

Editorial

Dear friends,

The second half of 2022 has been quite energetic at the Gender at the Centre Initiative. In this newsletter, we are happy to share the results that have been achieved through GCI between July and December 2022.

Against the background of a global climate crisis and the worldwide impact of the war in Ukraine, many GCI countries have been particularly challenged. The Sahel crisis has deteriorated the living circumstances for millions of people and led to disturbing levels of gender discrimination and violence, with the abduction of more than 50 women in Northern Burkina Faso as the latest distressing example. Despite these challenges, GCI countries have continued to show commitment and perseverance to advancing gender equality in and through education.

In September, GCI seized the opportunity to influence world leaders at the UN Transforming Education Summit in New York. During a high-level panel with the Minister of Education of Niger and a [meeting with feminist activists](#) from GCI and other countries, GCI called for action to make education gender-transformative.

GCI has also continued to work with Ministries of Education (MoE) to build both political will and technical capacity to advance gender equality. In October, 19 senior MoE leaders from 5 French speaking GCI countries came together in Dakar to strengthen their commitment and leadership for gender-transformative education. Several of them proudly [declared themselves feminist leaders](#) at the end of the meeting! 30 senior MoE from 16 African countries gathered in Dakar in the framework of the GCI Community of Practice in Gender and Education to continue to develop their professional expertise on gender-responsive planning. GCI continued its work in support of the governments of Mauritania and Niger in developing gender-responsive sector analysis and education reforms, gender institutional diagnostics and gender-responsive budget analysis. In November, 30 decision-makers, education and gender desk officers were trained in Nigeria on the Domestication of the National Policy on Gender and

Education and 50 education officials from Nigeria were gathered in Dakar to be trained on gender-responsive education planning.

GCI has strengthened its collaboration with the Local Education Groups as a key actor in the education space. In Mali and Chad GCI supported the LEGs to conduct rapid assessments of gender equality in education, using the [GES Toolkit](#). Local Education Groups (LEGs) members reported being more aware of gender discrimination in education and committed to using the data in their education work.

GCI's Civil Society Consortium reached around 350 community members and civil society actors with capacity building and community dialogue on issues such as advocacy for gender equality, school-related gender-based violence and sexuality education. The consortium has started a learning series to share good practices and experiences with colleagues across the 8 GCI countries.

GCI also continued its work on advocacy, community outreach, research and gender analysis. We encourage you to take some time to read through this issue's contents, which focuses on GCI's results and achievements in the second half of 2022 and draws attention to our planned activities for the beginning of 2023.

We are grateful for everything we have achieved together so far. As we start reflecting on the future of GCI, we are excited to continue to partner to advance gender equality in and through education.

Thank you for your energy, commitment 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.

Workshop on Transformative Leadership for Gender Equality for Francophone GCI countries



From November 14 to 17, 2022 UNGEI, in partnership with UNICEF and Gender at Work, organized a [workshop on Transformative Leadership for Gender Equality in Education](#) in Dakar, Senegal. 19 senior officials from the education and finance and planning ministries of the 5 French-speaking GCI countries (Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad) participated in the workshop. The workshop offered an opportunity for participants to reflect on their personal commitment to gender equality and grow their leadership skills to become effective gender champions. During the workshop country delegations strengthened cross-sectoral collaboration and developed action plans to champion gender equality in education.

“I now have my heart and brain tied together to take into account gender equality in national plans and policies in various sectors of governance in Niger.”

Abdou Moumouni Aboubacar, Finance and Statistics Expert, Ministry of Education Niger.

GCI MoEs and partners call for action at Transforming Education Summit

In September 2022, at the Transforming Education Summit in New York, UNGEI co-hosted the side event ‘Gender Transformative Education: From Rhetoric to Action’ in partnership with the governments of Niger, El Salvador, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), Plan International and Transform Education. Niger Minister of Education, Ibrahim Natatou, shared good practices from GCI and called for action on gender equality in and through education, including through mechanisms like the Freetown Manifesto.

Country-level MoE support

In **Chad**, the Ministry of National Education and Civic Promotion (MENPC)’s Department for the Development of Girls’ Education and Gender Promotion (DDEFPG) organized - with the technical support of IIEP-UNESCO Dakar- a training and policy dialogue workshop on the integration of gender equality into public education policies from 5 to 8 September 2022. With 48 participants from different departments of the Ministry, as well as from partner organizations and civil society organizations, the workshop made it possible to assess the situation of gender inequalities in education in Chad, and to identify possible actions to address them. The discussions and group work allowed many proposals to emerge and recommendations to be formulated.



Panel Members at the TES side event on Gender-Transformative Education.



IIEP training on gender-responsive educational planning in N'Djaména, Chad, September 2022

In November 2022, IIEP UNESCO Dakar held a five-day course for 35 education officials from the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) and the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MTHE) in **Sierra Leone**. The training, requested by the MBSSE, focused on gender-responsive education planning and statistics and strengthened the capacities of education officers to understand and explain the issues of gender equality in and through education, to identify and analyze the factors that lead to gender disparities in education and understand the links between gender norms and gender disparities in education, and to identify relevant indicators (quantitative and qualitative) and data sources, and be able to use them for analysis.

In October 2022 an IIEP mission to **Niger** consolidated the mobilization of managers and staff to facilitate data collection for two studies: a participatory gender diagnosis to promote organizational learning in order to better integrate the gender dimension into all activities of the Ministry of Education; and a study on the gender sensitivity of the education budget. Over the past few months, more than 70 interviews were conducted with Ministry of Education managers and agents, both at the central and decentralized levels, as well as a dozen interviews with Ministry partners. Data analysis will continue in 2023 and will be completed by the organization of participatory workshops in Niamey.

In **Mauritania**, after several data collection missions to Nouakchott, UNESCO and IIEP organized a training workshop on gender responsive education analysis methodology for the national team in Nouadhibou from September 13 to 16, 2022. Later on, in October, IIEP conducted a new mission to finalize the financial simulation model and to support the national team in drafting the education policy letter, two tools that materialize the Mauritanian government's main priorities in education while emphasizing gender equality and inclusion.

From the 21st to the 25th November 2022, IIEP-UNESCO delivered a tailor-made training workshop in Keffi, **Nigeria**, to a group of 30 decision-makers, education and gender desk officers coming from three states (Jigawa, Kaduna and Kwara) and the federal administration, on the Domestication of the National Policy in Gender and Education (NPGE). Approved in 2021, the NPGE defines some implementation guidelines that need to be integrated into policies and programmes implemented by state and local education authorities. The Keffi workshop pursued the objective of strengthening the capacity of representatives from the three states and the Federal Ministry of Education to integrate into their corresponding annual action plans activities allowing for the implementation of the NPGE. It completed a series of similar workshops initiated by other development partners in Nigeria, namely Unicef, FCDO and the World Bank, thereby allowing the FME to offer all Nigerian states this capacity development opportunity. This workshop fits within IIEP-UNESCO's technical support strategy in Nigeria, which aims to enhance the country's capacity to mainstream gender into the planning and management of the Nigerian education system.

In October 2022, IIEP UNESCO Dakar held a short education planning and management course for 50 education officials from **Nigeria**. This training was requested by Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Education, to strengthen the capacities of education officers working in the state administrations in the analysis, planning, and management of the education sector. The training was implemented in a hybrid mode, including a two-week residential workshop in Dakar (3-14 October 2022). Gender was mainstreamed to the training programme, that has been structured in three modules: Use of administrative and household data for education sector planning; Education sector planning; and Microplanning (with a focus on supply of schools, especially junior secondary). Through a hands-on approach, participants had the opportunity to improve the gender responsiveness of the action plans drafted in the framework of the workshop.

The **second francophone edition of the short-course on gender-responsive educational planning** ran online from October to the end of December 2022. More than 40 education professionals across 16 francophone African countries took part in it and were trained by IIEP on gender inequalities in and through education, gender-responsive education sector analysis and gender-responsive sector planning.

The **2022 anglophone Community of Practice on Gender and Education** residential workshop, organized by IIEP, took place in Dakar, Senegal, from October 10th to 14th, 2022. It allowed this group of senior education planners from across Africa, who had already studied online together and engaged online, to network, exchange, and open discussion, but also to build their knowledge and skills in gender-responsive education planning and in a range of relevant thematic strands, and finally, to get ready to apply their new knowledge in their own contexts and to strategize more broadly on how to mobilize their ministries to mainstream gender equality and bring about change. The workshop programme was based on two cross-cutting thematic pillars: 1) advocacy for change, and 2) gender mainstreaming in education policies and programmes.

GCI Ministers invite South East Asian countries to endorse Freetown Manifesto

With the support of UNGEI and GPE, the Ministers of Education from Niger and Sierra Leone invited South



2022 Anglophone edition of the CPGE workshop, Dakar, Senegal, October 2022

East Asian countries to endorse the [Freetown Manifesto for Gender-Transformative Leadership in Education](#). The Ministers' statement was presented at the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting on 13 October 2022 in Hanoi, Vietnam. Several countries expressed interest to sign the Manifesto. UNGEI and GPE will follow up on signatories and explore options to disseminate the Manifesto in other regions.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

- In **Burkina Faso**, IIEP-UNESCO will finalize the Gender-Participatory Diagnostic and publish a policy brief presenting its main conclusions.
- In **Chad**, IIEP-UNESCO will design and offer further gender training to the staff of the Ministry of Education with the support of AFD in the framework of [ALAPAJ](#) programme aiming at improving learning for youth empowerment in Chad.
- In **Sierra Leone**, IIEP-UNESCO will design and offer two in-person courses to the staff of the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, the first on gender and TVET and the second on gender-responsive budgeting
- IIEP will conduct several missions to **Niger** to finalize the collection of data for the participatory gender diagnosis and the study on the gender responsiveness of the education budget. The tool to collect data on school-related gender based violence will be developed together with the MoE and relevant partners
- In early 2023, IIEP-UNESCO will finalize the gender analysis of the education sector in **Mauritania** and begin to support the development of the gender-responsive sector plan. Results of the study on gender dynamics in education in refugee settings in Mauritania will be published early 2023.
- In **Mozambique**, IIEP-UNESCO will design and deliver in-person training to the Ministry of Education and Human Development staff on gender-responsive budgeting and will continue the political dialogue on supporting the Ministry on gender transformative education planning in provinces
- In **Nigeria**, gender desk officers and civil society representatives will continue to be trained and a training manual on gender will be developed with the support of IIEP.

- The IIEP GCI team and the IIEP Research and Development team are currently developing, following the MoE's requests, two studies on factors associated with girls' school drop-out in **Sierra Leone** and **Mozambique**
- IIEP and UNICEF Innocenti will continue to implement the research project " Women in Learning Leadership (WiLL) to unpack women's school management and leadership practices. A research brief on multi-country data analysis based on PASEC 2019 data for 14 francophone countries in sub-Saharan Africa (among which 3 GCI countries, Chad, Burkina Faso and Niger) will be published, seeking to document the association between students' learning outcomes and attending a female-led school. 4 country-

level work in Niger, Chad, Benin and Madagascar will follow with an analysis of national policy and institutional frameworks and analysis of existing data sources (such as EMIS, students' exam results, and other administrative data).4 country papers will be published in 2023. The progress of this very important work on women's empowerment and leadership in schools will be presented during CIES in February 2023 together with UNICEF.

- UNGEI will publish and present the SWOT report on gender mainstreaming in education sector planning in the 8 GCI countries at CIES in February 2023. In March 2023 UNGEI will host a webinar, with Cambridge Education and MoE partners, to present and discuss the findings of the SWOT analysis.

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

With the support of UNGEI, civil society organizations Plan International, ANCEFA and FAWE implemented various capacity building, advocacy and community engagement activities contributing to an enabling environment for gender equality in and through education.

Mauritania: On 26 and 27 December 2022 the Coalition of Mauritanian Organisations for Education (COMEDUC), in collaboration with ANCEFA, organized a workshop in Nouakchott for civil society organizations on gender mainstreaming in public education strategies. The workshop was followed by two days of training on 28 and 29 December on advocacy and communication techniques on girls' education. The two workshops were attended by 60 COMEDUC members, including 24 from the regional coordinations as well as institutional partners. One of the participants produced a [video summary](#) of the workshop.

Mozambique: The GCI Mozambique Consortium, with the support of ANCEFA, organized a training of provincial focal points of the Education For All Movement (MEPT) on policy advocacy in the field of education with a focus on gender equality in education. The training took place on 1 and 2 December 2022 in Maputo. Its objective was to improve understanding and appreciation of gender issues in and through education, as well as to build the capacity of participants to undertake gender-responsive education sector planning and analysis. The training addressed analysis of gender disparities in education, education planning processes, and concrete strategies to advance gender equality in education. It brought together 21 participants, and was designed by a team from Eduardo Mondlane University. Participants highly appreciated the relevance of the training for their daily work.



Clementina Gemo speaking about the role of MEPT Provincial Focal Points in monitoring gender-focused education programs at the Maputo workshop

Participants at the Nouakchott workshop discussing advocacy strategies to mainstream gender equality in public education strategies

Chad: Members of the GCI Chad Consortium, composed by FAWE and the Coalition of Civil Society Organisations for Development in Chad (COSOCIDE-Chad), met for planning sessions on the capacity building workshops to be organized. With technical support and coordination from ANCEFA, the GCI Chad Consortium will organize three capacity building workshops for civil society in January 2023 in N'djamena, Bol and Koumra. The workshops will build capacity on political advocacy for gender equality in education among the leaders of the CSO consortium members, with a specific focus on girls' enrolment and retention in schools, universities and vocational training structures in pilot intervention zones.



A planning session at COSOCIDE-Chad

Sierra Leone: The Education For All (EFA) Sierra Leone coalition, with the support of Plan Sierra Leone, organized a series of activities to promote gender equality in education. From 4 to 8 November 2022 a series of community meetings on gender equality in and through education were held in the Western and Port Loko areas. A total of 148 community members attended, including EFA-SL coalition members and other CSO leaders.



Children Group work on gender norms in Sierra Leone

On 26 November 2022 EFA hosted a day-long engagement session with mothers, female caregivers, and girls at Waterloo (Western Rural Area). In all, 58 people (46 girls and 12 boys) from Waterloo and the surrounding and western areas attended the event. Following a series of talks with school officials on the efficacy of the school referral route, another training for students and pupils on sexuality education and life skills was organized on October 28, 2022, in Freetown.

A total of 27 student leaders (7 male and 20 female) attended the training. The project also provided support to guidance counselors and focal point teachers in 10 schools on school-related gender-based violence and strengthening the reporting pathways.

“I have always thought that whatever teachers say or do to us, they have the right to do so and we should not report them to the head of the school. But with the information I have gotten from this session, I am now confident to report any teacher through the suggestion box in my school”

A student who attended the session on life skills and SRGBV.



A presentation during the engagement with guidance counselors and focal point teachers in Sierra Leone

“I have moved from the unknown to the known, now I know that teachers have a key role to play to prevent GBV issues in schools and help girls to feel safe and protected in school.”

Nancy Joyce Kamara, Guidance Counselor & Principal, St Raphael School, Sierra Leone.

GCI Social Norms Research Phase 2

UNGEI has partnered with Dalberg to conduct a research on social norms and girls' education in Sierra Leone. The research is a follow-up of the [desk study on girls' education and social norms in the 8 GCI countries](#). The research is aimed at gaining a contextualized understanding of the social determinants of girls' chances to access, complete and thrive in school. Using a girl-led and community-based approach, the research will explore, among other things, the factors that contribute to positive deviances to harmful gender norms, and the impact of local leaders, families and communities in supporting or hindering girls' education. The results of the research will be published in April 2023.

CSO webinar on innovative approaches to advancing gender equality

On 11 November, 2022 UNGEI organized a webinar with GCI CSO partners ANCEFA, Plan and FAWE, aimed at sharing innovations and good practices from the implementation of GCI. This activity is part of a series of learning webinars that UNGEI has set up with the GCI civil society consortium, in order to facilitate exchange and sharing of experiences among CSO partners. 27 persons from 8 countries (Senegal, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Nigeria), working in the field of gender and education at various levels (regional, national) within ANCEFA, FAWE, Plan International attended the webinar. In addition, one representative of Girls Not Brides, an external partner of GCI also participated in the webinar.

Gender Equality in Education Snapshot (GES) Toolkit piloted in Chad & Mali

The Local Education Groups of Chad and Mali, with the support of UNGEI, used the [Gender Equality in Education Snapshot \(GES\) Toolkit](#) to conduct a rapid assessment of gender equality in and through education. The toolkit was developed by UNGEI and GPE to help education planners and practitioners assess the situation of gender equality in education, taking into account the wide set of areas that impact gender equality (education system, gender norms, laws and policies, etc.). UNGEI supported the Ministries of Education in [Chad](#) and [Mali](#) to use the tool and collect and validate relevant gender equality data. [Ministries and UNGEI co-facilitated workshops with the LEG](#) in Chad on 21 July and in Mali on 1 November to discuss the results of the assessments and identify pathways for further analysis and planning. In Chad the assessment results served as a basis to support the committee in charge of developing the new education sector plan. In Mali LEG members used the assessment results to advocate for the acceleration of the implementation of gender-related activities in the PRODECII 2019-2028 five-year education program.

“The data related to gender norms are most striking and indicate the enormity of the problem. But they also indicate priority opportunities for advocacy.”

Beridabaye NDILKODJE, AFD,
Lead of the Local Education Group in Chad



Discussion session on data at the GES workshop in Chad



Discussion session on data at the GES workshop in Mali

“In Mali, the disparities between girls and boys increase as the education level progresses, which demonstrates the need to break down the barriers to gender equality in education.”

N'deye Batio Sène, Gender Technical Advisor,
Ministry of Education Mali

The Global Feminist Coalition for Gender Transformative Education

On the sidelines of the Transforming Education Summit, UNGEI hosted the inaugural [Global Feminist Coalition for Gender Transformative Education](#) on 20 and 21 September 2022, in person in New York and online. The Coalition was a first-of-its-kind coming together of feminist civil society organizations (CSOs) and young activists from 31 countries. These experts deliberated regionally and thematically to develop a set of top shared priorities and [recommendations to Ministers of Education, UN agencies and donors](#). Outcomes of this convening included [stories](#) and key recommendations. 3 GCI countries (Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone) and 10 other sub-Saharan African countries are present in the coalition and will continue to interact with coalition members to share experiences and accelerate action for gender-transformative education.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

- In February 2023 UNGEI will publish the Local Education Group Annual Reports, summarizing LEG member activities to advance gender equality in education in the 8 GCI countries.
- With the support of UNGEI, ANCEFA, Plan and FAWE will organize community engagement, advocacy and capacity building activities in the 8 GCI countries.
- UNGEI will host the second webinar in the learning series on sharing innovations and knowledge from GCI implementation for CSO country teams.
- UNGEI will pilot the GES Toolkit with the Local Education Group in Niger in February 2023. The Toolkit will be piloted in 3 other GCI countries in 2023.
- UNGEI and Plan International will pilot a program on Ending Gender Stereotypes in Schools in Niger, implementing a play-based curriculum to challenge gender stereotypes with children and teachers.
- In the first semester of 2023 IIEP-UNESCO will launch a research project on factors associated with girls' school drop-out in Sierra Leone and Mozambique.

NEWS

- 2 new team members, a Programme Assistant and a Communication Officer, will be joining the UNGEI GCI team in February 2023 and 2 new team members, a senior gender and education specialist and a communication and partnerships specialist will be joining IIEP GCI team in January and March 2023.
- GCI has commissioned an external mid-term review of the GCI program, which started in December 2022. Results will be shared in March 2023.

UPCOMING EVENTS

18-22 February 2023: CIES Annual Conference - Washington DC, USA: presentation of GCI SWOT report and presentation of a policy brief on Women in Learning Leadership.

Mid-March 2023: online webinar on GCI SWOT report

Mid-March 2023: online presentation of preliminary results GCI mid-term review

28-30 March 2023: GCI Alliance Annual Board Meeting - Dakar, Senegal

April 2023: launch research report on social norms and girls' education in Sierra Leone

July 2023: Women Deliver- Kigali, Rwanda: presentation of policy briefs and research on women's empowerment and leadership in schools (WILL) and GCI results

RESOURCES & PUBLICATIONS

Guidance, briefs and tools

- [Preventing School-related Gender-based Violence \(SRGBV\) | UNGEI](#) - Online course on School-Related Gender-Based Violence. The training package was developed by UNGEI and UNESCO and piloted in Mozambique in June 2022.
- [Ending Gender Stereotypes in Classrooms | UNGEI](#) - A briefing note introducing the challenge of harmful gender stereotypes in schools, with background to the Ending Gender Stereotypes programme in Niger, India and Bangladesh and the Ending Gender Stereotypes partner coalition.

Reports and studies

- [Education and Skills for Women's Integration into the Labour Market: A Comparative Analysis of Eight sub-Saharan African Countries](#), IIEP Africa office, October 2022. The paper seeks to shed light on the current challenges faced by the 8 GCI countries in achieving the integration of women into the labour market through education and training. This paper is the basis for reflection on a line of work on gender and skills for GCI Phase 2.
- [Gender Gaps in Education During COVID-19: Data and Evidence | UNGEI](#) - A factsheet that presents a quick summary of data and evidence from developing countries on gender gaps in learning through the COVID-19 pandemic.
- [Gender Equality in Education Snapshot \(GES\) Report Chad | UNGEI](#) - A review of data on gender equality in and through education in Chad, with recommendations from the Local Education Group.
- [Gender Equality in Education Snapshot \(GES\) Report Mali | UNGEI](#) - A review of data on gender equality in and through education in Mali, with recommendations from the Local Education Group.

Blogs and news

- [Expert Voice: Promoting gender equality, moving forward together](#), IIEP Africa office, October 2022
- [Polemag #31 Editorial : We advocate a holistic view of inclusion](#), IIEP Africa office, August 2022
- [Gender Transformative Education: Young feminists taking action | UNGEI](#) - Young feminist activist, Maryjacob Okwuosa of Whisper to Humanity, writes about how she coordinated a capacity strengthening workshop on Gender-Transformative Education with teachers in south-eastern Nigeria.
- ["Girls' rights don't come on a golden platter, we need to keep on fighting for it!" | UNGEI](#) - On Day of the African Child, UNGEI featured an interview with feminist activist Ely Aminetou, Founding member of the Coalition of Mauritanian Organizations for Education (COMEDUC) and Chair of the Mauritanian Association of Women Heads of Household (AFCF).
- [African Girls Can Code: Closing the gender gap in ICT | UNGEI](#) - On Girls in ICT Day, UNGEI and the African Union CIEFFA co-authored a blog on the importance of teaching girls to code as an approach to closing the gender gap in the tech world and bridging the gender digital divide.
- [Feminists are Leading the Way for Girls' Education | UNGEI](#) - For International Day of the Girl, members of the Global Feminist Coalition highlight what Gender-Transformative Education means to them.
- [Local Education Groups pilot GES Toolkit to Assess Gender Equality in and Through Education | UNGEI](#) - A reflection on lessons learnt from the Mali and Chad country pilots of the GES Toolkit.

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