

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Access to educational opportunities: trajectories of girl's education in Africa

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Gender inequality hampers poverty reduction, sustainable development and human wellbeing

Agenda 2063 'the Africa we want'

The continent's strategic framework 'master plan for transforming Africa into the global powerhouse of the future' → **building human capital & to prioritise inclusive social and economic development**

Girls education in the continent

- Women and girls are affected disproportionately by **poverty**, climate change, conflict, **inequality** & more...
- EFA;MDGs ; SDGs (Actors; development programme and policy initiatives)
- Their **Voice/experiences** is crucial in addressing the persistent challenges of making access to schooling and desirable outcomes possible (see ACPF 2020.)



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Poverty and Inequality

Education is often assumed to play a key role in reducing **poverty** through providing the skills and competencies

Assumptions about the problem are vast but continually :

The problem → the 'poor lack of understanding of girls education and its benefit'

Empirical evidence suggests:

Complex picture on the ground, multiple factors explain low level girls participation (see Grieve 2016)

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Poverty and Inequality

- **Primary survey 133 households survey & 40 in-depth interviews**
- **Also drawing data from 5 countries in the continent**

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Poverty and Inequality

Solutions = Building schools with cheap locally available material (WB)

Evidence on the ground tell us acute sense of inequality

“if I can – I would want my child to be in a school like in the city where they have proper schools, where they have books [...] I want my daughter to be like you”

Mother in Ethiopia



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Poverty and Inequality

Solutions = Building schools with cheap locally available material (WB)

Evidence on the ground tell us teachers recognise their own position and sense of helplessness

“the intake for local children increased after rehabilitating our school and getting playground because people assumed we went private”

School director in Ethiopia



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Poverty and Inequality

No evidence found for low value of child schooling or girls schooling

when it came to parents' decision on school enrolment the key **question was not if the child was a boy or a girl but a question of *who is this child to me?*** Children who are not biological offspring of the household head (16%) are much more likely to have lower levels of schooling.



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Empirical evidence suggests:

- **Girls (& their families) on the continent are ambitious and highly motivated**
- **Considerable efforts made by families and girls themselves to secure the promises from education**



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The dominant discourse assumes that setting up institutions, training packages, legislation and changing rhetoric will be sufficient to improve access to education

The findings suggests instead that there is a need also for greater self-reflection, such that **the state and its donors can see how its own partial vision and socially embedded institutions are implicated in the limited outcomes that are achieved.**



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constructive ways of hearing the marginalised voices from the Global South (rural teachers and children) and, to put global aspirations in context of their lived experiences. It also highlights addressing the persisting challenges in achieving global educational goals demands a genuine commitment to address power imbalances between the global and the local.



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Thank you
Looking forward to
discussion

