

EDITORIAL

Dear colleagues,

We are happy and proud to share the progress that has been achieved through the Gender at the Centre Initiative in the second half of 2021. Despite the continuing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, GCI has made progress in advancing gender equality in and through education. Many of our GCI partner countries continue to operate under very challenging circumstances, dealing with the pandemic on top of deteriorating security crises, and the harsh effects of climate change. In this context, it is all the more important to ensure that all girls and boys continue learning.

During this period, our collective achievements include regional and national civil society workshops, a Transformative Leadership facilitators training, the launch of the [Gender Equality in Education Snapshot \(GES\) Toolkit](#) and the launch of the [2nd Short Course on Gender Responsive Educational Planning](#). GCI has supported the government of Sierra Leone to develop its new Education Sector Plan, the government of Burkina Faso to develop a gender participatory diagnostic, and the Ministries of Education in Mozambique and Nigeria to develop specialized training on gender-responsive educational planning (GRESP). GCI partners at the country level have worked more closely together and made plans to jointly implement GCI activities in 2022.

In September, we held the very first in-person GRESP workshop since the beginning of the pandemic. Under the leadership of our CSO Consortium, civil society representatives and young feminists from French-speaking GCI countries gathered in Dakar to strengthen their capacities and share experiences in GRESP (video [here](#)). In November, the new Gender and Education Community of Practice (video [here](#)) mobilized in Dakar, as a follow-up to the IIEP university on Gender-Responsive Education Planning.

The Ministries of Education have strengthened their leadership in promoting gender equality. For example, Mozambique has launched a new multisectoral mechanism to address violence against children in schools, and Sierra Leone has adopted a new Radical Inclusion Policy.

UNGEI and IIEP, with your support, have showcased GCI's work at global and regional forums. At the [African Union 3rd Girls Summit](#), we presented the GCI approach and reiterated our plea for greater investment in gender-transformative education. At the [UNFPA-UNICEF Global Youth Roundtable on Accelerating Progress to Eliminate FGM](#), we highlighted the importance of girls' education to end harmful practices and contributed to setting up a global youth coalition to end FGM. These gatherings have been instrumental in establishing linkages between GCI and other initiatives, strengthening our commitment to tackling the complex and interrelated barriers to education faced by girls in particular.

We encourage you to read through this issue's contents, which focus on GCI's results and achievements in the second half of 2021, and draw attention to our planned activities for 2022. We are grateful for everything we have achieved together so far, and will continue to work hard for equal education opportunities for all girls and boys.

Thank you for your commitment, collaboration and solidarity.



Eline Versluys,
GCI Lead, UN Girls' Education
Initiative (UNGEI)



Fabricia Devignes,
Program Manager, International
Institute for Educational Planning
(IIEP-UNESCO)

RESULTS & UPDATES

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

Community of Practice in Gender and Education (CPGE)

- Following the Francophone University on Gender Responsive Educational Planning (November 2020 - February 2021), IIEP-UNESCO welcomed 21 members of the Community of Practice in Gender and Education to Dakar for an in-person workshop (15-19 November).

Short Course on Gender-Responsive Educational Planning in English

- IIEP-UNESCO organized a 9-week online Short Course on Gender Responsive Educational Planning (October-December 2021). Course participants included 52 participants from 20 African countries, working in Ministries of Education (both at central and decentralized level) and in non-governmental and international organizations.

- The Short Course on Gender-Responsive Education Planning is designed for professionals directly involved in educational planning and policymaking. The course focuses on how gender equality is currently addressed in national policies, and practical improvements to be taken forward.

Specialized training on gender-responsive educational planning for the Ministry of Education in Mozambique

- IIEP-UNESCO is working with two Mozambican education planning and gender experts to design tailor-made training materials on gender-responsive educational planning to the MoE.
- The training is designed for 36 persons (25 gender focal points from the Ministry of Education and Human Development, and 11 provincial coordinators).



Photo by IIEP-UNESCO Dakar. Workshop on the IIEP-UNESCO Dakar Community of Practice in Gender and Education (CPGE).

Specialized training on School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) for the Ministry of Education in Mozambique

- UNGEI is working with the Ministry of Education, the UNICEF country office and a gender expert to conduct a mapping of existing prevention and response mechanisms to SRGBV in Mozambique.
- Based on the results of the mapping, a contextualized course on SRGBV will be developed and delivered by UNGEI to MoE staff at central and decentralized levels. The course will be linked to the IIEP-UNESCO training on gender-responsive educational planning above.



Photo by IIEP-UNESCO Dakar. Meeting between the IIEP GCI team, UNESCO office and Her Excellency Carmelita Rita Namashulua, Mozambique's Minister of Education, MINEDH, 11 October 2021

Sierra Leone 2022-2025 Education Sector Plan

- Following the conclusion of Sierra Leone's [Education Sector Analysis \(2020\)](#), which included a chapter devoted specifically to gender, GCI is supporting the government of Sierra Leone to develop its 2022-2026 Education Sector Plan. In this framework, IIEP supports the costing of the ESP with a strong gender dimension. The ESP will be finalized in March 2022.

Participatory Gender Diagnostic (PGD) of the MENAPLN of Burkina Faso

- The PGD activities in Burkina Faso are currently underway. The PGD aims to (1) highlight MENAPLN's good practices in promoting gender equality in and through education, (2) identify areas of gaps and challenges, and (3) make recommendations on the way forward.
- IIEP-UNESCO conducted in-person and online surveys to consult with MENAPLN staff and key education actors in November 2021.



Photo by UNICEF/Tremeau. A learner studies in her classroom in Burkina Faso.

Online training of facilitators on Transformative Leadership for Gender Equality

- UNGEI and Gender at Work implemented a two-day online workshop on Transformative Leadership for Gender Equality. The course supports participants to acquire new leadership skills, build commitment and transform organizational culture for gender equality.
- The training of facilitators helped to build facilitator skills and obtain critical input into the curriculum for the Transformative Leadership Course. The trained facilitators will help lead the country level Transformative Leadership courses, targeting senior Ministry of Education officials in selected GCI countries.



Photo by UNICEF/Dejongh. A learner and her teacher on their first day back at school after the holidays in northern Niger.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

- UNGEI will deliver a training on Transformative Leadership for Gender Equality for senior MoE staff at central and decentralized levels in Nigeria, in coordination with the IIEP training on gender-responsive education planning.
- UNGEI will deliver a regional course on Transformative Leadership for Gender Equality for MoE staff from French speaking GCI countries.
- UNGEI will conduct a SWOT-analysis on mainstreaming gender equality in education sector planning and education grant processes in the 8 GCI countries.
- IIEP (the GCI team, together with the IIEP Research and Development team) is currently developing several projects aimed at clarifying gender equality practices in education, facilitating the understanding of key challenges, and supporting decision-making on gender equality in and through education. The main projects to be developed during 2022 are:
 - Norms and barriers preventing girls' access to and participation in quality education in Sierra Leone.
 - Factors associated with girls' school drop-out and early pregnancies in Mozambique.
 - Gender norms, power dynamics and resistance to change in education management and planning in Burkina Faso.
 - Education and gender equality among displaced populations in Mauritania and Chad.
 - Integrating SRGBV in education information systems: the case of Niger.
 - The political economy of early childhood education (ECE) and gender equity policy linkages.
 - Challenges and opportunities of women in leadership roles in education: analyzing the case of female school principals in sub-Saharan Africa.
 - Young women's unemployment and education.
 - Gender-sensitive policies to address skills mismatch issues.



Photo by IIEP-UNESCO Dakar. Workshop on the IIEP-UNESCO Dakar Community of Practice in Gender and Education (CPGE).



Photo by UNICEF/Diarra. Learners revise and exchange on a lesson regarding menstruation at a school in Mali.

- A GCI policy brief will be developed, with actionable recommendations to governments to mainstream gender equality throughout the education planning process and to develop concrete strategies to promote gender equality in and through education.
- Following the launch of a [literature review on social norms and girls' education in the GCI countries \(phase 1\)](#), UNGEI will release a new policy paper based on the research.
- UNGEI will launch a second phase of the above social norms and girls' education research, focusing on the structural determinants of girls' education in Nigeria and Niger. The research will cover both conflict and non-conflict settings.
- IIEP will support the Ministry of Education in Niger to develop a tool to collect data on school-related gender based violence and improve their education information systems.
- GCI will organize a workshop to disseminate the results of the gender participatory diagnostic in Burkina Faso, and work with the governments of Niger and Mali to carry out gender participatory diagnostic analyses (at programmatic, budgetary and operational levels).
- IIEP-UNESCO will launch its second cohort of the Community of Practice in Gender and Education for the alumni of the Anglophone Short Course on Gender-Responsive Educational Planning.
- IIEP-UNESCO will analyze gender inequalities in the budget process and options for addressing them in Burkina Faso and Niger.
- IIEP will deliver tailored training on gender-responsive education planning in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Niger and Mozambique.



Photo by UNICEF/Dejongh. In Niger, two learners attend class, accompanied by their teacher.



Photo by IIEP-UNESCO Dakar. Workshop on the IIEP-UNESCO Dakar Community of Practice in Gender and Education (CPGE).

RESULTS AND UPDATES

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

Dakar GRESP workshop

- From 27-30 September, FAWE, ANCEFA and UNGEI organized (along with other technical partners) a face-to-face [GRESP workshop](#) in Dakar. The workshop brought together 37 civil society actors and young feminists from 11 French speaking countries in West and Central Africa.
- The aim of the regional GRESP workshop was to strengthen civil society's capacity to support governments in building truly gender-responsive education systems.
- The workshop supported participants to strengthen their competencies in gender analysis, strategy development, gender-responsive budgeting and monitoring. [Young feminists shared their experiences](#) and expressed ideas on how to make education systems more equitable.
- All participants gained skills to advocate for gender-responsive education sector planning and to work with education partners to promote gender equality in education.

Workshop testimonials:

"I have learned many things. We learned about the importance of being involved in these issues as young people. So it will be useful for me. We also had new data which will enable improved advocacy, to take this fight to a new level, also to discuss with our relevant authorities."

Fatou Warkha Sambe, journalist and feminist activist, Plan Senegal

"We built on knowledge, intellect and heart to take action, and it's all of this brought together that made the workshop a success. [The participants] met each other, they had the opportunity to link what they had learned from people with the topic itself, and they learned the necessary technical knowledge."

Houraye Mamadou Anne, Regional Director FAWE-WASRO



Photo by UNGEI GCI. A young feminist activist takes the floor during the GRESP workshop in Dakar.



Photo by UNGEI GCI. A young feminist activist takes the floor during the GRESP workshop in Dakar.

GCI regional workshop organized by the CSO consortium

- Following the Francophone GRESP workshop, several strategic aspects of the training were further developed in a GCI regional workshop organized by the CSO Consortium for a subgroup of participants from 1-2 October 2021.
- During this workshop, and based on the new knowledge they acquired from the GRESP workshop, consortium partners shared lessons learnt from GCI pilot projects and developed action plans for GCI activities in 2022.

Country initiatives and capacity building activities led by the CSO consortium

- The CSO consortium (ANCEFA, FAWE and PLAN) and UNGEI met for a learning session to share experiences and lessons learnt during the pilot projects that were implemented in the first half of 2021.

Local Education Groups (LEGs) Annual Reports

- UNGEI presented GCI to LEGs in 7 GCI countries and started the development of LEG Annual Reports. The reports will give an overview of LEG members' activities to promote gender equality in education and will allow LEGs to identify potential synergies, detect gaps, and create opportunities for exchange.



Photos by GCI CSO Consortium. Left: CSO National Training in Sierra Leone. Right: Gender Training and Consultation with Young People in Sierra Leone.



Photos by GCI CSO Consortium. COVID-19 message development activity with youth in Sierra Leone.



Photo by UNGEI GCI. Workshop participants during an activity at the GRESP workshop in Dakar.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

- The CSO consortium has developed action plans for 2022 in all 8 GCI countries. Activities include policy dialogue, community engagement and capacity building. CSOs will be focusing on supporting gender-responsive education sector planning, fostering cross-sectoral collaboration and helping communities to transform gender norms.
- A learning series will be organized to allow CSOs from different GCI countries to share experiences, lessons learnt and innovative approaches to promoting gender equality in education.
- UNGEI will support LEGs in selected GCI countries to conduct a rapid assessment of gender equality in and through education using the GES Toolkit, and to organize Country Dialogues to discuss the assessment results.



Photo by UNICEF/Dejongh. Learners at an alternative education centre in southern Niger.

NEWS

- We have welcomed a new member to the GCI team! Cécile Giraud is a new IIEP Associate Gender-Sensitive Education Policy Analyst, based in Dakar.
- Launch of the new IIEP-UNESCO Dakar Office for Africa website, with a dedicated space for GCI. [Link here](#).
- Mozambique has launched a new multisectoral mechanism for the prevention, reporting, referral and response to violence against children in schools.
- The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education in Sierra Leone has adopted a new Radical Inclusion Policy.
- The [3rd AU Summit was held in Niamey, Niger](#) from 16 - 18 November 2021.
- The next GCI Alliance Board meeting is planned for March 2022.



Photo by UNICEF/Pouget. A learner participates in a mathematics class at a Koranic school in M'berra refugee camp, Mauritania.

EVENTS

Looking back on past events

- [When schools shut: Gendered impacts of COVID-19 school closure, Webinar for East and Southern Africa](#), UNESCO, GPE, FAWE, African Union's International Centre for Girls' and Women's Education in Africa, screened in English.
- [Inaugural Missing education data Summit: Gender data thematic session](#), NORRAG, AGEE
- Panel event during the [3rd AU Girls' Summit: "Harnessing Girls' Education for the Africa We Want"](#).
- [UNFPA-UNICEF Global Youth Roundtable on Accelerating Progress to Eliminate FGM](#), UNICEF, UNFPA, UNGEI, Spotlight Initiative.



Graphic by UNFPA. UNICEF-UNFPA Global Youth Roundtable Event.

RESOURCES & PUBLICATIONS

Guidance, briefs and tools

- UNGEI and GPE launched the [Gender Equality in Education Snapshot \(GES\) Toolkit](#).
- The toolkit supports education stakeholders to conduct a rapid assessment of gender equality in and through education in their country. The toolkit will be piloted by Local Education Groups in selected GCI countries.

Blogs and news

- [IIEP-UNESCO Dakar's Community of Practice in Gender and Education meets in Senegal](#), IIEP-UNESCO. Available in [English](#) and [French](#). Watch video interviews with CPGE members [Dakou](#), [Betty](#) and [Halidou](#).
- [GRESA Workshop: Young African Feminists Leading the Way Towards Gender Equality in Education](#), UNGEI. Available in [English](#) and [French](#).
- [Civil society stepping in to contribute planning for gender-responsive education systems](#), ANCEFA, FAWE, UNGEI, GPE. Available in [English](#) and [French](#).



Photo by UNICEF/Knowles-Coursin. Secondary-aged learners outside their school in Enugu state, Nigeria.

PRIORITÉ À L'ÉGALITÉ
GENDER AT THE CENTRE

For more information, please do not hesitate to reach out to gdiamond@ungei.org and c.giraud@iiep.unesco.org.

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

[Gender at the Centre Initiative \(IIEP-UNESCO Dakar\)](#)