

GENDER AT THE CENTRE INITIATIVE (GCI) ANNUAL REPORT 2023



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gender inequality is entrenched in and promulgated through harmful structural beliefs and practices which can be seen in almost every facet of life. This is especially pressing within the world of education. Recognizing the urgency of addressing this challenge, 2023 was a pivotal year for the Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI). As we drew on the lessons learnt and designed and launched the second phase (2024-2026), GCI continued to expand its impact on gender transformative education to new countries. Throughout the year the GCI community, including partner countries, donors and civil society partners, demonstrated their commitment to advancing gender equality in and through education, even amid times of rapid change.

The year began with the Annual GCI Alliance Board Meeting held in Dakar, Senegal, fostering candid discussions on successes and lessons learned. Above all, the meeting strengthened a sense of allyship among gender champions across the African continent, and a renewed commitment to advance gender-transformative education together.

GCI achieved significant milestones in 2023, including the finalization of research on gender-responsive education planning across eight GCI countries. Regional and national workshops were conducted to strengthen gender equality analysis, planning and policy in the education sector. Communities of Practice and partnerships supporting the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Country Compacts were established in order to mainstream gender equality in the education system.

Despite the challenge of political instability in the region during the latter half of 2023, GCI partners continued to deliver results. With GCI's support, newly formed Feminist Youth Coalitions in Mali and Niger emerged as community-driven agents of change. Ministries of Education invested in capacity building, partnerships and knowledge exchange to scale the impact of gender-responsive education sector planning (GRESP). In addition, GCI supported civil society organizations to build and advocate strong cases for increased investments in gender-transformative education.

2023 was also the year GCI grew in reach and influence in more countries across and beyond Africa. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) selected GCI as its partner for the new Gender Strategic Capabilities initiative which is a strong recognition of GCI's added value and its potential to impact gender equality in education in more countries in the future. Strengthened partnerships with GPE, the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, also laid the groundwork for future programming and knowledge exchange.

This 2023 GCI Annual Report offers a comprehensive overview of the 2023 work plan activities conducted throughout the year, ensuring transparency and fostering mutual accountability within the GCI Alliance.



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ACRONYMS

ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign on Education for All
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CES	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CPGE	Community of Practice in Gender and Education
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDEFPG	Department for the Development of Girls' Education and Gender Promotion
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EFA	Education For All
ESP	Education Sector Plan
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FGM	Female Genital Mutilations
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
GCI	Gender at the Centre Initiative
GE	Gender Equality
GES	Gender Equality in Education Snapshot
GRESP	Gender-responsive education sector planning
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HQ	Headquarters
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO)
LEG	Local Education Group
MBSSE	Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
MINEDH	Ministry of Education and Human Development (In Mozambique)
MENAPLN	Ministry of National Education, Literacy and the Promotion of National Languages
MEPT	Movement Education For All
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
OSC	Civil Society Organization
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
PNDSE	National Education Sector Development Programme
PRODEC	Ten-year programme for the development of education and vocational training
SCGREP	Short Course on Gender Responsive Educational Planning
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
SRGBV	School-Related Gender-Based Violence
TES	Transforming Education Summit
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
YAG	Youth Advisory Group

CHAPTER 1 — INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief Overview of the Gender at the Centre Initiative

The Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI) applies a whole-system approach to gender-transformative education, championing the leadership of ministries of education (MoE), civil society organizations (CSO), technical experts and young feminists to develop and implement plans, policies and interventions towards advancing gender equality in and through education. Through a dynamic partnership approach, GCI strengthens technical gender capacity, fosters political will and supports the transformation of harmful gender norms.

GCI is coordinated by the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO) and implemented through a multi-stakeholder partnership of education ministries, a civil society consortium (consisting of The Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA), the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and Plan International, the African Union International Center for Girls & Women's Education in Africa (AU-CIEFFA), G7 Donors, and multilateral agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF and GPE). Together, these partners form the GCI Alliance.

During its first phase, from 2020 to 2023, GCI was live in eight African countries - Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria and Sierra Leone - whilst supporting neighboring countries with gender capacity.

1.2 Context

Throughout 2023, GCI countries in West and Central Africa as well as Mozambique have experienced a significant amount of political and socio-economic changes and instability. Turbulent presidential and national elections were held in Nigeria and Sierra Leone; Niger experienced a military coup; Sierra Leone experienced an attempted coup; and Burkina Faso and Mali are facing ongoing insecurity and political and socio-economic instability.

UNICEF estimates that in 2024, due to the consequences of protracted and acute conflicts, population movements, recurrent and simultaneous public health emergencies, climate change-related disasters and food and nutrition

crises, 48.4 million children living in West and Central Africa will continue to require multisectoral assistance to uphold their rights and meet critical needs in education, nutrition, health, water, sanitation and hygiene, child protection, and social protection¹.

Gender inequality is an urgent and persistent challenge that cuts across political, economic and social stability and turmoil. Whilst gender inequality has critically negative effects on boys and men, women and girls are disproportionately affected. Girls in the world's poorest countries are less likely to be in schools, less likely to have opportunities for work and less likely to have a say in their own lives than boys². Where families have to make heart wrenching economic choices, boys' education is often prioritized over girls'. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimates that girls are 1.5 times more likely than boys to be excluded from primary school³. That equates to 15 million girls who will never attend primary school, in comparison to around 10 million boys.

Conflicts have put children at further risk of grave violations of their rights. Crisis and conflict threaten periodic closures of thousands of schools in West and Central Africa on an annual basis, making the region's education sector quite insecure, and heightening already strained systems⁴. Over the last four years, school closure numbers resulting from insecurity have almost doubled, reaching more than 13,200 schools closed in eight countries of the region. Burkina Faso alone accounts for half of the school closures recorded in West and Central Africa, with more than 6,100 schools closed as of July 2023⁵. School closures have larger and more significant effects on vulnerable groups, particularly girls⁶.

Amidst these challenges, and crucial to mitigating the systemic impact of these challenges, GCI is working to strengthen education in the region. GCI partners at national and community levels continued to show strong investment in GCI activities— committing to strengthening gender equality in and through education in their respective countries. GCI has continued to deliver programs in conflict-affected countries, leveraging trusted and well established partnerships with ministries of education, civil society organizations, and community-level actors.

1 [https://www.unicef.org/media/149801/file/2024-HAC-WCA\(1\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/media/149801/file/2024-HAC-WCA(1).pdf)

2 <https://www.ungei.org/publication/poverty-sexist-why-educating-every-girl-good-everyone#:~:text=ONE's%20Poverty%20is%20Sexist%20report,girls%20is%20a%20smart%20investment>.

3 <https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/2018-10-03-key-education-data-final.pdf>

4 <https://www.unhcr.org/africa/news/press-releases/insecurity-forces-closure-13-000-schools-upcoming-school-year-central-and-west>

5 <https://www.unhcr.org/africa/news/press-releases/insecurity-forces-closure-13-000-schools-upcoming-school-year-central-and-west>

6 <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/sites/default/files/2021-06/2021-forum-report.pdf>

CHAPTER 2 — GCI 2023 ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

What worked well:

Strengthened recognition of GCI expertise in Africa and beyond

GCI Technical Support:

Engagement with participating countries was robust, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to gender equality initiatives at the central and decentralized level. GCI and its partners delivered over 20 trainings, meetings and webinars on gender transformative education system strengthening, reaching a total of 638 representatives from ministries of education and civil society, as well as over 22,000 community members, including school principals, teachers, parents, young feminists and religious leaders. The course on Gender Responsive Education Planning reached over 100 ministry actors, in person and online. The continuation of the Communities of Practice facilitated knowledge exchange and collaboration, supporting the effective implementation of the GRESP approach through members' roles in their respective national education systems.

Civil Society Action and Youth Engagement:

GCI's civil society partners reached strong results on advocacy for gender-transformative education, as well as community mobilization in some countries. For the first time, GCI supported the development of Feminist Youth Coalitions in partner countries, which are now represented on the Local Education Group and provide a unique platform for joint youth action and peer support.

Increased reach and strengthened partnerships:

GCI extended its impact beyond the GCI focus countries, reaching over thirty African countries with learning and technical support. GCI tools such as the [GES Toolkit](#), the gender-responsive education sector analysis methodologies, the gender analysis framework applied to education budgets and the institutional gender diagnostic tools contributed to the inclusion of evidence-based gender strategies in education sector plans and GPE compacts, amongst other countries in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Central-African Republic, Mali and Egypt.

GCI's positioning and recognition as a key player in advancing gender equality in education underscored its significance and influence in the field. For example, GPE selected GCI as their partner for the Gender Strategic Capabilities program to provide additional technical assistance to GPE partner countries on gender transformative education systems.

In 2023, GCI contributed to better gender and education data to inform policies and actions and expanded the evidence base on gender and school leadership in fourteen African countries and identified concrete policy and programmatic measures for increasing women's representation in education leadership in Côte d'Ivoire, for example. GCI data production is now being funded through a new KIX grant awarded in 2023, strengthening the relationship with UNICEF Innocenti, GPE and IDRC.

GCI as a narrative-setting Initiative:

GCI shared its learnings with UNICEF country offices, UNESCO HQ, country offices and agencies, the French development agency— Agence Française de Développement (AFD)— HQ and agencies, IIEP UNESCO and is increasingly being solicited by countries to provide technical support on gender in education systems strengthening.

What needs to be strengthened: Country-level coordination, inclusive sector dialogue and resource mobilization for GCI phase 2

In consultation with its Alliance members and based on the results of the [GCI mid-term review](#), GCI has revised its strategy, learning from the challenges encountered during Phase one. Phase two will see a revised implementation strategy that allows for stronger country-level coordination to have better impact on policies and planning, a specific focus on data and evidence and gender responsive education sector dialogue, and finding innovative ways of transforming harmful gender norms.

Country-to-country learning opportunities that allow for meaningful sharing of experiences and innovations will be emphasized in phase 2, to provide regional counterparts with programmatic evidence for effectiveness, and expand the number of GCI alliance countries. GCI will also create more opportunities for young feminists to contribute their expertise, both at national and global levels. The new phase of GCI will include a strengthened focus on transforming harmful gender norms, working with young feminists and civil society partners to implement innovative campaigns and community dialogue approaches.

Lastly, with only one third of funding secured for its second phase, GCI will continue to advocate and mobilize resources in order to achieve its mission of significantly advancing gender equality in and through education in Africa and beyond.

Summary - Intermediate Outcome 1

Intermediate Outcome 1: Improved gender equality mainstreaming in and through education led and implemented by Ministry(ies) of Education in conjunction with other relevant Ministries.

In 2023, GCI made significant progress towards advancing Outcome 1, focusing on strengthening institutional systems and processes within ministries of education (MoEs) to mainstream gender equality across various aspects of education. Through targeted initiatives like conducting participatory gender diagnostics and disseminating findings, such as in Niger, supporting MoEs to conduct their Education Sector Analysis (ESA), GCI facilitated the identification of gender disparities and prioritized actions to enhance gender equality outcomes within the education sector—for example in Senegal and Mauritania. By working jointly with MoEs, GCI increased MoE expertise on gender disparity analysis in education that benefited gender responsive ESA narratives and planning locally and regionally.

Furthermore, capacity-development efforts empowered MoE staff with narratives and resources to effectively mainstream gender equality in education sector planning. For example, IIEP-UNESCO facilitated training on Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in Sierra Leone and the revision of the MoE teacher guide for gender responsive pedagogy and management in Chad. Through training sessions and workshops held at both national and decentralized levels, MoE personnel, including gender specialists, engaged with tools and expertise to integrate gender perspectives into education policies, planning, budgeting, and program implementation.

Throughout 2023, GCI further strengthened its strategic partnership with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), particularly by assisting GCI and non-GCI countries in drafting strategic documents. GCI provided technical expertise and support to integrate gender into proposals and budgets, engaged in strategic discussions on the development of large-scale programs to foster partnerships, and facilitated coordinated action through partnership compacts. This included support in Chad, the Caribbean region, and Côte d'Ivoire on the Partnership Compacts. In other countries, GCI supported development agencies and education ministries to develop program documents. In Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria, IIEP-UNESCO supported the drafting and programming of the System Transformation Grant. In Chad and Côte d'Ivoire, GCI is working closely with GPE on enhancing gender knowledge and skills through Strategic Capability Grants.

GCI's involvement in supporting education sector analyses (ESAs), and education sector plans (ESPs) and facilitating Global Partnership for Education (GPE) programming and implementation, showcases significant achievements for the Initiative as a recognized and forefront actor for gender responsive education sector planning (GRESPE).

Summary - Intermediate Outcome 2

Intermediate Outcome 2: Improved education sector enabling environment in support of MoE's efforts in gender equality mainstreaming in and through education

In 2023, GCI's Civil Society Consortium, including Plan International, ANCEFA and FAWE, undertook a series of initiatives in GCI partner countries to mobilize communities to support girls' education and gender equality, and to advocate with Ministries of Education for stronger investments in gender-transformative education. In Sierra Leone for example the CSO consortium supported the establishment of referral pathway systems to address school-related gender-based violence in 30 schools. CSO partners also strengthened capacities of both government and CSO representatives in gender-responsive education sector planning. In some countries, like Chad, Niger and Mozambique, there was a particularly strong collaboration between CSOs and the Ministry of Education, advancing GCI's mission to close the gap between government and civil society to advance gender-transformative education. In Mozambique the GCI CSO consortium managed to influence the revision of the teacher's code of conduct to address gender inequality and combat gender-based violence in schools.

Young feminists were at the center of many GCI actions this year. In Mali the Children's Parliament presented an advocacy note to the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Education requesting increased attention to girls' enrolment and retention at all education levels. And in Mali and Niger, GCI supported Feminist Youth Coalitions for Gender-Transformative Education, in order to advance youth participation in gender-responsive education sector planning.

GCI also focused on strengthening collaboration and knowledge-sharing within the GCI Alliance to advance gender equality in education. The GCI Alliance Annual Board Meeting provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss GCI results, innovative approaches, and phase 2 planning. Additionally, GCI disseminated semi-annual newsletters to provide updates on activities, outcomes, and outputs. The mid-term review of GCI's implementation highlighted successes and areas for improvement, leading to the development of a concept note for phase 2. These activities underscored the importance of collective action and collaboration in advancing gender equality in and through education within the GCI Alliance framework.

Activities under Intermediate Outcome 1

Intermediate Outcome 1: Improved gender equality mainstreaming in and through education led and implemented by Ministries of Education in conjunction with other relevant ministries.

Immediate Outcome 1.1:

Immediate Outcome 1.1: Strengthened institutional systems and processes within MoE to mainstream gender equality in education sector analysis, policies, planning, budgeting, strategies, and programs.

Output 1.1.1 – Ministry of Education norms, standards, regulations, codes of conduct, information systems and policy implementation tools developed and/or revised to integrate gender equality

In **Mauritania**, IIEP-UNESCO continued its support by accompanying the government to mainstream gender through key policy documents. IIEP-UNESCO provided significant support by technically assisting in the production of the Education Sector Analysis (ESA), a comprehensive assessment of the education sector. This endeavor culminated in the development of the Education Sector Plan 2024-2030 (PNDSE III). This support represented a major achievement, as GCI's technical support to the national team enhanced gender mainstreaming across key policy documents and bolstered the ministry's competencies on gender mainstreaming in education planning. This support should be a great asset for future policy development. Finally, IIEP-UNESCO continued its support by accompanying the government in mainstreaming gender through key policy documents, such as its sector policy letter.

In **Niger**, IIEP-UNESCO led a participatory exercise to conduct a participatory gender diagnosis to assess gender mainstreaming efforts within the ministry and sectoral strategies. This process aimed to support stakeholders to identify gaps and prioritize actions to enhance gender equality outcomes. In 2024 IIEP-UNESCO Dakar will finalize the institutional gender diagnosis which was initiated before the coup d'état, engaging newly appointed ministry personnel in discussions regarding the key findings of the diagnosis. This process aims to ensure continuity and inclusivity in addressing gender-related challenges within the ministry, fostering a collaborative approach to gender mainstreaming efforts despite recent disruptions.

In **Burkina Faso**, IIEP-UNESCO published the results of the participatory gender diagnosis through a Policy Brief, following an initiative undertaken by the Ministry of National Education, Literacy, and the Promotion of National Languages (MENAPLN) with the support of IIEP to address the challenges and opportunities associated with gender integration within the education system

Output 1.1.2 - Education sector analysis, education sector plans, operational planning and monitoring and evaluation processes revised to include gender equality lens

GCI continued to partner with the GPE to ensure effective integration of gender equality in the development and implementation of GPE Partnership Compacts. GCI supported ministries of education in GPE partner countries and beyond to analyze gender equality in their education systems and integrate gender equality strategies within the framework of the new GPE operating model.

In **Nigeria**, IIEP-UNESCO began supporting the development of the GPE Partnership Compact as a Task Team member, mobilizing GCI expertise to support gender mainstreaming in the drafting of the Enabling Sector Analysis and the strategy for defining the Compact's proposed priority reforms. The Partnership Compact, a cornerstone of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), serves as a robust framework for driving transformative reforms in education. It defines mutual accountability among stakeholders and channels their collective efforts towards achieving priority reforms. This document is shared with the GPE Board, providing a basis for decision-making on GPE funding allocations. GPE advocates for using the Partnership Compact as a comprehensive framework to align diverse funding sources, including GPE grants, thereby optimizing resources and maximizing their impact on educational outcomes. Through its involvement in Compact development, IIEP-UNESCO contributes to ensuring that gender considerations are integrated into all stages of the process and the eventual priority reforms, fostering inclusive and equitable education systems for all.

“The Gender at the Centre Initiative has really helped us - through the collaboration, MoE staff including gender focal points have learned about new tools and approaches to improve gender equality in and through education”

Ms Augustina Apakasa, GCI Focal Point for Nigeria, Federal Ministry for Education

In **Senegal**, the GCI team supported the Ministry of National Education in developing its Education Sector Analysis (ESA). The ESA is a crucial evaluation of a country's education system, typically led by ministries. With the technical support of the GCI, integrating gender perspectives into the ESA becomes a notable achievement. This collaboration is particularly significant as it aligns with governmental efforts, ensuring that gender disparities are addressed and promoting gender equality in education policies. The IIEP-UNESCO team specifically led the work on the Equity, Inclusion and Equality chapter. The aim of this chapter is to understand the extent to which educational opportunities and outcomes differ according to a number of key social variables. The analysis highlights disparities in educational experience according to learners' gender, region, place of residence, socio-economic status and disability. This chapter will also address the measures to promote equity and inclusiveness put in place in Senegal to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that have hindered equitable access to educational opportunities for certain learners and analyze how the distribution of public resources benefits or does not benefit learners equitably. The ESA will be published in 2024.

In **Chad**, IIEP-UNESCO provided technical feedback on the elaboration of the Partnership Compact, which defines mutual accountability and focuses all partners on achieving priority reforms. The compact is shared with the GPE Board, which utilizes it as a basis for decision-making regarding GPE funding. In the Chad Partnership Compact, gender considerations are comprehensively incorporated, particularly within the framework of Objective 2 of the priority reform: "To overhaul the beliefs, cultures, and practices of educators, prioritizing a gender-sensitive and inclusive approach to quality education, tailored and executed to ensure universal achievement in fundamental learning."

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, IIEP-UNESCO provided technical leadership to the development of the GPE Partnership Compact in support of the Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de l'Alphabétisation (Ministry of National Education and Literacy or MNEL) and the Local Education Group. Gender equality has been featured throughout the reform, through generic and gender-specific measures to reinforce learning outcomes for boys and girls in basic education. IIEP-UNESCO also took part in the development of the System Transformation Grant, which offers partner countries the ability to make focused, evidence-based investments in programs that remove systemic barriers and drive system wide change. The grant supports the implementation of a priority reform that a country has agreed with its partners and set out in its partnership compact.

At the request of UNESCO, GCI (IIEP) also provided technical assistance to ensure gender equality was intentionally considered in the enabling factor analysis and selection of priority reforms for the regional Caribbean GPE Partnership Compact (Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines).

UNGEI provided gender assessment expertise, introducing the GESToolkit, at the regional GPE workshop on Prioritizing Gender Equality in Reforms, hosted in Conakry, from May 1st to 5th. The workshop, which brought together around 40 participants consisting of planners, central directors, MoE gender focal points, civil society representatives and Local Education Group members from Guinea, Mali, and the Central African Republic, culminated in an exchange of strategies to prioritize gender equality in the proposed reforms.

“We think that the GES tool is extremely useful because it will enable us to correct the shortcomings in terms of gender equality in our schools and at the level of teachers.”

Mama Kany Diallo, Gender Equity Section, Ministry of Pre-University Education and Literacy, Guinea.

Immediate Outcome 1.2:

Immediate Outcome 1.2: Strengthened technical capabilities within MoE and other relevant ministries working in conjunction with MoEs to mainstream gender equality in education, including in emergency contexts.

Output 1.2.1: MoE and other relevant Ministries (including Ministries of Finance) staff, including gender specialists, trained on mainstreaming GE in education at national and decentralized levels

The second English language edition of the Short Course on gender-responsive education planning (SCGREP) was delivered by IIEP-UNESCO between September and December. 42 education professionals from sixteen anglophone African countries embarked on a three-month journey to explore topics such as intersectional inequalities in education, gender-responsive budgeting and gender-mainstreaming in education sector analyses and planning. Through this training, the participants acquired the ability to articulate the complexities and challenges associated with gender equality in education. Furthermore, participants demonstrated competence in pinpointing relevant indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, and adeptly utilizing various data sources for analysis. Their newfound understanding also extended to explaining the intricacies of the policy planning process, where they showcased the capability to identify concrete strategies and actions to address gender disparities in education.

“Participating in the SCGREP course was an incredible experience as the content and sessions gave me very valuable understanding of what gender responsive education planning entails. I highly recommend this training to any education planner or researcher.”

Short Course participant Ms Ibechone UCHOLA, Universal Basic Education Commission, Nigeria



IIEP-UNESCO short course on GRESP

In **Mali**, UNGEI delivered a workshop on Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning (GRESP) in Bamako, from November 29 to December 1, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented through GIZ's Global Project Education – BACKUP Education. Thirty participants, including focal points from the ministry of education, civil society organizations, technical partners, financial partners, and representatives from the Feminist Youth Coalition attended the four day training. The objectives of the training were to enhance understanding of gender equality issues in education and the principles of an equitable and inclusive education system; familiarize participants with gender analysis, its tools, and its role in education sector planning; strengthen capacity to apply a gender perspective to education policies and planning and; reinforce commitment to using leadership to promote gender equality in education.

In collaboration with BMZ, GIZ and UNICEF, UNGEI organized a multi-country learning event on Gender-Transformative Leadership and Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning (GRESP) in Dakar from December 5 to 8. Ministry of Education planners, civil



MoE and CSO representatives at the UNGEI workshop on GRESP in Mali, November, 2023



Participants at the UNGEI Multi-Country GRESP Workshop in Dakar, December 2023

society representatives and GPE grant agencies from eight countries (Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Republic of the Congo (RC), Egypt, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria) shared experiences and developed action plans to center gender equality in education sector plans and GPE compacts. Three participant countries— Burkina Faso, RC and Egypt— have recently utilized the training guides they received at the multi-country learning event, to implement GRESP trainings for their colleagues at the MoEs in their countries.

In **Chad**, as part of the “Girls Back to School” project, funded by the Japanese Government (MEXT Project) and coordinated by UNESCO, the Directorate of Girls’ Education and Gender Promotion (DDEFPG) of the MENPC worked with the IIEP-UNESCO Africa Office to develop a Teacher’s Manual for gender equality in Chad’s education system. They also organized training workshops in decentralized administrations. In September 2023, the DDEFPG team and IIEP-UNESCO Africa Office delegation met in N’Djamena to draft the manual and plan upcoming workshops in Bongor and Abéché. Selected decentralized administrations for training during the Bongor workshop included Mayo-Kebi East, Mayo-Kebi West, and Tandjilé. In January 2024, both teams reconvened in Dakar to finalize the manual and organize the Bongor workshop, confirming dates, participants, presentation content, and logistics.



IIEP-UNESCO workshop for the revision of the gender-responsive teacher training manual, Chad, September 2023

In **Mauritania**, IIEP-UNESCO actively participated in the ESA and the preparation of the ESP. Throughout the year, the team led various workshops and provided technical support for education sector planning and a Financial Simulation Model. In December 2023, validation and approval were obtained from the Local Education Partners Group (GLPE). The plan encompasses a comprehensive set of measures aimed at addressing gender inequalities. In addition to these supports, IIEP-UNESCO accompanies, with the financial support of

the Japanese Government, the capacity building of school management committees (COGES) at central and decentralized levels to convey a greater gender integration.

Output 1.2.3: MoE female planners supported through an innovative cohort program

Based on the lessons learned from two earlier groups, IIEP-UNESCO started a third Community of Practice in Gender and Education (CPGE). This group involved individuals who had previously taken part in a training course on gender-responsive educational planning in 2022. The program ran for six months, from June to December 2023, and was specifically designed for 30 education planners who spoke French and came from 14 different countries. Following a co-creation process, the programme included sessions on global education monitoring data, monitoring ‘hard to measure’ aspects of gender equality such as norm change and participatory gender audits. Thirty members of the Community of Practice on Gender and Education from Francophone Africa were invited to a week-long in-person workshop held in Dakar in October, organized by IIEP-UNESCO as part of the CPGE’s six-month networking and exchange program. The workshops primarily focused on data-related issues, covering aspects from collection and analysis to dissemination and utilization for steering transformative gender education. During the workshop, members shared best practices from their respective countries and learned from each other, contributing to strengthening the momentum initiated by the GCI towards achieving transformative gender education. In total, in 2023, IIEP trained 89 women from MoEs over the region.

“I learned a lot from CPGE members from other countries, and this enabled me to identify actions that could be duplicated in my country, such as gender sensitive budgeting, collecting data on school related gender based violence, advocacy and, above all, identifying resistance and ways of countering it in the process of gender-sensitive education.”

CPGE member Ms Virginie Moussa Minda, Ministry of Secondary Education, Cameroon



Community of Practice in Gender and Education: workshop in Dakar, October 2023

Intermediate Outcome 1.3:

Output 1.3.1 Action-research projects on barriers to implementing GE

IIEP-UNESCO launched the data collection phase of the research project on combating girls' school dropout through data systems, policies, and early warning systems in Sierra Leone and Mozambique. The objective of this project is to contribute to the generation of evidence on the process of girls' school dropout in these two countries and to assist governments in developing data systems, educational policies, and tools for its early identification and prevention. Specifically, it seeks to explore the possibilities for the design and implementation of Early Warning Systems, which are innovative in Africa. Through various data collection missions, the research team has interviewed over fifty key informants at central and decentralized levels.

In 2023, the Women in Learning Leadership (WiLL) research project, a joint initiative of IIEP-UNESCO Dakar, GCI and UNICEF Innocenti – Global Office of Research and Foresight, culminated in the publication of two seminal works, each offering unique insights into the pivotal role of women in educational leadership. The first publication, titled “The Role of Women School Principals in Improving Learning in French-speaking Africa,” presents a comprehensive analysis of the correlation between the gender of school principals and the academic performance of pupils. Drawing from data gathered in fourteen French-speaking African countries, particularly the PASEC2019 dataset, this study provides compelling evidence of the profound impact of female leadership on student achievement in reading and mathematics. By illuminating this nexus, the publication advocates for gender-responsive policies and practices aimed at fostering inclusive and high-performing educational environments across the region.

Complementing this seminal work is a second publication, “Women’s Leadership in Learning in **Chad**” presented in French to amplify its accessibility and relevance within local contexts. This publication delves into the unique challenges and triumphs experienced by women leaders in education within the Chadian context. By elevating the voices and experiences of women educators in Chad, this publication not only celebrates their resilience and ingenuity but also serves as a testament to the transformative power of female leadership in driving educational excellence and equity within communities.

Together, these publications stand as testament to our unwavering commitment to advancing gender equality and educational excellence through rigorous research, advocacy, and knowledge dissemination. As we continue to champion the cause of women in learning leadership, we are dedicated to leveraging these insights to inform evidence-based policies and practices that empower women as catalysts for positive change in education and beyond.

Immediate Outcome 1.4:

Immediate Outcome 1.4: Strengthened leadership by MoE for inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral dialogue and coordination to address demand- and supply-side barriers to gender equality in education

Output 1.4.2: Potential bottlenecks to implement gender-responsive budgeting in education analyzed, and policy dialogue established between Ministries of Finance and Ministries of Education on gender-responsive budgeting in interested countries

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is a powerful public policy tool that analyzes the extent to which budgets are conducive to gender equality, taking steps to bridge them and ensuring adequate funding for commitments to gender equality and women’s empowerment.

In **Sierra Leone**, IIEP-UNESCO delivered an in-person four-day course to the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) staff on GRB. The MBSSE was chosen as one of five line ministries to pioneer GRB in the budget preparation process for the FY2023 Budget. The primary objectives of the training were i) ensuring all MBSSE participants develop a strong understanding of educational planning and budgeting processes and their pivotal roles within them ii) empowering MBSSE participants to integrate a gender perspective into the education budgeting process, especially in budget formulation and evaluation stages and iii) equipping participants with the tools and skills to prepare a gender-sensitive budget proposal, identify appropriate indicators, set gender-responsive targets, and conduct a gender-sensitive expenditure review. The training took place in November in Freetown.

In the second phase of GCI, IIEP aims to enhance its technical assistance in gender-responsive budgeting. The objective is twofold: to foster greater gender responsiveness in education policies and to strengthen the integration between sector planning and education budget allocation. By doing so, the commitments towards gender equality are effectively reflected in budgets conducive to gender equity. This initiative will involve providing technical support in budget programming, conducting training activities, and undertaking analytical work to provide evidence on how budget allocations and decisions can increase or decrease disparities between genders, regions, or social classes.



IIEP-UNESCO training on GRB in Sierra Leone, November 2023

Activities under Intermediate Outcome 2

Intermediate Outcome 2: Improved education sector enabling environment in support of MoE efforts in gender equality mainstreaming in and through education.

Immediate Outcome 2.1:

Immediate Outcome 2.1: Strengthened capacity of national- and local-level civil society organizations, including youth-led organizations, to undertake effective evidence-based policy advocacy, campaigning and programming on gender equality (GE) in education.

Output 2.1.1: Gender equality in education initiatives undertaken by CSOs (policy advocacy, public campaigns, and other programming)

GCI civil society partners ANCEFA, FAWE and Plan International played a crucial role on the ground to support ministries of education to center gender equality in education sector planning and to engage communities on girls' education and gender equality. Through GCI programs, they rolled out capacity building initiatives for 155 government officials and 367 CSO representatives, and reached over 22,000 community members with awareness raising activities.

In **Burkina Faso**, official data indicated that during the month of February 2023, 66 educational facilities were newly closed due to the security crisis, affecting 16,810 pupils, including 9,256 girls. In collaboration with UNGEI, Burkina Faso's Ministry of Education (MENAPLN) and FAWE organized a two-day workshop in Ouagadougou on 26-27 June to develop two training and awareness-raising guides on girls' education in emergencies. Thirty participants from four different ministries (Education, Health, Youth, Gender), FAWE and its partners, including youth activists, UNGEI and AU/CIEFFA, took part in the workshop. The workshop enabled participants to gain in-depth knowledge of girls' education in emergencies in Burkina Faso, as well as to amend and finalize two guides on girls' education in emergencies.

In **Mali** and **Niger**, to advance youth participation in gender-responsive education sector planning, GCI began supporting Feminist Youth Coalitions for Gender-Transformative Education. Financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented through GIZ's Global Project Education – BACKUP Education, UNGEI started supporting the youth coalitions.

On 20 June UNGEI, in collaboration with UNICEF and [Transform Education](#), launched the first Feminist Youth Coalition for Gender-Transformative Education in **Niger**, bringing together thirty young leaders working on gender equality in and through education. Participants discussed the challenges to gender equality in education in **Niger** and shared their own experiences and unique perspectives as gender equality activists. The Coalition



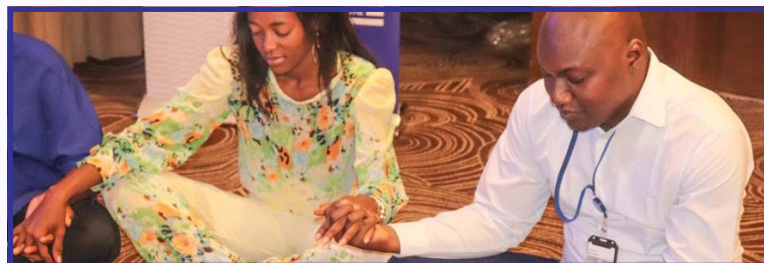
Members of the GCI supported Niger Feminist Youth Coalition at the coalition launch event in Niamey, Niger

is a platform for youth participation, advocacy and mutual support and aims to become the primary youth consultation platform for the Ministry of National Education on all matters related to gender equality in education. The coalition is represented on the Local Education Group.

UNGEI also supported the launch of a Feminist Youth Coalition in **Mali** which equally saw 30 young feminists empowered to organize for gender equality in education nationally. The coalition met on 7 August and developed an action plan for joint advocacy, community engagement and peer support. Officially represented within the Local Education Group, the coalition will be able to engage in education sector decision making to promote gender-transformative education.

“The establishment of this national youth coalition presents new avenues to promote inclusive education. As dedicated young leaders, we could shape education policies and reforms in Mali. Our voices matter for an equitable educational future.”

Zeina Mohamed Ali, Mali Feminist Youth Coalition



Members of the Mali Feminist Youth Coalition setting intentions for the year, Bamako, Mali.

In **Burkina Faso**, FAWE encouraged the creation of a national youth coalition to promote girls' education. In collaboration with this coalition, a national youth advocacy forum for the promotion of girls' education was organized on October 19 in Ouagadougou under the chairmanship of the Secretary General of the Ministry of Education. A total of 57 people from the Centre, East and Centre-South regions took part in the event. The forum was an opportunity for the youth to put forward advocacy messages on the need to set up toilets adapted for Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) in schools in the Centre-Sud region, the care for internally displaced girls in the East region, the persistence of sexist stereotypes in teaching practices, obstacles to the retention and success of girls in school, and the resurgence of insecurity in the school environment in Burkina Faso. Youth representatives delivered their advocacy messages to representatives from the Ministry of Education and the traditional chieftaincy. Another advocacy/awareness-raising meeting on girls' education was held in the Centre-Sud region, chaired by the Regional MoE Director of Post-Primary and Secondary Education, following the same model, with 53 participants.



Youth representatives deliver advocacy messages to the authorities and invited partners, including the Ministry of Education and the traditional chieftaincy, in June, 2023, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

In **Mozambique**, ANCEFA, through the Movement for Education for All Partnership (MEPT) and collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Human Development, focused on advocating and implementing impactful educational policies for girls from May to December. Engaging with Ministry working groups, the initiative influenced the creation of a national action plan for reintegration and retention in schools, particularly for girls. Successful activities included advocacy with parliamentarians, dissemination of the Multisectoral Mechanism for Preventing and Combating School Violence, and media campaigns promoting girls' education. Notable achievements included influencing the revision of the teacher's code of conduct to address gender inequality and combat violence in schools. Through these efforts, MEPT reached a total of 240 beneficiaries, including students, teachers, and civil society stakeholders.

In **Mali**, FAWE, alongside the EPT Coalition and Plan International, organized advocacy sessions in Kati, Baguinéda, and Bamako on October 12, 25, and 27 respectively, aiming to improve girls' enrollment and retention in education. These sessions saw commitments from local authorities to create conducive environments for girls' education, including ensuring adequate conditions for secondary education completion in Kati and increasing enrollment rates in Baguinéda. In Bamako, the Children's Parliament presented an advocacy note to the Ministry of Education to enhance girls' enrollment and retention, particularly in primary education levels.

In **Sierra Leone**, Plan International spearheaded initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and empowering youth. Firstly, Plan supported the establishment of referral pathway systems to address school-related gender-based violence in 30 schools. These systems, implemented in schools across the Western Area Urban, Western Area Rural, Moyamba, and Port Loko districts, included forming peer educator groups, distributing suggestion boxes, and providing materials for issue documentation. By facilitating meetings and coaching sessions led by guidance counselors and focal point teachers, Plan International ensured that students had access to resources and support mechanisms to address gender-based violence issues effectively.

Additionally, Plan International facilitated consultations with 120 girls from 30 schools across four districts regarding the use of government school buses. This initiative sought to actively involve girls in decision-making processes related to their education. By engaging girls in discussions about transportation to and from school, Plan International recognized the significance of their voices in shaping policies that directly affect them. Plan also conducted advocacy leadership training sessions for junior and senior secondary students. These sessions, held in the Western Area, Urban, and Moyamba, from 9 to 10 October, were attended by 95 individuals including students, facilitators, and staff. The training aimed to equip young people with essential advocacy skills, emphasizing the importance of youth-led advocacy in their schools and communities.

In **Niger**, Plan International undertook multiple initiatives aimed at propelling gender equality and nurturing inclusive education. From 28 to 31 August, the initiatives started with a series of exchange and awareness raising sessions, engaging 23 stakeholders from civil society organizations and ministry of education staff. The sessions illuminated existing barriers to gender integration and fostered dialogue on transformative leadership. Participants from diverse regions such as Niamey, Dosso, Tillabéri, and Maradi found these discussions enlightening and pledged their commitment to advancing gender equality. Furthermore, from 4 to 5 September a comprehensive national training session on gender dynamics and the gender transformation program was conducted, benefiting 45 ministry officials. The training received widespread acclaim for its relevance, prompting calls for sustained collaboration and knowledge-sharing platforms.

From 28 to 30 September, a sensitization caravan was launched by Plan International, reaching over 9,518 individuals across regions including Maradi, Aguié, Gazoua, and Tessaoua. This initiative aimed to heighten awareness of the significance of girls' education, sparking community-level dialogues and fostering commitments.

In observance of the International Day of the Girl Child, events like conference debates and talk shows were organized by Plan International on 12 October. Themed around "Activism, Responsibility, and Resources for Girls", these discussions drew nearly 100 stakeholders from the fields of education and gender equality, facilitating meaningful exchanges and insights.

Output 2.1.2: Workshops (national, multi-country) delivered for CSOs on gender equality in education issues and/or approaches

On 12 July UNGEI and the GCI CSO Consortium organized the second webinar in the learning series on civil society action within GCI. 37 civil society representatives from ANCEFA, FAWE, Plan and Girls Not Brides from nine countries (Senegal, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Nigeria, Cameroun) participated in the webinar. GCI civil society partners shared experiences on the whole-school approach to end SRGBV, MoE influencing on gender equality in education and the impact of GCI capacity building on education programs. GCI partner Girls Not Brides shared lessons learned from their budget advocacy projects to end child marriage and promote girls' education in West and Central Africa.

The GCI Civil Society Consortium in **Chad**, made up of ANCEFA, FAWE-Chad and the Coalition of Social Organizations for the Development of Education (COSOCIDE-Chad), organized a capacity building workshop for 36 leaders of civil society organizations from April 25 to 27, on political advocacy and community mobilization in favor of girls' enrolment and retention in schools and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) structures.

As a follow-up, ANCEFA and COSOCIDE organized two workshops on the same theme and objectives in Bol and Koumra (Chad) from June 3 to 4 with 56 participants. The three workshops were attended by agents from the Ministry of Education, members of the GCI Consortium, young girls and women activists, and political authorities. As a result, relevant authorities and CSO leaders have understood the stakes involved in lifting the barriers to girls' education and have expressed their commitment to moving the lines in favor of gender equality in and through education in the Chadian education system and in their communities.

In order to include gender-transformative education in the Local, Social, Economic and Cultural Development Programs (PDSEC), FAWE-Mali organized a three-day workshop in Bamako, **Mali**, from 24 to 26 June, bringing together 30 participants made up of representatives

“CSOs have a vital role to play in policy advocacy and community mobilization in favor of girls' enrollment and retention. They should get support to make their participation dynamic and effective in the Chadian education system for the benefit of girls”.

Ms Fatimé Gattibé Tabo, Director of Girls' Education Development and Gender Promotion, Ministry of Education, Chad

from the Ministry of National Education, elected representatives from decentralized communities, civil society representatives and youth organizations. At the end of the workshop, participants had a better grasp of the concepts of gender equality, gender-transformative education, gender-responsive planning and budgeting, and how to integrate a gender-transformative education lens in the PDSEC.

In **Nigeria**, FAWE organized two Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning (GRESPE) workshops on 16-18 October in Katsina State and 23-25 October in Cross River State. 33 participants from Katsina State and 34 from Cross River State coming from the ministry of education and CSOs took part in these training sessions. The trainings were aimed at enhancing participants' ability to assess, plan, evaluate and decide on the best measures and strategies to promote gender equality in and through the education sector. The main outcome of the training was the development of a state-level work plan aimed at promoting gender-responsive plans and programs with a participatory approach in both Katsina and Cross River State.

In **Niger**, from 13 to 15 September, Plan International facilitated the enhancement of capacities for 20 participants from among civil society organizations and Ministry of Education officials through targeted training on transformative gender approaches and inclusive education strategies. This initiative, which included training members within the Gender and Inclusion Working Group, aimed to strengthen the foundation for sustained progress in promoting gender equality and fostering inclusive education practices.

Immediate Outcome 2.2

Improved coordination for gender equality in education through LEGs, under the leadership of MoEs.

Output 2.2.2 — Policy and practice events and workshops (national and multi-country) delivered



Guinea MoE staff engage in data compilation and analysis as part of the GCI supported GES assessment. Conakry, Guinea

UNGEI supported the ministry of education in **Guinea** to conduct a rapid assessment of gender equality in and through education through the use of the [Gender Equality in Education Snapshot \(GES\) Toolkit](#). On 27 April UNGEI, in collaboration with UNICEF, organized a workshop for the Local Education Group (LEG) to discuss the [assessment results](#) and formulate recommendations to promote gender equality, and embed the gender dimension effectively within the country's priority reforms outlined in the GPE process. This event successfully convened 24 participants, including the technical team members of the Decennial Program of Education in Guinea (ProDEG), as well as representatives from civil society and members of the Local Education Group.

Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented through GIZ's Global Project Education – BACKUP Education, UNGEI also supported the Ministry of National Education (MNE) in **Niger** and the country's LEG to conduct a GES assessment in the country. In collaboration with UNICEF and the LEG, a validation workshop was organized on June 21, bringing together 30 participants from various education stakeholders, as well as young feminists from the GCI-supported National Feminist Youth Coalition. The assessment [results](#) will guide the revision of the National Strategy for Accelerating Education and Training for Girls and Women (SNAEFF) and the development of the new education sector plan going forward.

“We cannot advance our society without promoting gender equality.”

Mohamed Zeidane, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Niger of Education, Niger

Immediate Outcome 2.3:

Improved policy and practice dialogue for GE and education at national, continental, and global levels

Output 2.3.1— Policy and practice dialogue on gender equality in education catalyzed and facilitated at national, continental and global events

In 2023, GCI significantly enhanced its visibility both internally within IIEP-UNESCO and UNICEF and externally through various platforms and events. IIEP and UNGEI organized their participation in major research events, such as the CIES (Comparative and International Education Society) Conference, to present their initiatives and achievements to a global audience of education professionals and researchers, placing GCI as a major actor of gender-transformative education.

From 12 to 14 September GCI participated in the AU/ CIEFFA meeting with the Girls and Women Education CESA cluster in Burkina Faso. GCI's representative shared lessons learnt from GCI implementation and discussed how GCI can further contribute to the activities of the cluster and the African Union.

From 1 to 3 November, UNGEI convened over 120 organizations at the [Feminist Network for Gender-Transformative Education](#) (FemNet4GTE) Summit in Istanbul. GCI supported a session on girls' education in politically stressed contexts, with representation from Burkina Faso and Niger, and shared lessons learnt from GCI countries— opening up global dialogue on successes and challenges in education during political instability.

On 21-22 November GCI participated in FAWE's 3rd Triennial Conference on Girls' Education in Africa, in Nairobi. The conference brought together around 250 education and gender experts from around the continent. GCI shared lessons learnt on gender-transformative systems strengthening and presented the EiE-GenKit.



Maimouna Kere, Director of Girls' Education, MoE Burkina Faso, sharing lessons learnt from GCI supported activities, at the 2023 Feminist Network for Gender-Transformative Education meeting, in Istanbul, Turkey. November, 2023

GCI also participated in the KIX (Knowledge and Innovation Exchange) Symposium in Abidjan, October 2023, where it showcased its projects and shared expertise on gender-responsive education policies and practices. At the UKFIET (UK Forum for International Education and Training) Conference in September 2023, GCI ran a Symposium within the Equality and Inclusion sub-theme and engaged with policymakers, researchers, and practitioners to discuss innovative approaches to addressing gender disparities in education.

Furthermore, GCI representatives appeared on prominent media outlets such as BBC Africa, RTS, and France 24, advocating for gender equality in education and sharing insights on GCI's initiatives. The Initiative also marked the International Day of the Girl Child with various awareness-raising activities, emphasizing the importance of girls' education and empowerment. Additionally, GCI contributed to a NORRAG blog discussing the factors contributing to girls' school dropout and proposing strategies to address this issue on October 11.

Finally, during the celebration of IIEP's 60th anniversary in November, GCI's achievements were highlighted with over 1200 online participants and hundreds attending in-person events in Paris. This platform provided an opportunity to showcase GCI's impact and contributions to gender-responsive education policies and practices. These engagements and activities significantly increased GCI's visibility and recognition both within the education community and among the general public, reinforcing its position as a leader in promoting gender equality in education.

Output 2.3.2— Policy and practice notes and reports on gender equality in education produced

In March, UNGEI and Dalberg published a report on [Social Norms and Girls' Education in Sierra Leone](#), along with a [summary report](#). The community-based research looked into the social determinants, norms, and perceptions hampering girls' education in Sierra Leone and identified positive pathways to transform social norms and help girls and boys fulfill their dreams, including fostering access to female role models for young girls. UNGEI held a subsequent [webinar](#) in June, bringing together education stakeholders from national and global levels, including youth activists to reflect on the study results and identify actions needed to effectively transform social norms within the education system and beyond.

In April, UNGEI and Cambridge Education published a report: '[How is gender equality included in education sector planning? An analysis of power, voice and social change](#)', along with a [policy brief](#). The report was accompanied by eight sub-reports, each providing a more detailed and specific analysis of the study question in each GCI country— [Burkina Faso](#), [Chad](#), [Mali](#), [Mauritania](#), [Mozambique](#), [Niger](#), [Nigeria](#) and [Sierra Leone](#). UNGEI held a [webinar](#) that same month, which brought together young activists, ministries of education and civil society representatives to reflect on the study results, and identify actions needed to effectively advance gender-responsive education planning.

In August, GCI published an [Advocacy Brief](#) outlining the Initiative's whole-system approach to gender-transformative education (GTE). The Brief provides insight on the unique partnership model of the GCI Alliance, through which the Initiative is building a strong social movement for GTE in Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as GCI's vision to strengthen education systems towards gender equality.



Social media preview of the GCI Advocacy Brief

In September, UNGEI published a [Program Package brief for UNICEF country offices](#), providing an overview of GCI's programmatic offer, and ways for country offices to receive technical support from GCI. Two subsequent internal webinars were held with UNICEF offices in Asia and Africa to share experiences from GCI implementation and learn about receiving support to implement gender-transformative education program within country offices.

In 2023, IIEP published two notable reports contributing to educational research and policy dialogue. The first publication, titled "[The role of school principals in enhancing learning outcomes in francophone Africa](#)," sheds light on the critical role of school principals in improving learning outcomes across francophone Africa. This comprehensive report, co-authored with UNESCO, examines the strategies and practices employed by school directors to drive positive change in educational quality and equity. It provides in-depth analysis, case studies, and policy recommendations to support efforts in this area.

Additionally, IIEP released a report titled "[Gender considerations in the strategies and practices of the Ministry of Education in Burkina Faso](#)" in 2023. This publication highlights the efforts of the Ministry of Education in Burkina Faso to address gender disparities in education. Through a detailed examination of gender-sensitive strategies and practices, the report offers insights into promoting gender equality within the education sector. It underscores the importance of integrating gender considerations into policy and practice to ensure inclusivity and equity.

Output 2.4.1: Annual meetings of GCI Alliance (including annual meetings of DPs) convened

The GCI Alliance Annual Board Meeting took place in Dakar, Senegal, on 28-30 March. The meeting brought together around 80 GCI Alliance members, including ministries of education, donors, technical partners, civil society representatives and young feminists from the eight GCI partner countries. During the three day-meeting, Alliance members discussed GCI results, including through the GCI Mid-Term Review, shared innovative approaches to promoting gender equality in education and reflected on GCI Phase Two. Many participants expressed their enthusiasm and commitment to continue to join forces to advance gender equality in and through education.

Output 2.4.2: Semi-annual GCI newsletter produced and disseminated

Two GCI newsletters, [Issue 5](#) and [Issue 6](#) were produced and disseminated for the periods of January to June 2023 and July to December 2023 respectively. Each newsletter was produced in the three official languages of GCI, English, French and Portuguese. Issue 5 covered central updates regarding the GCI Annual Alliance Board Meeting, webinars, training, research publications and programmatic support via CSO partnerships. Issue 6 delved deeper into GCI's strategy for Phase Two, along with providing updates on GCI outcomes and outputs from Phase One. Issue 5 was sent to a mailing list of 228 partners, and received a 42.98% open rate, with an interaction rate of 27.63% (e.g. clicks on hyperlinks in the newsletter etc). Issue 6 was sent to an updated GCI mailing list of 219 partners, and received a 52.05% open rate, with a 10.05% interaction/click rate.

GCI Mid-Term Review and GCI Phase 2 development

[An independent mid-term review](#) of GCI's first two years of implementation was conducted by consulting firm Cayambe, between December 2022 and March 2023. The review aimed to understand the Initiative's successes and limitations, and to identify areas of improvement in planning for the future. Overall the review found that GCI has been successful in putting gender equality firmly on the education agenda and that it is filling an important niche in the eight partner countries and beyond. Among other recommendations, the review suggested a revision of GCI's strategy for Phase Two, with a stronger focus on in-country coordination and collective ownership. Based on the findings from the review and consultations with the GCI Alliance members, a concept note for GCI Phase Two has been developed and shared with the GCI Executive Committee.



Social media preview of the GCI Newsletter - Issue 6

APPENDICES

Annex I - Table of Activities completed in 2023 as per the GCI 2023 Work Plan and the GCI Results Framework

GCI 2023 Activity Outcomes and Outputs

	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Postponed	Cancelled	Date realised	Details/Comments
Immediate Outcome 1.1: Strengthened institutional systems and processes within MoE to mainstream gender equality in education sector analysis, policies, planning, budgeting, strategies and programs						
Output 1.1.1 MoE documents, systems and tools integrating GE						
Burkina Faso: Publication of the results of the participatory gender diagnosis and Policy Brief					2023	Read the publication here
Niger: Mapping of existing tools, development of a tool to collect statistical data on SRGBV to improve information system					On going	Processes were halted due to an attempted coup d'etat. Processes resumed in 2023
Niger: Participatory gender analysis to analyze gender mainstreaming within the ministry and in sectoral strategies					June 21	
Nigeria: Mainstream gender in the STEM strategy for Higher Education					N/A	
Output 1.1.2 ESA, ESP, operational planning and M&E processes include GE						
Mauritania: Finalization of the gender-sensitive education sector analysis					July	Report currently being edited
Mauritania: Support to MoE planners to integrate gender into sectoral planning					October	Plan currently being edited Read the government press release here
Immediate Outcome 1.2: Strengthened technical capabilities within MoE to mainstream gender equality in education						
Output 1.2.1 MoE and other relevant Ministries staff trained on mainstreaming GE in education						
Mauritania: Design and implementation of trainings on gender-responsive educational planning					July 17-26	
Mozambique: Design and implementation of a training on GRB						
Nigeria: Continued support for the domestication of the national policy on gender in education (NPGE), and other relevant capacity building and technical support activities					October 16-18	GRESB workshops held in Katsina State encompassed all goals of this activity
Sierra Leone: design and implementation of trainings on GRB					31 October - 3 November	
Sierra Leone: design and implementation of trainings on TVET					2024	This activity was postponed to 2024 because of the security instability registered in Freetown at the end of 2023
Chad: Design and implementation of trainings on gender for MoE staff in the framework of the ALAPAJ project at decentralized level (AFD)						MEXT project designed instead. ALAPAJ will be prepared and implemented in 2024.
Multi-country: Delivery of a short course on Gender-responsive educational planning (English)					October to December	

	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Postponed	Cancelled	Date realised	Details/Comments
Reflection and design of the new IIEP offer on gender equality in educational planning and strategies (starting in 2024)					January 2024	
Niger: national GRESP workshop						This activity, funded by BMZ, was canceled due to BMZ's suspension of activities in Niger after the military coup.
Mali: national GRESP workshop					December 1	
Regional GRESP workshop					December 8	Read the 2023 GRESP Workshop Report here
SWOT report published and disseminated					June	SWOT Reports available here
Output 1.2.3 Cohort program on gender mainstreaming in MoEs						
Community of Practice - French: online learning, capacity-building and networking activities, on-site workshop					June to December	
Immediate Outcome 1.3: Strengthened capacity of MoE to change internal organizational culture to better reflect commitment to gender equality						
Output 1.3.1 Action-research projects on barriers to implementing GE						
Sierra Leone: Addressing school failure through data systems, policies, and early prevention tools: An encouraging pathway towards improved girls' education in Sierra Leone						
Mozambique: Addressing school failure through data systems, policies, and early prevention tools: An encouraging pathway towards improved girls' education in Mozambique						
Multi-country: conduct 3 cases studies in Chad, Madagascar and Benin (Project Women in Learning Leadership - WILL) to unpack women's school management and leadership practices					End of 2023	https://dakar.iiep.unesco.org/en/women-in-learning-leadership-will
One-year follow-up of Freetown Manifesto commitments						Postponed to 2024, activities will be aligned with the AU Year of Education.
Mozambique: Design and implementation of trainings on GRB (36 technicians)					2024	
Input in Global Platform for Gender Equality Education through Freetown Manifesto follow-up						Contributed to development of Global Platform data dashboard through sharing of GES Toolkit lessons learnt and participation in strategic conversations.
Immediate Outcome 1.4: Strengthened leadership by MoE for inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral dialogue and coordination to address demand- and supply-side barriers to gender equality in education						
Output 1.4.2 GRB in education analyzed and policy dialogue established between MoF and MoE						
Niger: case study of the experience of Niger in the transition to program budgeting and efforts in gender-sensitive budgeting						Postponed due to political instability. Diagnostic framework developed, 4-day training on GRB delivered in Sierra Leone in lieu of Niger and Burkina Faso. In 2024, 4-5 countries will benefit from technical support from IIEP. Dialogue with MoF and other finance actors has been established.
Burkina Faso: case study of the experience of Burkina Faso in the transition to program budgeting and efforts in gender-sensitive budgeting						Postponed due to political instability. Diagnostic framework developed, 4-day training on GRB delivered in Sierra Leone in lieu of Niger and Burkina Faso. In 2024, 4-5 countries will benefit from technical support from IIEP. Dialogue with MoF and other finance actors has been established.

	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Postponed	Cancelled	Date realised	Details/Comments
Immediate Outcome 2.1: Strengthened capacity of national- and local-level civil society organizations, including youth-led organizations, to undertake effective evidence-based policy advocacy, campaigning and programming on GE in education						
Output 2.1.1 CSO gender in education initiatives undertaken						
Gender Equality in education projects undertaken by CSOs						
Semi-annual reports submitted and reviewed					July and December	
project visits conducted						Limited capacity to conduct project visits.
Quarterly learning meetings organized					Quarter endings	
2 national feminist coalition convenings Niger organized					November 2023/ February 2024	
1 national feminist coalition convening Mali organized					November	
Output 2.1.2 CSO Capacity building workshops delivered for CSOs on GE in education issues and/or approaches						
National and regional workshops delivered						
Workshop reports compiled and shared					Year-round	
Immediate Outcome 2.2: Improved coordination for GE in education through LEGs under the leadership of MoE						
Output 2.2.1 Gender Equality in Education Snapshot (GES) Tool piloted by LEGs						
GES Toolkit piloted in 4 GCI countries					Year-round	The GES Toolkit was piloted in 2 new countries and disseminated to more countries through global webinars and regional workshops. Read the GES Toolkit Reports here
Lessons learnt from GES Toolkit pilots shared with GPE and other partners					Year-round	
Output 2.2.2 Policy and Practice events and workshops (national and multi country) delivered						
National-level workshops and events for LEGs undertaken						GES workshops in Guinea and Niger and GRESP workshop in Mali organized for LEGs.
Immediate Outcome 2.3: Improved policy and practice for GE and education at national, continental and global levels						
Output 2.3.1 Policy and practice dialogue on GE in education catalysed and facilitated at national, continental and global events						
UNGEI event organized (Convening of Feminist Network for Gender Transformative Education)					November	Read the report here
GCI key messages conveyed through UNGEI Secretariat participation in global, regional and national events					Year-round	GCI panels or supported panels at CSW, FemNet4GTE and more
GCI key messages conveyed through GCI staff participation in global, regional and national events					Year-round	GCI panels or supported panels at CSW, FemNet4GTE and more
GCI key messages conveyed through GCI Alliance members participation in global, regional and national events					Year-round	
Output 2.3.2 Policy and Practice notes and reports on GE in education produced						
Gender norms research phase 2 implemented in Sierra Leone					April	Read the report here
Gender norms research phase 2 report developed and disseminated					April	

	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Postponed	Cancelled	Date realised	Details/Comments
Immediate Outcome 2.4: Improved coordination and collaboration among global GCI Alliance Development Partners (DPs) to advance GE in and through education						
Output 2.4.1 Annual meetings of GCI convened						
Annual GCI Alliance Board Meeting held					March	Read the post meeting blog here
Executive Committee meetings held					Year-round	
Conclusions from board meeting and Executive Committee meetings documented, shared and implemented					Year-round	
Output 2.4.2 GCI programme managed and implemented (Secretariat activities)						
Overall vision and strategic direction provided, including in convening global events and meetings in support of GCI					March	
Staff and consultants hired, supported and overseen					Year-round	
Operational support for workshops, contract and vendor management					Year-round	
Guidance and oversight provided to CSOs					Year-round	
Mid-term evaluation conducted					April	Read the Report here
Mid-term evaluation results disseminated					April	
Final evaluation conducted						Postponed to Q2-Q3 2024
Final evaluation results disseminated						Postponed to Q3 2024
Strategic vision for GCI phase 2 developed and shared					July	
Development of advocacy brief based on mid-term review					September	Read the Advocacy brief here
Consultation process with GCI Alliance to develop GCI phase 2 strategy					September	
Develop GPE Strategic Capabilities proposal					August	
Develop GCI phase 2 ToC, results framework and budget					August	
Output 2.4.3 The value and achievements of GCI communicated and disseminated (Secretariat activities)						
Semi-annual newsletter produced, translated and launched					June 2023 and January 2024	Read the newsletters here: Issue 5 and Issue 6
GCI actors supported with communication assets including videos and event-related materials					Year-round	
Links of GCI with global moments and processes established with opportunities created for phase 2					Year-round	
Output 2.4.4 Global partnerships built, regional and local partnerships supported (Secretariat activities)						
Relationships built with gender equality and child rights protection actors to enable their advocacy in education systems in WCA					Year-round	
Relationships built with UNICEF and UNESCO country offices and donor representatives in country					Year-round	



GCI Annual Alliance Board Meeting in Dakar, March 2023

PRIORITÉ À L'ÉGALITÉ
GENDER AT THE CENTRE

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[Gender at the Centre Initiative \(UNGEI\)](#)

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\(IIEP-UNESCO Dakar\)](#)