children facing discrimination may, in fact, cause exclusion of other vulnerable groups and/or cause unforeseen side effects such as stigma. Kidd concludes the report by outlining strategies that will decrease exclusionary forces in social protection: (1) expanded coverage to include not just the most vulnerable in society because the more a government invests in coverage, the less it invests in administration related to targeting, monitoring, and general oversight, (2) improved analysis of targeted groups and how to ensure they are not excluded, especially for those with disabilities and ethnic minorities, (3) improved administration overall, and (4) enhanced monitoring and evaluation of inclusion and exclusion in social protection schemes.

**Rohwerder, B. 2014. *Disability inclusion in social protection*. GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1069. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham.**

In this rapid review of literature, Rohwerder seeks to identify examples of disability integration within cash transfer and other social protection schemes, strategies and policies, in low-income contexts. It provides interesting country examples of disability inclusive policies and strategies as well as cash transfer type programs, highlighting the differences between three types of programs that people with disabilities can access—targeted, mainstreamed, and targeted mainstream programs. It highlights that evidence shows most people with disabilities are not reached by social protection and even when disability inclusive programmes exist, effectiveness is limited because of low coverage. The report outlines the main challenges that limit the effectiveness of disability inclusive social protection schemes: expensive and unreliable targeting, monitoring, and evaluation; cost of traveling for benefit is higher than benefit itself; poor people with disabilities living in remote areas often do not know about the schemes or cannot access them; the implicit disability targeting criteria that suggests that people who are disabled are incapacitated which is a limited view of disability that ignores the more important contextual factors that limit people from working or attending school. The report concludes with an analysis of complementary services, like inclusive education, needed to create the enabling environment to make cash transfers and/or other social protection schemes for people with disabilities effective by reducing the vulnerability of these communities. The report highlights an example of a cash transfer program in Zambia that showed limited results for education outcomes among members of the households with a disabled member. Although this report does not focus specifically on how cash transfers promote increased participation for children with disabilities, it provides insight into possible limitations of cash transfer programs aimed at improving school participation for children with special needs.

## Cash Transfers and Stipends

**Ahmed, V. & Zeshan, M. 2014. “An analysis of the social impact of the stipend program for secondary school girls of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.” *Educational Research for Policy and Practice* [Online] 13(2): 129-143.**

In this peer-reviewed article, Ahmed and Zeshan present evidence that has not been included in the existing exhaustive systematic reviews on cash transfers yet provides particularly insightful data on the impact of cash transfers on girls' education in regions where socio-cultural norms have traditionally blocked girls from accessing education equitably vis-à-vis boys. The authors analyse household-level primary data collected in 2012 in seven districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan, including Battagram, Bonair, Hangu, Kohistan, Shangla, Tank, and Upper Dir to understand better factors that impact enrolment of girls in the secondary school and how cash transfers can improve their chances of enrolment. They find that chances of female schooling decrease with a rise in family size while chances of female education increase by 1.8 and by 3.3% if household heads and their spouses have one additional year of schooling, respectively. Related to cash transfers, 35% of girls will drop out in the absence of a stipend program illustrating the powerful impact that these transfers have on school participation for girls, particularly in regions where discrimination against girls and women is prevalent.

**Baird, S., Ferreira, F. H. G., Özler, B., Woolcock, M. 2013. “Relative effectiveness of conditional and unconditional cash transfers for schooling outcomes in developing countries: a systematic review.” *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 2013: 8.**

Baird et al. provides a comprehensive systematic review of both conditional and unconditional cash transfers on education outcomes for children in developing countries, seeking to specifically highlight relative effectiveness of conditional cash transfers (CCTs) and unconditional cash transfers (UCTs). The authors analyse 75 reports related to 35 studies conducted between 1997 and April 2013. Of the thirty-five studies, thirty-two focus on programs targeting boys and girls while three focus on just girls. The authors find that overall both CCTs and UCTs have positive effects on enrolment for girls and boys with very little difference in the effect size. As for attendance, they find that CCTs and UCTs are equally effective for boys

while CCTs appear to be more effective than UCTs for girls. The impact of CCTs and UCTs on student learning is very limited and more studies are needed to determine any differences between CCTs and UCTs. The analysis also suggests that CCT programs are only effective in increasing enrolment at the secondary level (as opposed to primary and secondary level). These findings align with those of Snilstveit et al. 2015, the latter which reviewed an even larger sub-set of studies with some overlap though with many newer studies conducted between 2013 and 2015. Like Conn 2014, this systematic review also points out that some evidence suggests that unconditional cash transfers, in particular, have positive effects on decreasing teenage pregnancy and early marriage. Similar to other systematic reviews that included a look at cash transfers, Baird et al. provide no findings or conclusion related to how these types of social protection schemes improve education outcomes for children with disabilities.

**Lamichhane, K. & Kawakatsu, Y. 2015. “Disability and determinants of schooling: a case from Bangladesh.” *International Journal of Educational Development* 40: 98–105.**

In this peer-reviewed article, Lamichhane and Kawakatsu analyse a nationally representative dataset from Bangladesh utilising the fixed effects and logit model techniques to understand the determinants of school participation between children with and without disabilities. They find that although disability is negatively correlated with school participation, having higher monthly household expenditures and more working age members in the household are positively correlated with the probability of school participation once the sample is restricted to disability only. These results suggest the importance of disability-inclusive poverty reduction strategies, notably cash transfers and scholarships to mitigate the poverty of households towards increasing access to education for children with disabilities.

## **Household Economic Strengthening & Savings Groups (e.g. Village Saving and Loans Associations)**

**Chaffin, J. & Mortenson Ellis, C. 2015. *Outcomes for children from household economic strengthening interventions: a research synthesis*. London: Child Protection in Crisis Learning Network and Women’s Refugee Commission for Save the Children UK.**

Chaffin and Mortenson provide a useful systematic review of literature on various household economic strengthening (HES) interventions and their impact on child well-being, including three education outcomes categories (enrolment, performance, and completion). They include a total of 46 studies published or publicly-available randomized control trial (RCT) research reports between January 1990 and December 2014. Thirty-five studies measured the impact of programs in which the caregivers were the direct beneficiaries while 12 measured the impact of programs in which adolescents or youth were the direct beneficiaries. This review considers only “push-side” interventions such as skills training, non-cash voucher, unconditional and conditional cash grants, and microfinance (business development, microcredit and savings programming). However, inclusion of conditional cash transfers (CCTs) is limited since it has been extensively researched in other studies.

Related to education, the review finds statistically significant improvements in one or more of the three education outcome categories for individual savings program when youth are targeted directly, non-cash asset transfer/non-cash vouchers, unconditional cash transfers (UCTs), and CCTs. Overall, microfinance initiatives did not have statistically significant impact on education outcomes. The review highlighted one particular study (Akresh et al., 2013) given its relevance to children with disabilities and other vulnerable children. The study carried out a randomized evaluation in Burkina Faso comparing the effects of CCTs and UCTs on school enrolment for what the authors defined as “marginal”, lower ability (i.e. children with disabilities), or disfavoured children (girls and younger children). It found statistically significant evidence that CCTs increased school enrolment for all of these groups, while UCTs had no such effect despite the finding that both CCTs and UCTs increased enrolment for traditionally favoured children.

Particularly salient general findings are: (1) more than 20% of the studies revealed at least one negative effect on child wellbeing resulting from the HES intervention. One example includes a microfinance initiative that led to improved food security but also led to adolescents spending less time in school to help with the family business; (2) focusing on individual children in the family as opposed to the entire household or entire communities can negatively affect other children outside of the intervention; (3) statistically significant outcomes were always “good” and never “bad” when youth (as opposed to adult caregivers) were directly targeted by the interventions; (4) there is limited longitudinal evidence overall that links HES interventions to children’s wellbeing, including education outcomes.

**FHI 360/Supporting Transformation by Reducing Insecurity and Vulnerability with Economic Strengthening (STRIVE) Program. 2015. *The impact of savings groups on children’s wellbeing: a review of the literature. STRIVE.***

As part of the STRIVE program, FHI 360 presents a thorough and straight-forward review of literature that studies the impact of savings groups (SG) like VSLAs and other models that involve “self-governed groups that combine regular savings deposits into a fund from which loans are issued to group members” (p. 5) on children in outcome categories that include education, health, food security/nutrition, household assets, and quality of housing. The reviewed literature includes 23 reports or papers: 19 primary research studies and four secondary research reports. The majority of the reports are grey literature; only two were published in a peer-reviewed journal. This review finds that overall the studies report positive results in all the outcome categories. However, the results for education and health indicators are mixed or uncertain, especially for girls. For example, one reviewed study finds that absenteeism among girls increased while another study noted concerns that SGs lead to increased demand for girls to participate in household income-generating activities (IGA). This review of literature finds most studies to be qualitative and anecdotal in nature with only a few recent exceptions of studies using experimental and quasi-experimental methodologies. No clear differences emerged between impact on girls’ education outcomes versus boys’ which may have to do with limited access to disaggregated data collected by projects and in turn evaluative studies. The review also points out that limited literature exists on SGs implemented directly with children and youth; however, the studies that do exist find that participants, notably girls and/or child-led households used the savings to further their education. No studies were included that explored the impact of SGs on education outcomes for children with disabilities. This review finds the literature on how SGs impact children specifically to be limited overall.

# PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

This section complements related literature on public accountability measures found in general systematic reviews under the section Inclusive and Quality Education. It includes additional literature not covered in the systematic reviews that help answer the following research question: What is known about how public accountability measures improve provision of and experience of education for the most vulnerable and marginalized? The literature covers five types of public accountability measures: school-based management, inspections, monitoring, assessment, and student voice and participation. Decentralisation is also included in some of the literature presented in this section; however, for the purposes of this annotated bibliography, decentralisation is considered a form of innovative financing rather than an accountability measure.

**Carr-Hill, R., Rolleston, C., Pherali, T. & Schendel, R., with Peart, E., and Jones, E. 2015. *The effects of school-based decision-making on educational outcomes in low- and middle-income countries: a systematic review*. 3ie Systematic Review Report 21, London: International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie).**

Carr-Hill et al. present a thorough and insightful systematic review of 26 studies related to the impact of school-based decision-making on education outcomes in low- and middle-income countries using a mixed-methods approach combining meta-analysis and narrative analysis. The authors define school-based decision-making as any type of reform that places decision-making at the school-level in areas that include overall management, funding/budgeting, and/or curriculum, pedagogy, and other classroom decisions. The meta-analysis sought to measure impact of school-based decision-making reforms on six educational outcomes: (1) student drop-out; (2) student repetition; (3) teacher attendance; and (4-6) student learning: as measured by language test scores, math test scores, and aggregate test scores/tests of more than one subject. The authors also conducted a narrative analysis of the studies to identify enabling and hindering factors for school-based decision-making. Their meta-analysis suggests school-based decision-making has a somewhat beneficial effect on drop-out in some contexts and on repetition when looking across studies. The effects on student learning were positive when aggregated, particularly for middle-income countries. However, in general the impact on learning outcomes is still tentative. The effects on teacher attendance are stronger in contexts with more developed and higher levels of decentralisation and in low-income contexts; however, these improvements may not translate into better learning among children. School-based decision-making reforms appear to be less effective in most disadvantaged communities with lower incomes and with generally low levels of education where parents have low status relative to school personnel while being more impactful on education outcomes for children from wealthier backgrounds and/or with parents who are educated. The study identifies an important gap in the research, noting that most studies reviewed did not conduct any type of disaggregated analysis; if they did disaggregate, they come to different conclusions.

**Eddy-Spicer D, Ehren M, Bangpan M, Khatwa M, Perrone F. 2016. *Under what conditions do inspection, monitoring and assessment improve system efficiency, service delivery and learning outcomes for the poorest and most marginalised? a realist synthesis of school accountability in low- and middle-income countries*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, UCL Institute of Education, University College London.**

Eddy-Spicer et al. provide a useful and straightforward systematic review of 61 studies published on/after 2001 that provides evidence of the conditions under which assessment, monitoring, and inspection can improve education outcomes for children in developing countries. Overall, it finds that both assessment and monitoring have potential to be effective accountability measures under certain conditions while school inspection is limited in its impact on systems and school-level outcomes. According to the evidence examined, the necessary conditions for assessment to be effective are (1) trust in the pedagogical authority of the assessment; (2) customized guidance on interpreting the results for teachers; (3) individual incentives for teachers that prompt desire for reward in improvements on test scores; (4) parental oversight of quality of teaching and learning. Accordingly, the primary barriers to assessment being an effective accountability measure with positive impact on educational outcomes are (1) fear of consequences of poor performance



by staff; (2) lack of individual teacher incentives; (3) lack of training and support on use of assessment results to make needed changes. The necessary conditions for monitoring to be effective are (1) consistent and clear feedback about results that is accompanied by training to interpret the results of the monitoring efforts; (2) accuracy of information; (3) local school development planning; (4) acting on information; (5) parental involvement. A particularly useful aspect of the review was an emphasis on examining any particular impacts on girls and their education outcomes. One relevant gender-specific finding is that the “use of EMIS for school development planning (SDP) could create an ownership of local education issues and may lead to the improvement of primary school enrolment among minority girls, triggered by learning from failure, when there is (1) supplemental funding for implementation of a new national curriculum, (2) empowerment at school level of planning and resource allocation, (3) school leadership training in education management and on new curricular materials, and/or an environment for experimentation” (Eddy-Spicer et al. 2016: 9-10).

**Yuki, T. Igei, K. & Demas, A. 2017a. *Measuring quality of policies and their implementation for better learning: adapting the World Bank’s SABER Tools on School Autonomy and Accountability to Burkina Faso*. JICA-RI Working Paper No. 109.**

This working paper provides recent evidence on how school-based management (SBM), in the form of school councils, works together with decentralisation and student assessment policy to achieve improved learning results for students in Burkina Faso. Adapting the World Bank’s SABER School Autonomy and Accountability tool, this paper measures the quality of policy intent related to SBM, decentralisation and student assessment. They find that the government has made improvements on all accounts as evidenced by approval of national guidelines on school councils, increased autonomy of budgeting at the commune level, and increased frequency in use of standardised assessments. The paper then turns to analysing the extent of policy implementation and impact on education outcomes for students. Regarding SBM, the functionality of the student councils, defined by level of contributions by parents and the community and implementation of procedures, differed from school-to-school which explains also differences in the delivered education services such as textbooks, supplementary lessons, and learning achievement among schools. Furthermore, the utilisation of student assessment results to make changes to pedagogy and other changes is associated with improved learning results in those schools where this data was utilised. Decentralisation as measured by the degree of financial budgeting autonomy at the communal level also showed a positive association with improved learning outcomes as well. Like other studies on public accountability measures, this paper does not examine impact on specific groups of children like girls and children with disabilities.

**Yuki, T. Igei, K. & Demas, A. 2017b. *Measuring quality of policies and their implementation for better learning: adapting the World Bank’s SABER Tools on School Autonomy and Accountability to Senegal*. JICA-RI Working Paper No. 113.**

This working paper provides recent evidence on how school-based management (SBM) in the form of school councils, works together with decentralisation and student assessment policy to achieve improved learning results for students in Senegal. Adapting the World Bank’s SABER School Autonomy and Accountability tool, this paper measures the quality of policy intent related to SBM, decentralisation and student assessment. The study finds that Senegal scores high on school councils and use of student assessments but still rather low on autonomy as almost all education budgeting remains at the central level. The paper then turns to analysing the extent of policy implementation and impact on education outcomes for students. Regarding SBM, the functionality of the student councils, defined by level of contributions by parents and the community and implementation of procedures differed from school-to-school which explains also differences in results. This study found that greater functionality of school councils is associated with higher pass rates for the primary graduation exam and with more teaching time. A related finding is that the school director and the president of the school council sharing the view that the local commune is fulfilling its decentralised role in education has a positive association with learning achievement. Furthermore, the utilisation of student assessment results to make changes to pedagogy and other changes is associated with improved learning results in those schools where this data was utilised. Like other studies on public accountability measures, this paper does not examine impact on specific groups of children like girls and children with disabilities.

**Mnubi, G.M. 2017. “Improving the quality of basic education through the use of gender-sensitive student councils: experience of six selected districts in Tanzania.” *Journal of Learning for Development* 4(2): 161-168.**

See the section, Gender Transformative Programming, for a full annotation of this article. Because of its particular relevance to both sub-topics, it is also included in this section.

**Porter, C. 2014. “Turning old problems into new Problems: the role of young citizens in improving accountability in education in Malawi and Kenya.” *A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 44(3): 356-378.<sup>4</sup>**

Accountability is increasingly recognised as the key mediating variable that encourages service providers to deliver efficient and effective local services. In the context of education, accountability strategies do not always explicitly consider young citizens as the primary users of education services. In this [peer-reviewed<sup>5</sup>] paper, a client approach to accountability is compared to a citizenship approach. Drawing on community scorecard and social audit research in Malawi and Kenya, the author explores whether education services are more responsive and accountable when young people access information and exercise their voice. The paper outlines a refreshed “accountability framework” for education, placing young citizens at the centre, and argues that a citizenship-led approach in education governance is likely to be more realistic and effective than a “client power” approach. This article makes an important contribution to the development community’s understanding of what constitutes an effective approach for promoting more transparent and responsive education governance.

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4 Please note this is a verbatim inclusion of the extract found on the ERIC database since the article was not available in an open-access format. It was included, however, for its particular relevance to an unresearched area of public accountability measures.

5 Added by author of annotated bibliography for clarification of the type of literature this article entails.

# INNOVATIVE FINANCING

This section complements related literature on innovative financing found in general systematic reviews under the section Inclusive and Quality Education. It includes additional literature that helps answer the following research question: What is known about how innovative financing models (decentralisation, non-formal education, private funding sources), promote inclusion? The literature is divided into three categories: (1) decentralisation; (2) public private partnerships that include private contract schools, low-cost private schools, voucher schemes, subsidy programs, and philanthropic and/or religious organization-funded schools; (3) non-formal education. See also the section Public Accountability Measures for three articles that discuss decentralisation in conjunction with assessment and/or school-based management and decision-making.

## Decentralisation

**Carneiro, P. M., Koussihouédé, O., Lahire, N., Meghir, C. & Mommaerts, C. 2015. *Decentralizing education resources: school grants in Senegal*. IZA Discussion Paper No. 8960.**

In this discussion paper, Carneiro et al. provide an important contribution to the growing yet limited literature on the impact of decentralisation on education outcomes of children, especially girls in developing countries by conducting a randomised experiment using data collected on a school grants program that allocated a portion of the previously centralised budget to schools directly in Senegal. Overall, the authors find a large and statistically significant positive effect on girls' performance while noting no change among boys. Specifically, they find these effects on test scores one year after the start of the intervention for children who benefited from school grants when they were in second grade, especially for girls, suggesting more positive impacts of decentralisation at the lower grades. Furthermore, their research reveals that effects were larger in the South of the country where the project focused more on teaching and management in comparison with schools in the North that focused more on school material acquisition. The authors suggest that the latter result reveals teacher and principal quality enhance the impacts of decentralisation.

**Hanushek, E. A., Link, S., and Woessmann, L. 2013. "Does school autonomy make sense everywhere? panel estimates from PISA." *Journal of Development Economics* 104: 212–232.**

In this peer-reviewed article, Hanushek et al. provide a useful analysis of data from PISA tests across both developed and developing countries in conjunction with estimates of levels of school autonomy for those countries to understand the extent to which decentralisation positively impacts student learning and achievement. Overall, they find that school autonomy is beneficial in developed and wealthier contexts while having negative effects on student achievement in developing countries. Although the study does not disaggregate by gender or ability, it provides a reliable estimation on how more vulnerable contexts overall are not favoured by decentralisation.

**Leer, J. 2016. "After the Big Bang: estimating the effects of decentralization on educational outcomes in Indonesia through a difference-in-differences analysis." *International Journal of Educational Development*, 49(C): 80-90.**

In this peer-reviewed article, Leer provides a compelling piece of evidence on the extent to which decentralisation plays a role in improved educational outcomes in developing contexts using data from 2561 public and 1251 private schools collected via the longitudinal Indonesia Family Life Survey. The author uses a difference-in-differences analysis that involves comparing changes in student achievement and teacher effort before and after decentralisation in public schools with changes in the same education outcomes measures before and after decentralisation in private schools. Overall, the author finds that decentralisation had no effect on student achievement and negative effect on teacher effort, especially in rural areas and in schools with inactive school committees.

## Public Private Partnerships

**Aslam, M., Rawal, S., & Saeed, S. 2017. *Public-private partnerships in education in developing countries: a rigorous review of the evidence*. Ark Education Partnerships Group.**

In this systematic review, Aslam et al. conduct a thorough examination of the most recent literature on public private partnerships (PPP) in developing countries that includes 22 studies of medium to high quality in a variety of settings. It analyses principally three types of PPP: contract schools, government subsidies to non-state providers, and voucher schemes. The authors find few examples of contract schools in the literature. They conclude that while the two studies found suggest that contract schools could benefit the most disadvantaged students, there is insufficient evidence to draw a clear association between this type of PPP scheme and positive educational outcomes. More yet still limited evidence is available on subsidy programs that entail governments subsidising private schools or faith-based organisations in some way. The authors find that only a weak positive association exists between this type of PPP and student learning outcomes. The case of voucher programs is also inconclusive with mixed results on their positive impact on student learning. Furthermore, some evidence exists that voucher programs negatively impact student learning through increased social stratification and inequities. In regards to impacts on the most vulnerable, especially girls, this systematic review only provides one anecdotal piece of evidence from Pakistan that these types of schemes benefit girls: an interview with a representative from the Sindh Education Foundation noted that PPPs led to improved access and quality of education for girls in Pakistan. The study concludes that there is insufficient evidence to draw any generalisable conclusions about PPPs and their impact on education outcomes for children in developing countries.

**Day, A.L. and Wales, J. 2015. *The impact of non-state schools in developing countries: a synthesis of the evidence from two rigorous reviews*. Education Rigorous Literature Review. Department for International Development (DFID).**

In this literature review, Day and Wales provide a useful synthesis of two rigorous reviews conducted between 2014 and 2015: *The role and impact of private schools in developing countries* (Day et al., 2014) and *The role and impact of philanthropic and religious schools in developing countries* (Wales et al, 2015). This synthesis principally compares and contrasts the findings of both studies and comes to a number of conclusions helpful for understanding the state of evidence on these PPP-type education financing schemes, including their impact on girls. A particularly salient finding is that there is weak evidence overall about whether girls are more or less likely to access private schools; however, it is very contextual because of reasons undetectable through the available data. Additionally, there is moderate strength and consistent evidence that philanthropic schools increase female enrolment; however, the case for religious schools is mixed with some studies showing that male students dominate enrolment. Although a common finding is that private and philanthropic schools produce better quality learning outcomes and teaching in comparison with public schools, this information is not disaggregated by sex. No evidence is provided on the impact on education participation and experience for children with disabilities.

## Non-formal education

**Gee, K. 2015. *Achieving gender equality in learning outcomes: evidence from a non-formal education program in Bangladesh*. *International Journal of Educational Development* 40: 207–216.**

In this peer-reviewed article, Gee provides an important contribution to understanding the extent to which non-formal education (NFE) contributes to improved learning outcomes for girls vis-à-vis boys. The author begins by providing a review of literature published before 2013 on NFE and its impact on girls' participation in education. Using a quantitative cross-sectional approach, the author then analyses the academic achievement of girls vis-à-vis boys in a sample of 1203 children who participate in a non-

formal education program, Shikhon, in rural Bangladesh. Overall, Gee finds that no statistically significant differences in learning outcomes were found between girls and boys. The author cautions that the study provides no insight into why the learning outcomes are equal, but he posits it could be related to differences in observable and non-observable (e.g. motivation) ways. Furthermore, the author cautions that girls performing on par with boys in the non-formal education program does not mean that the non-formal education program caused the gender equality. The author concludes that more randomized field trials of the program is needed to understand the extent to which a causal relationship exists between the NFE and the equal learning outcomes between girls and boys.

**UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office. 2016. *Final report: provision of alternative learning opportunities for adolescent girls forced out of schools due to teenage pregnancies.* UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office.**

This UN project final report on an innovative program targeting child and teenage mothers with alternative learning opportunities provides some insight, albeit limited, on how non-formal education programs are effective in improving education outcomes for this sub-group of girls. Although not a formal evaluation, this report illustrates that the project achieved its desired results: (1) heightened awareness among policy makers and the general public on the need to enable adolescent girls whom are forced out of school because of pregnancy or being a mother to continue their education and have access to learning opportunities; this led to the adoption of this model of reaching child mothers by the government and a commitment of resources; (2) creation of guidelines for reintegrating child and teenage mothers back into the regular education system. Unfortunately, this final report does not provide any data on specific results related to education outcomes of girls, including the scale and reach of this intervention.

**Naylor, R. and Helen Mobey. 2015. *HEART helpdesk report: evidence on girls' secondary education.* Department for International Development (DFID).**

See the Gender Transformative Programming section for a full annotation of this article. Naylor and Mobey provide an overview of some non-formal education literature and its impact on girls' education. Because of its particular relevance to both sub-topics, it is also included here.



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# ANNEX: DETAILED SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

## ① What is known about the most effective models for gender transformative education approaches within schools (in terms of content, materials, teacher development, school policies, school governance)?

### Overall findings

- Research on gender and education often focus on identifying existing gender discriminatory norms and practices that act as barriers to girls' education. However, evidence is still relatively limited on what works best to change these gender norms and practices.
- Much of the literature still focuses on gender sensitive or gender responsive education practices. The concept of gender transformative programming is not widely used in literature; it is much more common to see gender transformative programming paired with sexual and reproductive health programming. This is likely related to an overall lack of consensus on what gender transformative education involves (See Aikman and Unterhalter, 2013; Baily & Graves, 2016; Freitas López & Hoffmann, 2016 for related discussions on the intersection of gender and education). However, progressively with the adoption of the sustainable development goals (SDG), there appears to be a movement towards approaching education and gender from a transformative perspective to go beyond parity in participation and learning to include transforming relationships and institutions that sustain gender inequality in education and beyond.
- That said, only a handful of education interventions can be considered gender transformative in nature; in other words, they show impact on changing power dynamics, gender roles, and gendered social norms:
  - Girl-friendly schools that encompass a “quality mix” of interventions targeting changes in education participation, learning, and gender equality that typically affect outcomes positively for girls and boys. Typically, this mix of interventions includes the following types of interventions: gender sensitisation and training with all relevant stakeholders (teachers, administrators, Ministry of Education representative in general, parents, and students), girl-friendly infrastructure like separate latrines, construction of more schools to make closer to home in societies in which girls cannot freely travel far from home, and clean water.
  - Girls' clubs especially when combined with outreach to parents on gender norm changes and larger behaviour and attitude change campaigns.
  - Comprehensive sex education that includes gender equality content.
  - Interventions that seek to enhance the capacity of poor or marginalised women and girls to participate in discussing school practices.
  - Communications activities aimed at changing gender discriminatory norms like community dialogue, community dialogue/theatre, non-formal education classes, and interactive radio.

### Research gaps and/or opportunities

- **Best practices in gender transformative education programming in general and measuring its impact on participation and experience of education for the most vulnerable, notably interventions that aim to change gender norms.** Much of the gender-related programming that has been shown to work is at best gender responsive. To be gender transformative, education programs must transform gender roles and power dynamics in gender relations as well as larger gendered social norms and practices that sustain these roles and dynamics. Overall, none of the systematic reviews on what works best to improve education outcomes in developing countries included in this annotated bibliography (see the Inclusive Quality Education section) analyse how gender transformative/responsive/sensitive programs as stand-alone programming impact school participation and learning.

- **Impact of textbooks once revised to be gender transformative.** Several documents argue that the hidden curriculum found in both teaching practices and notably in the textbooks are detrimental to achieving gender equality in and through education. However, according to these reviews, no studies have been undertaken to measure the impact of this type of textbook revision on gender norms and practices and power dynamics between men and women/boys and girls once the change is made along with changes in education outcomes, roles, power dynamics (See Blumberg and Keenan, 2014; Sperling & Winthrop, 2016). The study conducted by Blumberg and Keen (2014) implies the latter is applicable to both high income countries and middle-and low-income countries, noting that the persistence of gender bias in textbooks is nearly universal worldwide with reforms often failing and/or simply taking many years to complete because of factors such as high cost, change of priorities from one government to the next, and resistance from conservative factions in society.
- **Role of female teachers and mothers on school management committees and their impact on gender transformative education.** The evidence is mixed on how female teachers in the classroom impact girls' experience in education as well as on gender equality. Contrary to the common belief that female teachers act as a positive "input" for gender transformative education, recent studies show the opposite with girls performing worse in some cases and female teachers perpetuating gender inequitable attitudes, behaviours, etc. in the classroom. Likewise, mothers on school committees have been shown to have a negative and positive impact on girls' education. More research is needed to understand the nuanced dynamics of female teachers' roles and mothers' role in education to ensure positive outcomes for girls' and boys' education.
- **Impact of gender-responsive pedagogies, related teacher training, and teachers' modelling of gender equality in the classroom on transforming discriminatory gender norms, roles, and power dynamics in education.** Although some studies note the impact of these types of interventions, there is still an evidence gap on the extent to which they not only transform gender norms, roles, and power dynamics but also positively impact education outcomes, especially for girls.
- **Engagement of boys and men as partners for achieving gender equity and equality in the school setting.** Little is still known on how working with boys and men can be used to make education empowering, inclusive, relevant and quality for girls and boys equally while at the same time to act as an avenue for transforming the unequal power dynamics and discriminatory gender norms, practices, that are harmful to both genders but acutely so for girls in general.
- **How to change gender norms that assign household chores to girls.** Responsibility for household chores is a well-documented key barrier to girls' attendance and learning as girls grow older, yet few projects have been able to successfully change this norm in a sustainable manner. More research needed on how to make a sustainable change to this particular gender norm barrier to education for girls.
- **Innovative and effective impact measurement of girls' empowerment activities in the school setting on education outcomes.** The mid-line evaluation of the Girls' Education Challenge Innovation Window highlighted the inconclusive impact of extra-curricular activities, non-formal education and empowerment, and self-esteem interventions aimed at addressing barriers to girls' aspirations and decision-making on improving girls' attendance or learning. The evaluation notes this is likely caused by ineffective methods of capturing changes in behaviour and attitudes rather than lack of impact. Therefore, more research is needed on effective ways of measuring these types of empowerment activities.
- **Impact of combined infrastructural interventions, classroom improvements, and changing policy institutions and culture on girls' and women's rights and gender equality.** Unterhalter et al. (2014) highlight this particular gap.
- **Interplay of religion, education, shifting gender norms, and education.** Unterhalter et al. (2014) highlight this particular gap.
- **How does intersectionality (i.e. compounded discrimination) impact educational outcomes.** No specific literature on intersectionality and how this impacts educational outcomes for those children experiencing compounded and/or multiple levels of discrimination (e.g. girls with disabilities, homosexual minority boys, etc.) emerged. It is a notable gap given the number of ways that intersectionality can manifest.



## **2 What is known about how gender transformative programming with parents (including engagement with fathers) effects access to and experience of education for children, especially girls?**

Overall, there is a notable gap in research related to gender transformative programming with parents and how it affects education outcomes for children, especially girls. Only a handful of cases studies were found that shed light on this sub-topic:

- Evidence from 19 projects encompassing the Girls' Education Challenge Innovation Window found parent visits to other households to conduct outreach had promising impact on changing attitudes towards girls' education. However, there is no further evidence that these changes in attitudes translated to improved participation and experience in school for girls.
- In Yemen, engagement of mothers' committees within the framework of the larger school committees increased women's participation in school planning that in turn resulted in a school environment and content that were more relevant to girls (See Sperling and Winthrop, 2016).
- In the most recent and arguably most comprehensive of the systematic reviews completed to date (Snilstveit et al., 2015), only two of 238 studies involved any type of gender sensitisation with parents and both studies were conducted on the same project in Burkina Faso (Burkinabé Response to Improve Girls' Chances to Succeed Programme (BRIGHT)). Furthermore, the gender sensitisation was just one element of this multilevel interventions and not analysed for impact as a stand-alone activity. The program, however, showed very positive results for improvement in enrolment, attendance, and learning. It is possible, therefore, that parent sensitisation contributes to improved educational outcomes for girls.

## **3 What is known about children and young people's participation in school and school governance to promote gender transformative approaches?**

Overall, there is a notable gap in research related to children and young people's participation in school and school governance to promote gender transformative approaches in education. Only one study (Mnubi, 2017) from Tanzania on democratically-elected gender sensitive student councils was found that provides insight on how their participation in school governance promotes gender transformation:

- Attendance especially for girls improved due to shifts in expectations of household duties among parents.
- Incidence of early pregnancy decreased because of students' increased self-advocacy gained through leadership modelling by the democratically-elected and gender-sensitive student councils.
- Improvements in the delivery of quality education in schools took place as a direct result of the democratically-elected and gender-balanced student leaders whose presence facilitated more positive behaviour among the student body as a whole which led to more time spent on learning than on classroom management and discipline. These school leaders also worked to hold teachers and school directors accountable to their student learning responsibilities.
- Increased gender equality in school and at home through the democratic and gender-balanced election process of the student councils. These school councils increased sensitisation on gender equality and leadership and self-advocacy skills among female and male students enabling them to voice their needs and concerns at school and at home. Additionally, these student councils provided a model for the boys to see the benefits of equal leadership shared between women and men.

## 4 What is known about how social protection schemes promote participation for the most vulnerable, especially girls, child mothers and children with disabilities (including both community level and government level interventions, such as savings and loans groups, cash transfers etc.)?

### 4a. Social protection in general, cash transfers, and stipends

#### Overall findings

- Some data suggests that when accessed, social protection schemes such as cash transfers and universal child benefits are powerful ways to improve access to education for those living with disabilities (See Lamichhane & Kawakatsu, 2015). However, much of this is anecdotal without experimental or quasi-experimental studies to back it up. Only one study evaluated as part of the various systematic reviews and other literature reviews measured the impact of cash transfers on children with disabilities; this study found that conditional cash transfers were effective in increasing enrolment while unconditional cash transfer had no effect in Burkina Faso (See Chaffin and Mortenson, 2015). Furthermore, the data that does directly link cash transfers to improved educational outcomes for children with disabilities is older than five years (See Schneider et al., 2011).
- Social protection programs in theory are aimed at the most vulnerable like those with disabilities but the design may continue to exclude them if not adapted and made responsive to people with different types of special needs.
- Cash transfers that are provided to households or parents have larger overall positive impact than those given directly to mothers or students without any statistically significant distinctions between girls and boys.
- Conditional cash transfers (CCTs) appear to be more effective than unconditional cash transfers (UCTs) for promoting girls' attendance.
- UCTs found to be effective in preventing early marriage and pregnancy, common drivers of dropout of girls.
- In specific regions where gender discrimination exists in favour of boys and where an increase in family size drops chances of girls being enrolled in school like the case of many regions in Pakistan, incentives like CCTs are particularly valuable for improving school participation for girls.
- CCTs are particularly effective for increasing girls' transition from primary to secondary school and decreasing their dropout rate.
- Merit-based scholarships are also effective for positively impacting access while also having a positive effect on learning through the incentive to achieve higher academic achievements.
- Cash transfers are most effective when conditional and unanticipated (i.e. the first time a cash transfer is received) by the family.
- Cash transfers have statistically significant impact on all school participation outcomes (enrolment, attendance, dropout, and completion) for girls and boys alike.
- Cash transfers do not appear to have statistically significant impact on learning with the exception of merit-based scholarships. However, fewer studies have been conducted on the impact of cash transfers on learning and achievement.

#### Research gaps and/or opportunities

- **Impact of all types of social protection on education outcomes for children with disabilities.** While some data exists, it is very limited. More is needed to understand the relationship between social protection schemes like cash transfers and education outcomes for children with disabilities.
- **Impact of all types of social protection on education outcomes for child mothers.** No evidence was found on this relationship.
- **Impact of cash transfers on gender relations, power dynamics, practices, and norms in the household and/or in schools.** Despite extensive evidence around how cash transfers are effective for increasing participation and to a limited extent learning of girls and boys, with particular increases noted for girls, no evidence or studies exist on how they go beyond impacting gender parity in schooling outcomes to transforming gender equality in the household and in their daily lives as they progress through the education system.

## 4b. Household Economic Strengthening & Savings Groups (e.g. Village Saving and Loans Associations)

### Overall findings

- Evidence exists that a portion of VSLA savings are typically designated to children's education expenses and increased empowerment for women in making education decisions on behalf of their children.
- However, evidence points to mixed or uncertain impact of VSLA-type programs on improving school participation and experience of children.
- In fact, evidence shows there may be detrimental impacts on education when children have increased absenteeism related to increased participation in household income-generating activities, especially for girls.
- No evidence emerged about how VSLA impacts education outcomes of children with disabilities.
- There are a growing number of evaluations and literature reviews on VSLA, but no systematic reviews have been completed on its impact on education outcomes for children, especially girls, child mothers, and children with disabilities.

### Research gaps and/or opportunities:

- **Role of VSLA in gender transformative programming that impacts children's educational outcomes.** FHI 360/STRIVE (2015) note that VSLA/savings groups are involved in social efforts and participate in sensitisation type activities but limited data exists showing the link to improvements in girls' education outcomes.
- **Relationship between savings groups implemented directly with children and youth and improved educational outcomes, particularly for child mothers and other girls.** Although there is limited literature on savings groups (SG) implemented directly with children and youth, a couple of studies found that participants, notably girls and/or child-led households, used the savings to further their education. Also, SG programs implemented directly with children and youth have been found to have no negative consequences unlike when aimed at parents and caregivers. Given these positive outcomes, this type of intervention could be successful for improving participation and learning of child mothers. However, more research is needed.
- **Investigation of the mediating factors (e.g. i.e. gender of recipient, focus of conditionality, adolescents/youth as direct beneficiaries) for success of economic strengthening interventions.** Chaffin and Mortenson (2015) highlight this particular gap.

## 5 What is known about how public accountability measures improve provision of and experience of education for the most vulnerable and marginalized?

### Overall findings

- Some evidence is available that public accountability measures improve provision of and experience of education for the most vulnerable children, particularly girls:
  - One study notes that use of an education management information system (EMIS) for school development planning (SDP) could create ownership of local education issues and may lead to the improvement of primary school enrolment among minority girls. However, the results are suggestive and require further research. (See Eddy-Spicer et al., 2016)
  - Bottom-up community management and accountability interventions also have been found to be effective in changing discriminatory social norms that "restrict demand for educational services" among girls and other vulnerable groups because these interventions help generate conducive environments for social change. (See Masino & Niño-Zarazúa, 2016)
  - Overall, the presence of school management committees with strong community participation was associated with lower dropout rates for boys and girls.
  - Implementing information-based accountability (i.e. providing parents with periodic reports on students' learning achievements and attendance) are associated with more of a gender gaps in repetition rates.
  - Gender-sensitive school councils led to improvements in education outcomes for girls and boys and led to changes in gender norms overall.

- Two studies found that community involvement was a core component of interventions that improved education outcomes for children with disabilities. This could be nascent data that points to an important role that community-based monitoring may have on improving inclusion for children with disabilities. More research is needed. (See Srivastava et al., 2015)
- Other promising evidence exists that public accountability measures improve participation in and experience of education in developing contexts under certain conditions:
  - Promising practice for teacher accountability include hotlines for parents to report absent teachers and school directors. No data still available on whether this positively impacts learning and other outcomes.
  - School-based management and use of student assessment is important in developing countries for improving learning outcomes. However, insufficient evidence exists to confirm if it holds true for the most marginalised. More research is needed.
  - Mixed evidence exists on how effective community-based school management and participation are as public accountability mechanisms. The most effective is when communities are provided grants to manage, receive related capacity building to manage those grants, and have autonomy to make changes to schools accordingly with the grant.
  - Public accountability measures in the form of (1) provision of information to parents and (2) empowering local communities to have representative decision-making roles in schools have positive impacts on student learning.

### Research gaps and/or opportunities

- Student voice and child-led accountability/school governance & its impact on education outcomes for the most vulnerable.
- Impact of all types of public accountability measures on education outcomes of children with disabilities and other marginalised children.
- Conditions that make community-based monitoring most effective in improving education participation and experience of the most vulnerable children.

## 6 What is known about how innovative financing models (decentralisation, non-formal education, private funding sources), promote inclusion?

### Overall findings

- In general, the impact of decentralisation on inclusion is multiplied when accompanied by school-based management and when the decentralised budget is used on teaching and learning.
- Strong evidence exists that school autonomy/decentralisation is beneficial in developed and wealthier contexts while having negative effects on student achievement in developing countries. This is related to developed and wealthier countries having strong institutional capacity already in place.
- One study found that decentralisation had a large and statistically significant positive effect on girls' performance while noting no change among boys in Senegal.
- Overall, there is still insufficient evidence to draw any generalisable conclusions about public private partnerships (PPP) and their impact on education outcomes for children in developing countries.
- Overall, there is weak evidence on whether girls are more or less likely to access private schools; though, it is very contextual because of reasons undetectable through the available data. Additionally, there is moderate strength and consistent evidence that philanthropic schools increase female enrolment; however, the case for religious schools is mixed with some studies showing that male students dominate enrolment. Although a common finding is that private and philanthropic schools produce better quality learning outcomes and teaching in comparison with public schools, this information is not disaggregated by sex. Overall, no evidence found about the impact on education participation and experience for children with disabilities.
- School choice and availability of private schools appears to increase gender inequalities as often the better option is chosen for sons versus daughters; however, limited evidence of this exists. (See Unterhalter et al., 2014)

- Most evidence on how non-formal education improves access to education is largely linked to adults, lifelong learning, and/or children and youth in crisis and conflict. There is limited data on the impact of non-formal education in non-crisis/conflict contexts for the most vulnerable.

### **Research gaps and/or opportunities**

- **How decentralisation, non-formal education, and public-private partnerships improve participation and outcomes for children with disabilities.** No evidence emerged in the literature.
- **How non-formal education programmes help girls transition back into formal education.** Little evidence on best ways of using non-formal education to help girls transition back into the formal education system.
- **Impact of non-formal and PPP on education outcomes of child mothers.** Some evidence that non-formal education programs and some PPP schemes have a positive impact on schooling for child mothers. However, it is very limited and requires further research.
- **Conditions under which PPP could promote gender equality and increased inclusion for the most vulnerable children.** No data and evidence emerged on this relationship.
- **Providing school fee loans to parents and promoting savings for education as well as providing loans to private schools are starting to show promising impact on girls' participation.** This particular approach to education financing emerged in one study (Girls' Education Challenge Innovation Window Mid-Line Evaluation) and presents possible new innovative financing to research further.





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### About Plan International

We strive to advance children's rights and equality for girls all over the world. We recognise the power and potential of every single child. But this is often suppressed by poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination. And it's girls who are most affected. As an independent development and humanitarian organisation, we work alongside children, young people, our supporters and partners to tackle the root causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. We support children's rights from birth until they reach adulthood, and enable children to prepare for and respond to crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national and global levels using our reach, experience and knowledge. For over 80 years we have been building powerful partnerships for children, and we are active in over 75 countries.

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