

## Return to Dakar renews momentum for gender equality

Rosie Peppin-Vaughan and Moira Wilkinson

The first global declaration on girls' education, the *Dakar Declaration on Accelerating Girls' Education and Gender Equality*, has been adopted by delegates at an international conference to mark the tenth anniversary of the launch of UNGEI (UN Girls' Education Initiative) at the World Education Forum in 2000. The innovative conference, 'E4: Engendering Empowerment: Equality and Education', was organised by UNGEI in collaboration with the Beyond Access team at the Institute of Education, University of London, and was held in Dakar, Senegal on 17-20 May 2010.

The conference was a significant event. Through the Declaration and country action plans it paved the way for future partnerships to accelerate efforts on girls' education and bring about a higher level of coordination within UNGEI's campaign itself. Over the last ten years UNGEI has worked to prioritise girls' education within the global EFA campaign, and much has been achieved in terms of enrolment. But poor quality education, extreme poverty, structural inequality and violence against girls were identified by conference delegates as major obstacles to achieving

real gender equality in education by 2015, as pledged at the 'Education for All' conference forum at the same hotel in Dakar ten years ago. The E4 initiative was launched to bring together activists, practitioners, policy-makers and scholars to build a common knowledge base from which to tackle these issues, with the explicit goal of strengthening and expanding partnerships for girls' education. While some obstacles were present during the conference, it was also a significant next step on the global path to gender equality in education.



Participants to the E4 Conference in Dakar, Senegal

### IN THIS ISSUE

- 1-3 Return to Dakar renews momentum for gender equality
- 4 e4e: Internet opens conference participation
- 5 Increase ways to address poverty, gender equality and schooling, urges the Poverty working group
- 6 Break the silence to contest violence and promote girls' education, says Violence working group

- 7 Quality education cannot ignore gender equality, warns Quality working group
- 8 Making E4 Happen: An interview with Afaf Fuad Makki
- 9 Making E4 Happen: An interview with Loanna Mave
- 10 A global travesty of gender inequalities: Using football to campaign for 1GOAL

- 11 Declaration reviews the past to try to make a better future
- 12 United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and forthcoming events

## Reconnecting: bringing perspectives from research and the field

The *Dakar Declaration on Accelerating Girls' Education and Gender Equality*, adopted at the closing ceremony by the assembled participants was the culmination of three days of discussions of a substantial amount of field and research-based materials. The conference was unique in that it was designed to have a significant research input from the field and academia, with 23 commissioned and open-call papers combining theory with examples of good practice from the field. The programme was based around three simultaneous 'Working Group' streams – Violence, Poverty, and Quality, which met over five sessions: and addressed cross-cutting themes of (i) health, water, nutrition and HIV/AIDS; (ii) participation; and (iii) climate change (see pages 5-7). Each stream also included a plenary with keynote speeches from experts. Other sessions at the conference included a 'Partnership Forum', which featured speakers from major donor organisations, development agencies and the private sector.

Participants expressed their satisfaction with the workings and outcomes of the conference: a national representative from FAWE (Forum for African *'the wonderful and realistic discussions from scholars and academicians or the organisations in the field greatly impressed me'*). A representative from an African government also felt *'the research base was an important part of the conference and added a richness to the discussions...the working group format was also an efficient way of allowing for in depth discussions, which does not always happen at conferences'*. The research papers and dialogue between different groups provided a strong information base for the Declaration and for the design of steps forward.

Many of the materials and discussions are available online (see Box 1).



David Wiking, Meg Rihani, Kalidou Diallo, Aissatou Sarr Dieng and Cheryl Gregory Faye at E4

## Representation and the limits of global engagement

The E4 initiative sought to bring together people with diverse experiences and perspectives on girls' education. Seeking to engage with the broadest possible range of participants, the initiative began with an online e-conference, held over the five weeks preceding the face-to-face conference in Dakar (see page 4).

The majority of participants in Dakar were official delegations from countries which had either made significant progress since 2000 in girls' education (such as Ethiopia, Senegal and Yemen), or from countries which still have large gender gaps in education (such as Niger, Chad and the Congo). Those invited to attend as part of delegations included officials from education and women's ministries, civil society representatives, UNGEI focal points and academics. Also participating were the conference papers authors and members of the UNGEI Global Advisory Committee. The opening ceremony and plenaries featured many expert and high profile speakers, including the Prime Minister of Senegal Mr Souleymane Ndéné Ndiaye; Codou Diaw, Executive Director of the Forum for African Women Educationalists; Elizabeth King, a leading education economist at the World Bank; and Anthony Lake, the new Executive Director of UNICEF.

The range of people attending the conference had important implications for levels of engagement and participation. Participation at the conference was strictly limited to a small group of around 200 people; and although there was the opportunity for wider participation through the e-conference, comments on the website and live streaming, it was regrettable that many others could not be included in the face-to-face conference. While the organisers strove to strike a balance in terms of regions, there was (naturally) a very strong representation from West and Central Africa, and while arguably the greatest need for focus is in Africa, there was considerably less representation from South America and South Asia; there was also little representation from NGOs, particularly from the broader women's movement. Diversity amongst the groups who attended was another issue: fostering partnerships, particularly with such a varied range of participants, was a central challenge for the conference.

The conference featured a participatory and collaborative methodology oriented toward transformative action which sought to break from traditional formats and encourage interaction, dialogue and new forms of engagement between the diverse set of participants. The Working Group sessions were specifically intended to encourage new lines of dialogue between different groups. Through discussing existing

### Box 1: Conference Resources

- situation analysis (<http://www.e4conference.org/overview/situation>)
- e-conference keynotes, papers, discussion threads (<http://www.e4conference.org/e4e>)
- conference agenda and working groups programme (<http://www.e4conference.org/dakar>)
- full conference papers (<http://www.e4conference.org/dakar/papers>)
- Dakar Declaration ([www.ungei.org/index\\_2527.html](http://www.ungei.org/index_2527.html))
- interviews with participants (<http://www.e4conference.org/press>)
- video footage of the plenaries (<http://www.e4conference.org/dakar>)
- participant videos (<http://youtube.com/e4conf>)
- conference photos (<http://flickr.com/photos/e4conference>)
- full conference report (<http://www.e4conference.org/dakar> available from July 2010)

### Box 2: Working Group sessions

- Session 1: Reviewing literature and refining definitions
- Session 2: Addressing hierarchies of power
- Session 3: What can we do? Interventions and partnerships
- Session 4: Making connections: Processes for change
- Session 5: Reporting and reviewing

problems and potential solutions (see Box 2), these sessions drew on the conference papers, which were presented throughout structured discussions and group-work, led by teams of facilitators. Simultaneous interpretation was available throughout the conference in English and French.

In such global meetings it is important to keep in mind the issue of power; both in terms of who received invitations to attend, and also, with participants from so many different regions and backgrounds, who is granted the most time to speak and visibility, and who is able to give input into the final Declaration. The participatory methodology certainly attempted to address this. Moreover, the conference was able to fulfil the important task of providing a time and space both for links to be forged between senior officials; for delegates to



**Delegates at a plenary session**

put questions to them during the plenaries; for cross-country dialogue between delegates; and for discussion between NGOs, government officials and academics. In this way it gave an opportunity for delegates to work through the different perspectives on girls' education, resulting in a rights-based Declaration that featured explicit references to violence and poverty, and was considerably stronger than might have been expected from a meeting which encompassed so many diverse participants.

One delegate from South Africa stated, *'there was an identifiable shift at the conference, and the Declaration at the end is a vast improvement on the starting foundation. By this I mean that the Declaration represents the human rights/human development approach to gender equity'*.

On the other hand, there remains the question of how far certain groups can ever be reconciled in practice. In particular, it felt at times a huge challenge to connect academic ideas with political realities, and hard to determine which ideas would be

taken up by policymakers, which was a sobering prospect for academics striving to bring about change.

### **Gender equality in education: the challenge of joint endeavour**

The Declaration brings us to the important question of the legacy and impact of the conference. What will be the impact of the Declaration, which is not legally binding and came from a relatively small-scale conference? What leverage is available to actors at national level? To sustain momentum after the conference, time was allocated in the agenda for country delegations to form country-specific action plans to work towards strengthening girls' education at national level, with particular reference to participation and partnership. The aim of the plans was to outline strategies for disseminating the outcomes of the conference, advocacy, convening relevant actors, policy reform, and partnerships at national level.

The prospect of holding a global conference specifically on girls' education, particularly in the build-up to the MDG end-date of 2015 and the global education summit in July, and following shortly after the Beijing +15 activities, was extremely exciting. Here was a unique opportunity to bring together key groups to explore pertinent issues and consider how they might work together more effectively to achieve the goal of gender equality in education. Moreover, the conference succeeded in fostering a wider engagement beyond the conference in Dakar, both through the e-conference, and through the E4 and UNGEI websites, which featured constantly updated information about events at the conference. The country working groups and the formation of country action plans provided a space and a format for making workable and realistic strategies to be taken forwards at national level. UNGEI also had direct contact with many partners in governments, NGOs and academia, which can only serve to strengthen its plans for the next ten years. In the following months, the

Dakar Declaration has the potential to be taken to the upcoming global summit on education to be held in South Africa in July.

On top of this, it was also an important – and unprecedented – opportunity to learn about how greater global participation might work in practice: how different groups on girls' education can collaborate; that the different agendas and working practices and expectations nonetheless can be brought together to work under one goal. In this way the conference acted as a microcosm of the wider challenges and possibilities of creating global partnerships between groups with different perspectives.

The achievement of gender equality in education rests on effective partnerships between all groups involved; the conference placed this issue high on the global agenda and the challenge is now to continue the powerful momentum from the conference at global and national level.

### **How can I be involved in the next steps?**

- subscribe to Equals to learn more about Beyond Access
- sign up for updates on the UNGEI mailing list
- read the full conference report (forthcoming, see UNGEI/E4 website)
- find out whether your country has a plan for girls' education
- follow the One Goal/ Education summit

*Rosie Peppin-Vaughan completed a PhD last year on global campaigns on girls' education, at the University of Cambridge. Recently she has been research fellow on Development Discourses, an ESRC project on higher education and poverty reduction in South Africa, and has also been regional consultant to UNIFEM on a project on Ending Violence against Women and Girls through Education*

*Maira Wilkinson is UNICEF Basic Education and Gender Equality Consultant at the UNGEI Secretariat*



**Pre-conference facilitators meeting: Vanya Berrouet of UNICEF Africa Regional Office, Fatoumata Marega of UNESCO and Aissata Dia of ActionAid**

# e4e: Internet opens conference participation

Tim Neumann, Keshet Bachan and Gorgui Sow

An exciting feature of E4 was the use of the internet to expand access to discussion. An online conference took place from 12 April to 14 May as part of the build-up for the Dakar Conference. Five weeks of in-depth discussions on the E4 website opened up participation in E4 well beyond the 200 delegates who could be accommodated at Dakar. The e-conference came to be known as e4e. As only 15 papers could be selected for presentation at Dakar, e4e allowed for additional high quality contributions, with valuable insights, experiences and ideas given a public platform. The format allowed for exchanges free from the constraints of limited speaking opportunity and time.

16 teams and individuals presented their work in the e-conference, and over 80 participants contributed at least once in the discussion forums, generating a total of more than 25,000 words of text – an indicator of the depth of the discussion. The discussion was fully public, using current web technology to remove as many barriers as possible. While active e-conference participants represented about 5% of all visitors to the e-conference web pages, every day between 100 and 300 people engaged with the contributions. Overall, more than 2,800 people from 140 countries visited the e4e pages, most of them multiple times to follow the progress of the discussion, exemplifying the level of world-wide interest.

The Western Africa, Southern Asia, and Eastern Africa regions were particularly prominent among e4e visitors. The top ten contributing countries outside the UK/US were Senegal, France, Canada, Kenya, India, Burkina Faso, South Africa, Israel, Tanzania, and Peru.

Each of the first four weeks of e4e focused on a separate theme: poverty, quality education, violence, and social policy and health. The themes drew from the situation analysis specially prepared for E4. The fifth was a convergence week, drawing together the discussions in preparation for the Dakar meeting. Each week started with a live one hour keynote session on Elluminate audio-graphical conferencing given by two people from our nine-strong moderator team, who introduced the subject and guided discussions over the week.

The forum questions allowed for an interactive discussion on the multi-layered influences on girls' education. Contributions from a wide range of practitioners provided a rich backdrop for the forum, and responses brought together the latest analyses and thinking. For example, Kate Greany's reporting on her doctoral fieldwork with youth in the slums of Kampala drew discussions going back and forth to tease out commonalities from other experiences and core principles. In the final week of the e-conference participants contributed ideas towards the Dakar Declaration on girls' education and gender equality. The conference moderators were able to take these directly to the discussions in Dakar.

One of the most exciting aspects of the forum was the diversity of groups participating and the variety of perspectives represented. ActionAid, ANCEFA (Africa Network Campaign on Education For All), Community Action for Popular Participation in Nigeria, Plan, and Save Our Youths Campaign in Nigeria joined in discussions on intersecting inequalities in Week 1, expanding on the reasons for inequality and noting the links between poverty and rights. Nnenna Eluwa observed, *'No matter how much they are abused most poor people do not claim their rights'*. Protective factors too were identified: for example, Gorgui Sow noted, *'when mother is well educated they [families] will do everything possible to send girls to school'*.

Plan International structured its organisational responses to e4e by theme, in advance, ensuring contributions week by week from all regions and from experts in programme areas and in decision-making positions. The organisation's 'Because I am a Girl' campaign on girls' rights revolves around the need for recognising girls as a unique cohort, requiring educational data to be collected and analysed by sex and age. e4e introduced the campaign and its unique contribution to a different kind of audience.

e4e highlighted linkages between women's empowerment through literacy post-literacy, girls' education and political, economic and social development. Campaigners from ANCEFA and the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) contributed examples of actions taken by children's and women's groups, challenging violence and rape.

## Keynotes and presenters

Week 1: *Poverty, Intersecting Inequality and Girls' Rights to Education*  
Elaine Unterhalter and Amy North

Week 2: *Quality Education and Gender Equality*  
Sheila Aikman and Elaine Unterhalter

Week 3: *Breaking the Silence: Contesting Violence, Promoting Girls' Education*  
Akanksha Marphatia and Victorine Djitrinou

Week 4: *Contesting Social Policy: Climate Change, Health, AIDS and Girls' Education*  
Relebohile Moletsane and Patricia Ames

One of the key messages taken forward from e4e to the Dakar Conference was a call to improve interactions between all stakeholders involved in girls' education: from all levels of government via teachers, the community, local and international organisations and academia, to the private sector.

**Tim Neumann is a Learning Technology Fellow and Research Officer at the London Knowledge Lab, Institute of Education, University of London, and specialises in online conferencing and web-based learning**

**Keshet Bachan is the Project Coordinator of the critically acclaimed 'Because I am a Girl' Report at Plan International**

**Gorgui Sow is the Regional Coordinator of the Africa Network Campaign on Education For All (ANCEFA). He is a Psychologist and monitoring of learning achievement specialist**



# Increase ways to address poverty, gender equality and schooling, urges the Poverty working group

Elaine Unterhalter

What is poverty? What are its gendered effects on schooling? How can work in the education sector contribute to empowerment for change? Again and again participants in the Poverty working group returned to these questions. Coming from varied backgrounds and countries with different histories facing complex contemporary challenges it was sometimes difficult for the group to do more than begin to open a line of discussion. What we registered was that we needed to know a lot more to do a bit better.

Sharing differences often generated productive insights. The majority of participants were officials in national education departments. The perspectives they exchanged with others coming from different places – a small number of NGOs, a few academics, one teacher union, and some donor organizations – meant together we began to look behind comfortable orthodoxies.

Discussions considered whether poverty was simply lack of money or food, or more complex struggles for survival and confrontations with interconnected forms of inequality. Poverty, many commentators brought out, is clearly an outcome of hierarchies of power. But making definitions is one form of power. 'Who is poor? Is my country poor?' one participant asked. The process of answering took discussion in many directions. There was agreement that poverty was multi-dimensional.

Much discussion illuminated that in socio-economic and political systems dominated by men, poor girls came out worst. They had the lowest chances of entering school, remaining there for any length of time or being taught by good teachers. Women's lack of economic empowerment within households, communities and nationally, affected girls and this was evident in many examples cited of how girls were not enrolled, were excluded for non-payment of fees, and were taken out of school to ensure the household survival. Power inequalities were reflected in the direct and indirect costs of schooling. Fees in many forms, social stigma in not talking a dominant language, health issues or lack of time to give to school work, all act to undermine the poorest girls'

learning. Ethnic, race, class, regional and global inequalities connect to produce poverty. The effects of climate change were seen in floods that closed schools in Peru and long distances girls walked to get water in Mali, both squeezing already limited time in class. Many poor girls in school experienced discrimination through curriculum, the views of teachers and school governance committee members.

Seeing poverty as a human rights violation, as outlined by Angela Melchiorre, pointed to a new approach to empowerment. Programmes that work across social sectors suggest current small initiatives carried big promise for further investigation and action. The Women's Global Education Project in Senegal, outlined by Amy Maglio and Adji Senghor, works on poverty and girls' education across all social sectors – schooling, health, community development and women's literacy. It, like initiatives associated with the work of CARE and VSO, offered important glimpses of how to bring about change.

These initiatives prompted the working group to ask whether government departments, schools, teacher organizations, NGOs or academic research was doing enough to address the multidimensionality of poverty and power. We asked ourselves whether national plans on gender or girls' education addressed poverty holistically. How much do partnerships with trade unions, NGOs, donors, CSOs take up questions of poverty? There are many difficulties in working cross-departmentally and across organisations. Practices are often out of step, concerned with different resources and priorities. Difficulties with communication and trust are



**Facilitators for the Poverty stream: Professor Lebo Moletsane from South Africa in discussion with Dr Malak Zaalouk from the UNGEI Regional Secretariat, Jordan**



**Poverty working group: Adnane Daoudi of CIDA and Grace Chisamya of Care International, Malawi**

exacerbated by unconnected committee structures, tiers of government and monitoring frameworks. Identifying some of the challenges was one small step towards trying to overcome the disconnections they signal.

The group also considered whether existing interventions, such as cash transfers or boarding facilities, reached the poorest girls. In many countries there is inadequate information on whether the poorest were able to secure the enforcement of laws regarding education and gender rights. Many programmes that look primarily at school provision leave issues of gender and poverty inequalities untouched.

In charting ways forward the group focussed on the need for more time to listen and refine ideas; this required research, reflection, critique and forms of engaged action. There is a great need to understand a wide range of different contexts of poverty and for the disaggregation of data to take account of gender and poverty. The need to make 'specific solutions for specific problems', to give more to the poorest girls and to open up participatory spaces for discussion of poverty, inequality and violence were endorsed as important moves in creating and sustaining education for empowerment.

**Elaine Unterhalter is Professor of Education and International Development at the Institute of Education, University of London**

**The Poverty stream facilitation team at E4 included, Lebo Moletsane, Amy North, May Rihani and Malak Zaalouk. Lucy Hatfield and Tara Knies Fraiture were the rapporteurs.**

**The eight papers presented in the Poverty stream can be found at <http://www.e4conference.org/dakar/poverty>**

# Break the silence to contest violence and promote girls education, says Violence working group

Akanksha A. Marphatia and Victorine Kemonou Djitrinou

A 'culture of silence' surrounds violence against women and girls. Social norms and practices often accept or maintain such violence. The gender-based violence stream of the E4 conference advocated sustained dialogue between civil society, government and academics and encouraged greater collaboration around initiatives linking research, policy and practice.

Studies in Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Democratic Republic of Congo highlighted the prevalence of gender-based violence and its significance for girls' access to, retention, and success in education. But policy makers and practitioners are often unaware of this research. For example, legal and constitutional frameworks on violence against women do not always lead to improving girls' success in schools. To combat violence, mechanisms on reporting and penalising perpetrators need to be strengthened, and increased access to support services for survivors, such as counselling and free legal services, are required.

Participants in this working group came from Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Nigeria, Mali, Malawi, Pakistan, Portugal, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, UK, Yemen and Zimbabwe. They represented a range of agencies, from the UN to Government education officials, civil society and academia. They observed that while more information is now available on gender-based violence, development of effective strategies has been slow. Few genuine prevention and/or protection mechanisms are available (or known internationally) to effectively address gender-based violence in the school, home, the street, or in the compound.

## Messages from research

Eight papers presented current research, programmes and strategies. Laetitia Antonowicz and colleagues noted the lack of clarity and agreement concerning what constitutes violence, a vocabulary to describe violations which trivialises the exploitation of women further supports the 'culture of silence'. International targets measuring performance on Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) also do not include an indicator on gender violence. Jenny Parkes and Fatuma Chege pointed out that an act of physical punishment might be seen as a human rights abuse in one

context but in another it is upheld as a means to keep order and protect girls.

A number of authors reporting small-scale and baseline studies on education, child rights and women's rights focused on the frequency of acts of violence, identifying perpetrators (often male students and teachers), taboos and sexual violence. These challenge the notion of schools as 'safe havens'. Schools can be seen as social spaces in which power relations of domination and discrimination are practised. The working group acknowledged a need for larger qualitative studies that address notions of masculinity, femininity, sexuality and disability that normalize violence and discrimination, homophobia, gender inequalities, and their relationship to youth experiences in urban settings.

## Gender and power dynamics that fuel violence

Whilst recognising that violence against women is rooted in wider structural gender inequalities and power dynamics, the group considered how different contexts affect women's experiences. Seema Vyas and colleagues' study in Tanzania found that intimate partner violence is higher when men have few(er) economic resources and when women have higher education levels than their partners. Similarly, Madeleine Arnot and Georgina Oduro highlighted how the notion of sexuality/sexual violence is redefined in the overcrowded, lawless slums of Accra, Nairobi and Cape Town, where powerless township girls sell their bodies for survival and to pay for basic needs or school materials and fees. In Zimbabwe, Lucy Lake and colleagues found that training mothers on issues of child abuse and counselling skills was effective in supporting vulnerable children against violence in school, and also raising the status of mothers who, through participating in women's groups and income-generating projects, were able to redefine traditional power structures.

## Recommendations

After three days of discussions the group was strongly of the view that it is not possible to address girls' education without tackling the question of violence against girls. We must be both critical and ambitious and move beyond simply adapting strategies to challenging gender inequality and unequal power dynamics. We must recognise that participation is also about power, and care must be taken to ensure the dominant voice



Facilitators Victorine Djitrinou and Akanksha Marphatia in discussion at a Violence working group session

does not control the message or represent diverse groups. The group therefore recommends that strategies include:

- harmonising the efforts of different constituents including the media to challenge unequal gender and power dynamics through prevention, support and justice-oriented activities
- ensuring initiatives respond to the constraints and challenges uncovered by research and that efforts are taken to systematically monitor impact to better understand what works and how
- meaningful participation, especially of girls, in identifying problems and solutions, facilitated through a child-friendly and rights-based approach
- contextualized interventions that take into account vulnerable children in general and girls in particular
- initiatives to ensure that violence and human rights are addressed in the school curriculum and during teacher training so school staff, students and unions are made aware of how to counter violations, support girls and bring perpetrators to justice
- enacting inter-sectoral policies and laws that challenge the legacy of gender inequalities and hold perpetrators to account, as well as monitoring by civil society to ensure proactive measures respond to reality, and adequate financing is committed to effectively implementing them.

*Akanksha A. Marphatia is the Head (Acting) of International Education at ActionAid International and Victorine Djitrinou is the International Education Advocacy and Campaign Coordinator at ActionAid International*

*The Gender Violence stream facilitation team at E4 included Fatoumata Marega, Lucy Lake, Aissata Dia and Iseult Kestelyn. Charlotte Nussey and Wilma Emanuel Randle were the rapporteurs.*

*The eight papers presented in the Violence stream can be found at <http://www.e4conference.org/dakar/violence>*

# Quality Education cannot ignore gender equality, warns Quality working group

Sheila Aikman

The 'Quality Education' stream at the E4 conference asked, 'What has changed in terms of our understandings and our practice in schools for achieving greater equality and empowerment for girls?' While there has been a rapid global expansion in girls' enrolment in schooling since 2000, dropouts and repetition rates remain high. The MDGs goals set in 2000 for gender parity, measured through exam scores and years of schooling and compared across countries, regions and the globe, have been found to be limited and inadequate in terms of understanding what the value of formal education is for girls, how it develops their capabilities and how it engenders empowerment. The Quality stream was concerned with not only understanding what has been achieved since 2000 but to lay out a new agenda for the coming years to make schooling and learning an empowering experience for girls.

The Quality stream comprised a Working Group of some 70 educationalists drawing from practitioners, researchers and policy makers who worked over three days to analyse and examine evidence from research and practice. They engaged with the issues of the E4 conference through four broad objectives. First, to *expand the notion of quality education beyond parity*: this called for an understanding of quality that recognises how schools are embedded in their broader political, social and economic contexts, contexts which may deny rights to girls and undermine their experience of a quality education which has value for their lives beyond school. Second, to *unpack and examine issues of power, and participation* and recognise relations and power dynamics which silence and marginalise girls and women. Third, to *be aware of the ways in which multiple types of inequalities intersect and compound each other*; and fourth, to *examine how we could work together in partnerships, across sectors*.

Important to a new agenda for quality education for gender equality is the importance of meeting girls' and women's needs for and expectations of a quality education through ensuring an environment that is empowering and enabling, an education that is relevant and meaningful and which operates on the basis of

democratic principles. The Working Group raised questions about the importance of understanding transitions in girls' educational lives, from not only primary to secondary school but also from school to work, and the need to interrogate the quality and role of private education. Teacher quality and quality teachers was identified as of paramount importance, including issues of teacher retention and recruitment, and also questioning teachers' values and empowerment. It was deemed unacceptable that curricula should be gender 'blind' – and by extension that curriculum developers should be 'blind' to the gendered nature of knowledge and pedagogies. Participants acknowledged too that girls' and women's inequality is often compounded by other inequalities based on, for example, ethnicity, language, religion and/or disability, and that inequalities were intersecting and needed multiple and intersecting strategies to tackle them (paper by Sheila Aikman and Nitya Rao).

Conference papers were presented which offered contextualised insights in these areas of quality education. For example Joshua Muskin and colleagues' paper on scholarships and lodgings for girls spoke to the theme of enabling environment; Bridget McElroy and colleagues' paper on teacher training raised questions in the Senegal context linked to relevance and meaningfulness of education; while the paper by Rebecca Ingram and colleagues offered valuable

insights into school governance and issues of democratic processes.

As the Working Group progressed it was noted that strategies needed to be alert to three overarching themes and processes:

- the importance of understanding inequality in relation to context and history;
- the continuous nature of change framed by different degrees of interconnectedness between schools and their local, national and global societies; and
- the complexity of the challenge for quality education for gender equality calls for working in collaboration and partnership – both vertically and horizontally – as the paper by Dora Amoah-Bentil and colleagues on working in partnership to address gender inequalities in education highlighted.

The Working Group dedicated time to prioritising strategies that they felt had the potential to empower and transform girls' education now. They agreed that gender equality has to be seen as at the heart of all dimensions of quality education and not an 'add-on' or second level consideration after 'access' has been achieved. In this way it can be transformative and empowering for girls – and for boys. But to achieve this, the quality of education offered in schools must be concerned not only with inputs and outputs but with processes. Such a challenging agenda demands a collaborative approach with the active participation of girls and women, working together with boys and men in partnership. Partnerships, it was agreed, is vital for achieving gender equality as an outcome through a process in which gender equality is inherent. Based on these premises, then, the Working Group for the Quality stream concluded that strategies for gender equality must start with transforming the quality of teachers, the local school environment, and educational institutions.

**Sheila Aikman is a Senior Lecturer in Education and Development at the University of East Anglia, UK**

**The Quality Education and Gender Equality stream facilitation team at E4 included Maki Hayashikawa, Raka Rashid, Patricia Ames and Rosie Peppin-Vaughan. Sandra Zerbo and Saip Sy were the rapporteurs**

**The papers presented in this stream can be found at <http://www.e4conference.org/dakar/quality>**



**Facilitator Raka Rashid speaking at a Quality working group session**

# Making E4 happen

## Donors hold a key to supporting girls' access to school

An interview with Afaf Fuad Makki, Director of Girls' Education in Yemen

### Setungoane Letsatsi

The UNGEI E4 conference called upon many voices to engage in issues around engendering empowerment: education and equality. These are issues that hardly have a public space in some countries, and the Republic of Yemen, one of the poorest countries in the Arab region, is one of these. Perhaps because of its geographical location in the south-western tip of the Arabian peninsula, Yemen does not get much press coverage in other countries regarding its education and gender equality issues. This conference opened up space for Yemeni delegates to express their views. They stressed the importance to pave a way forward to increase awareness of the need for girls to be in schools, to access quality education without being marginalised because of their gender, and to successfully complete their education.

The Director of Girls' Education in Yemen, Afaf Fuad Makki, gave me a brief interview at E4, where she talked about her work and about messages she was taking away from the conference. She said that her work centres on taking care of girls' education, a significantly challenging responsibility in a country where girls' education is not perceived as particularly important. Some of the obstacles that force girls to drop out of schools before completion include poverty, early arranged marriages, and disengagement between local community and government on the significance of girls' education. One of the biggest challenges in her work currently, as she puts it is that, *'we have young girls who are forced into early traditional marriages from as young as 10 or 11 years old and they become mothers. These are children who should be in school but because of their marriage they drop out of school during their 4th or 5th grade.'*

Afaf's interest in working with girls' education was influenced by her previous work as a teacher where she had come to realise the importance of training more teachers to recognise a specific need for girls' education. This subsequently drove her to work for the improvement of girls' education in Yemen. In her present position Afaf's prime role is not only to enable girls to go school but also to ensure that girls stay



Director of Girls' Education Afaf Fuad Makki with Mohammed Al-Ebbi, Chief of UNICEF Field Office in Aden, at a plenary session

in school. Therefore contracting teachers and providing them with training on gender-awareness in teaching approaches to encourage both boys and girls to remain in school until they complete basic education has been a key part of what she does. She also pointed out that an important aspect of her work is to constantly refer to reports from organisations such as UNICEF to ensure that her work is aligned with global education perspectives. UNICEF had reported access to education as one of the biggest challenges facing children in Yemen today; Afaf was concerned to learn that 'nearly half of primary school age girls do not go to school', a problem which she hopes to have addressed in the near future. However, Afaf is tasked with a challenging role as there are insufficient funds to support teacher training programmes.

Afaf believes that increased donor funding would go a long way in sustaining the teacher training programme, and her department has had some success in attracting funding. A four year project funded by the Japanese government based in six of the 23 districts in the country, which ended in 2008, saw an increase in enrolment of girls from 40% to 85%. Following from the huge success of this project, the Ministry of Girls' Education

convinced the Yemeni government to roll out the project to rest of the country.

Afaf had come to E4 with high expectations, and though it had been very energising experience she was a little disappointed that she had not heard more Arab voices and specific Arab issues focused on in the conference. She believes that Africa, which had received good attention, has similar problems to a number of Arab countries and there is much that can be learnt from each other.

One of the important lessons from the conference that Afaf was planning to take home with her was the need to strengthen ties with donor agencies and to work towards a common goal of improving girls' access to quality education. In her closing statement she emphasised the need to work towards a targeted strategy to improve girls' education and outlined her main priorities for the near future: *'We need to strengthen ties with donors in the next five years to have one idea on improving girls' education.'*

**Setungoane Letsatsi is a PhD student at the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa. She also works as a part-time research assistant for the Education Policy Unit in the University.**

# Making E4 happen

## Respect and listening can take gender equality forward

An interview with Loanna Mave, teacher and trainer from Papua New Guinea

Charlotte Nussey

Loanna Mave has worked in education in Papua New Guinea for the past twenty years. She came to the E4 conference in her role as a teacher trainer within one of the nine departments of the Ministry of Education; in her words she was 'born' to education.

Papua New Guinea is a group of islands in the South Pacific, with a population of approximately 6 million people. Loanna joined the conference's Poverty stream; approximately 35% of the population of Papua New Guinea are below the poverty line, and 85% rely on subsistence farming for their livelihood. Poverty seems to affect both genders, but in different ways. Girls tend to stay at home to help with domestic chores, while boys will go out and fish. 'But', Loanna said, smiling as she reflected on her experience as a teacher, 'they don't let this affect their homework!' Poverty and remoteness mean providing for education for all children is difficult. Very recently, in her role within the Ministry, Loanna travelled to the remote island district of Daru to monitor schools. Midway through the year all the textbooks ordered for the schools were still in the District Office. It was only with the help of the Ministry that these books could be delivered to the schools

The conference had given Loanna space to reflect more deeply on how poverty and gender can affect educational outcomes. She said that the complex relationship between poverty and education was, for her, a 'new idea' and something that 'we are still trying to work out.' One of the lessons that she was determined to take back to her Ministry was the need to develop a cross-sectoral approach to health (particularly nutrition) and education. But she reflected ruefully, 'I do not think I fully understand poverty.' This was a challenge she seemed willing to face, and the presentations and discussions of her stream in the Conference had given her vital tools to help her do so.

My discussion with Loanna highlighted some of the ways in which different understandings of gender can operate, producing contradictions and contestations. Loanna's initial presentation of equality in Papua New

Guinea was positive. She gave the example of 'successful schools' she had monitored, half were managed by women. But she jokingly reflected that her experience was often the opposite of what might be expected, and that in many instances 'girls are stronger than boys! They are the ones doing the bullying!' Some of this strength she attributed to the social structures of Papua New Guinea, where both patrilineal and matrilineal societies exist, and all members of society participate in decisions.

Loanna provided me with a government policy document, entitled 'Gender Equity in Education Policy'; she said that it was very useful because it 'gives you a push', and reminds those working in education that they must not lose sight of gender issues. But she admitted that there had been issues when policy language stressed the importance of 'girls' education.' She told me that during a teacher training programme aimed at only female teachers, men had deliberately turned up. For gender equity to work in Papua New Guinea it was clear that men needed to be involved too. I was unsure as I listened whether this was because men still dominate the discourse, or whether Loanna was picking up on a point that had been stressed within the Violence stream that I attended: for gender relations and power hierarchies to be truly transformed we need to involve boys as well as girls, men as well as women.

The moment in the interview which I found the most illustrative was when I asked Loanna to tell me a story that had informed her experience of gender relations. She smiled, and clearly enjoyed reflecting on past experience. As an experienced teacher she had been given a difficult class, where many of the pupils, who should have been doing extremely well, seemed to be getting very low grades. At times the atmosphere in the classroom was negative, and the boys and girls did not often mix with each other. This all changed when some of the girls noticed that some of the boys, who they had not realised were from much poorer families, were not eating lunch. Instead of drawing attention to it, the girls decided to throw a party and brought in food. Loanna said that this was the turning point in relationships within the class, and that after that the girls went to support the boys playing sport. At the end of the year, all of the class got significantly better grades. Earlier Loanna had told me that respect and listening is 'the Papua New Guinea way'. The message of this story, of the importance of listening and mutual respect, was a simple, but very powerful one.

***Charlotte Nussey worked as a rapporteur and research intern at the E4 Conference for the Beyond Access team, through the Institute of Education. She is in her second year of studying for a Masters in Education and International Development.***



Loanna Mave being interviewed at E4 by Charlotte Nussey

# A global travesty of gender inequality and children out of school: Using football to campaign for 1GOAL

Amy North

1GOAL is an innovative campaign seizing the power of football to ensure that education for all is a lasting impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, which, for the first time ever, is being held in Africa, a continent with more than its fair share of out-of-school children.

Launched by the Global Campaign for Education, 1GOAL has brought together footballers, fans, charities, corporations and individuals to use the World Cup as a focus for lobbying for education for all. The campaign has captured unprecedented support and political will across the world: it is supported by the football world and its governing body, FIFA, as well as a multitude of top global football stars, celebrities and world leaders. At the time of writing, 12,430,853 people around the world had joined 1GOAL.

The 2010 FIFA World Cup is the world's biggest single sporting event, watched by over half the world, as millions come together to share the passion of football. 1GOAL seeks to harness this passion to catalyse the action needed to make education for all a reality. 1GOAL has developed a host of different activities and communications initiatives which enable campaigners around the world to take action and raise their voices collectively. It is using blogs, facebook and twitter to keep supporters updated on the campaign actions and progress – and the World Cup matches. During Global Action Week in April thousands took part in the 1GOAL Lesson for All with the theme 'financing quality public education: a right for all'.

A key moment in the 1GOAL campaign will be the 1GOAL Education Summit,

which will take place in Pretoria on July 11th, with the commitment of South African President Jacob Zuma and FIFA President Sepp Blatter. This will be the first time ever that a political summit is hosted alongside a major international sporting event. The summit in Pretoria will offer world leaders the chance to draw up a roadmap to ensure that every child is in school by the time the 2014 FIFA World Cup takes place in Brazil. At a press conference in Pretoria, President Zuma said:

***For us education has to be the most important spin off. As government we plan to host a 1GOAL Education campaign summit ... on the sidelines of the semi finals in Cape Town. If implemented successfully, this project will enable 72 million children who do not attend primary school currently to do so. It will be one of the most lasting legacies of the 2010 World Cup and we urge all nations of the world and the private sector internationally to support this campaign.***

1GOAL Co-Founder, Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan, commented:

***The World Cup Education Summit offers those children hope of a reprieve and the chance to go to school before the next World Cup in 2014. There have been many great goals in the history of football, but delivering education for 72 million children around the world could be the greatest goal of all time. This is a historic opportunity to end global poverty. I urge world leaders to go to South Africa and live up to their promises of universal education.***

Girls make up the majority of the world's 72 million out-of-school children, so it is essential that their needs in particular are put at the heart of the 1GOAL summit. The E4 conference in Dakar highlighted the need to pay close attention to the effects of extreme poverty, structural inequality, violence against girls, and the school experience, in order to ensure that girls and boys are able to receive a quality, gender equitable education, which enables them to fulfil their aspirations. The E4 Dakar Declaration has been sent to the 1GOAL education summit, and Alex Kent from Global Campaign for Education and Head of 1GOAL South Africa explained how it will be used:

***1GOAL has mobilised more than 10 million people in over 100 countries that are calling for Education for All to be a lasting legacy from the 2010 World Cup. There has been strong dialogue and a strong call for quality education for all during this sporting tournament. One of the significant moments bringing together voices on education was the E4 conference – signing up to the Dakar Declaration on Accelerating Girls' Education and Gender Equality. The declaration will be delivered alongside millions of other names, and concerns on education to the Heads of State Summit on education that President Zuma is holding on the 11th July.***

***It's a global travesty that in 2010 72 million children are out of school, and most of them are girls. Now is the time for world leaders to listen to our call – and provide Education for All.***

It is crucial that world leaders now take seriously the need for action to support the achievement of the vision outlined in the Dakar Declaration of 'a world in which all girls and boys are empowered through quality education to realize their full potential and contribute to transforming their societies, so that gender equality becomes a reality'.

***To find out more about 1GOAL and how you can get involved go to [www.join1goal.org](http://www.join1goal.org)***

***Amy North is a researcher working on gender, education and international development at the Institute of Education, University of London***

The screenshot shows the 1GOAL website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'TAKE ACTION', 'SUPPORTERS', 'ABOUT 1GOAL', and 'NEWS'. A prominent banner displays '1GOAL EDUCATION FOR ALL' and a counter for '12,430,853' people joined. Below this, a 'JOIN OUR TEAM' button is visible. The main content area features a paragraph about the global education crisis and the impact of 1GOAL. The page also includes a '1GOAL STORE' section and a 'Why join 1GOAL?' section.

# Declaration reviews the past to try to make a better future

Elaine Unterhalter

The Dakar Declaration on Girls' Education and Gender Equality was adopted by delegates at the E4 conference after weeks of intensive discussion. The idea that the conference might adopt a Declaration crystallised as the e-conference got under way and the level of interest in E4 around the world became evident. The process of reviewing the gender and education component of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Beijing Declaration for the Beijing +15 and Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) discussions had indicated that there is no substantive international declaration that expresses a vision for girls' education and gender equality. The MDG targets and indicators are very narrow, while elements of the Beijing Platform of Action needed focussing and updating.

Through discussion of the E4 situation analysis in the e-conference a number of areas emerged as particularly salient to any



**Aissatou Sarr Dieng presenting the Declaration in French at the closing session**

declaration. These were the work that had been done over the last ten years, key challenges for the future, and the significance of linking gender equality with a wider notion of social justice. Developing a declaration that could guide advocacy, research and policy was a particular challenge.

At Dakar a Declaration working group met throughout the conference looking at different drafts. Initial drafts were developed from the consultations leading up to Dakar

including points offered by participants in the e-conference. These were negotiated in light of the discussions in the working groups and a number of working drafts of the Declaration emerged. A penultimate draft of the Declaration was discussed in depth by all the working groups on the final morning of the conference. Participants from each group took changes to the text in English and French to the final meetings of the Declaration working group where the final text was agreed. Not everyone's ideas could be incorporated and on some points some participants wanted more depth and others less. Nonetheless the document substantively expressed many of the themes that had been in discussion as part of E4 over many weeks.

In the closing plenary the Declaration was read out in English and French. It stands as a testament of our aspiration for engendering empowerment, education and equality.

## The Dakar Declaration on Accelerating Girls' Education and Gender Equality

We the participants of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative global conference 'Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equality', assembled in Dakar in May 2010, call for urgent action in support of girls' rights to education, gender equality and empowerment opportunities.

The rights of girls and women are guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Discrimination in Education and the Beijing Platform for Action.

In Jomtien in 1990, we established the Education for All Framework; in Dakar in 2000, we strongly endorsed the need for targets for education, especially for girls.

Since then, there has been considerable progress: about 22 million more girls enrolled in primary schools from 1999 to 2007, and gender gaps in primary school enrolments have narrowed in many countries.

Despite the progress that has been made, poor quality of education, extreme poverty, structural inequality and violence against girls continue to jeopardize the achievement of the education- and gender-related Education for All and Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

Powerless and poor girls make up the most disadvantaged group in education. Achieving equity in education will entail putting in place a rights-based empowerment framework that will target the most vulnerable and transform power hierarchies in learning spaces, communities and policy structures in order to give poor and vulnerable girls a voice and ensure that their right to quality education is sustained.

Gender equity is at the centre of transformative, quality education. Attention to the physical, social and academic aspects of multiple learning environments is necessary to enhance opportunities, especially for adolescent girls, and to move beyond basic education. Recognition of teachers as professionals, supported by gender-responsive curricula, is likewise key to ensuring gender equality. Because poverty is both structural and

multidimensional and has differential impacts on girls and women, interventions for girls' education must cover multiple sectors. Education policies, strategies, plans and budgets must all be gender-responsive.

Gender-based violence remains an obstacle to the full achievement of girls' rights to education. We call for effective strategies and for enforcement of legislation and policies to ensure safe and secure learning environments for girls. Protective and innovative learning opportunities must also be created for children and young women affected by HIV and AIDS and for those in armed conflict and emergency situations.

We envision a world in which a special initiative for girls' education is no longer needed – a world in which all girls and boys are empowered through quality education to realize their full potential and contribute to transforming their societies, so that gender equality becomes a reality.

**Dakar, Senegal, 20 May 2010**

# Forthcoming events 2010

<b>7 July-20 July</b>	Online discussion of Gender, Education and Employment (English and French) <a href="http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw55/onlinediscussion.html">http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw55/onlinediscussion.html</a>
<b>11 July</b>	Global Summit on Education, Pretoria, South Africa
<b>18 July</b>	Shanghai International Forum on Lifelong Learning within Expo 2010 Shanghai
<b>19 – 23 July</b>	International Workshop on Gender Training, Canada <a href="http://www.mosaic-net-intl.ca/gender.shtml">http://www.mosaic-net-intl.ca/gender.shtml</a>
<b>9 August</b>	International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
<b>12 August</b>	International Youth Day
<b>30 August-1 September</b>	DPI/NGO conference 'Advance Global Health: Achieve the MDGs', Melbourne, Australia <a href="http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/conference/">http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/conference/</a>
<b>8 September</b>	World Literacy Day
<b>20-22 September</b>	Summit on the Millennium Development Goals, New York
<b>22-24 September</b>	UNESCO World Conference on Early Child Care and Education, Moscow
<b>5 October</b>	World Teachers' Day

## United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)

UNGEI was launched in April 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar by former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan. It is the Education For All (EFA) flagship for girls' education, a partnership that embraces the United Nations system, governments, donor countries, non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector, and communities and families. UNGEI provides stakeholders with a platform for action and galvanizes their efforts to get girls in school.

UNGEI's vision is a world where all girls and boys will have equal access to free, quality education.

UNICEF is the lead agency and Secretariat for UNGEI. A Global Advisory Committee is composed of key partners and members who share in the planning, decision-making, guidance and accountability of UNGEI. At the country level, UNGEI supports country-led development and seeks to influence decision-making and investments to ensure gender equity and equality in national education policies, plans and programmes.



It operates as a mechanism to advance education strategies and the technical capacity to assist countries. UNGEI partners mobilize resources for both targeted project interventions and country programmes as well as large-scale systemic interventions designed to impact on the whole education sector.

**For more information on UNGEI go to [www.ungei.org](http://www.ungei.org)**



## Contact Details

Managing Editors: Elaine Unterhalter  
Sheila Aikman

Beyond Access was set up in January 2003. Its main aims are:

- To contribute to achieving MDG 3 – promoting gender equality and empowering women – by generating and critically examining knowledge and practice regarding gender equality and education
- To provide appropriate resources to share and disseminate for the purpose of influencing the policies of government departments, national and international NGOs and international institutions including UN agencies

Please contact us with any comments or enquiries:

Amy North,  
Beyond Access,  
School of Educational Foundations  
and Policy Studies,  
Institute of Education,  
20 Bedford Way,  
London WC1 OAL

Tel: 0044 20 7911 5405  
Fax: 0044 20 7612 6366  
Email: [a.north@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:a.north@ioe.ac.uk)  
Website: [www.ioe.ac.uk/efps/beyondaccess](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/efps/beyondaccess)  
or [www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/issues/education/gender\\_equality.html](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/issues/education/gender_equality.html)

The views expressed in this newsletter are entirely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the project, their partners or sponsors.

This issue of the Equals Newsletter and the last (issue 25) have been sponsored by the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) to publicise the *Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equality* (E4) Conferences that took place electronically from 12 April-14 May 2010, and face-to-face in Dakar, Senegal, from 17-20 May 2010. The editors for this issue are Amy North, Elaine Unterhalter and Mano Candappa. We gratefully acknowledge the research assistance of Charlotte Nussey and contributions to artwork by Holly McGlynn.