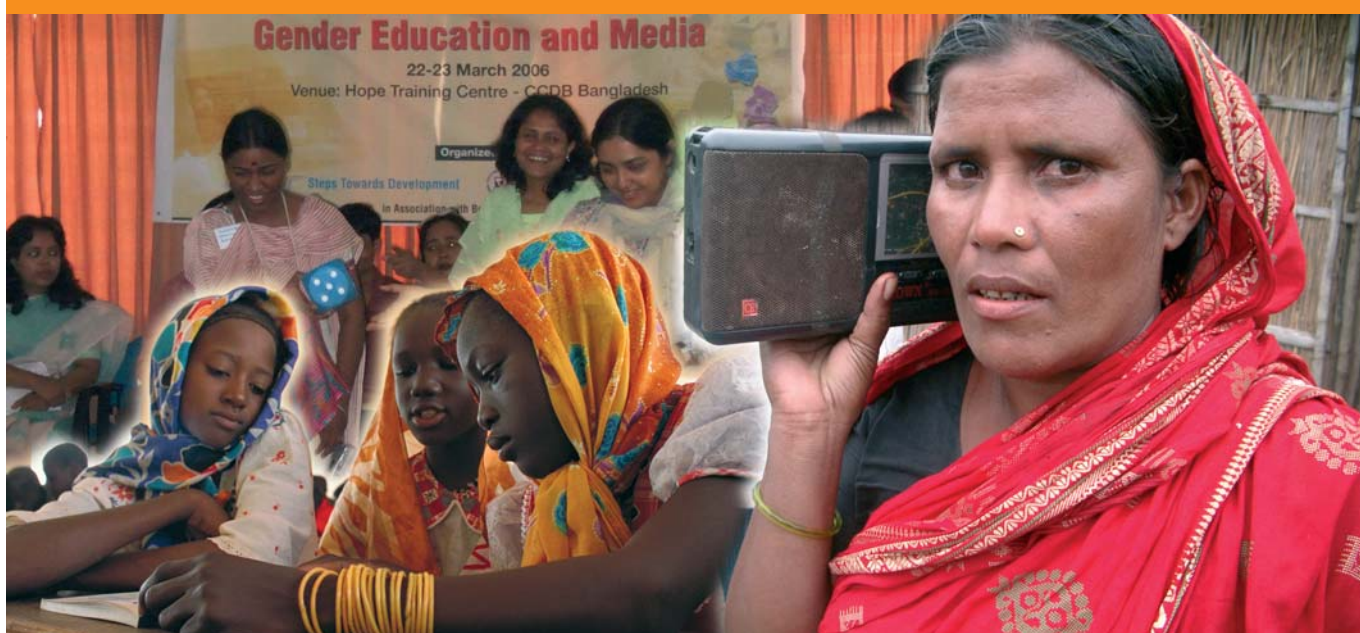


# WORKING WITH THE MEDIA ON GENDER AND EDUCATION



A Guide for Training and Planning

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# 1

## Introduction



## Introduction

This guide has been developed following two “Gender, Education and the Media” workshops which were held in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2005 and in Dhaka, Bangladesh in March 2006. It brings together learning from both workshops in order to help organisations working on gender and education develop and implement media-advocacy strategies for gender equitable education.

The guide has been developed by the *Beyond Access: Gender Education and Development*<sup>1</sup> Project, in collaboration with the Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA) in Kenya and the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) and Steps Towards Development in Bangladesh.

## About the Gender, Education and the Media workshops

The *Beyond Access* “Gender, Education and the Media” workshops brought together 25 representatives from civil society organisations working in gender and education and media practitioners. Their specific objectives were:

- To enable participants to develop a deeper shared understanding of gender equality in education;
- To equip participants with information and skills needed to enable them to improve their capacity to use the media to advocate for gender equality in education.

During the 2 day workshops participants shared experiences about and developed skills in:

- Identifying national education challenges and campaign issues;
- Analysing gender issues in education;
- Analysing the role of the media and its portrayal of gender;
- Developing strategies for working with the media to ensure that gender and education issues are covered in a way that contributes to the achievement of gender equitable education for all.

## Using the guide

The guide is divided into 7 sections. Each section explores a different aspect of working with the media on gender and education issues, starting with looking at education campaigning in general before focusing on gender issues in education, and the role of advocacy and the media. You will find practical advice for working with the media on gender and education issues and suggestions of activities to help individuals or groups generate discussion and develop their understanding of the issues addressed in more depth. These activities can be used as the basis for training others. A set of worksheets that correspond to these activities accompanies the guide and can be photocopied and used alongside the guide.

### Find out more

- Find out more about Beyond Access at [www.ioe.ac.uk/efps/beyondaccess](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/efps/beyondaccess) or [www.oxfam.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/issues/education/genderequality\\_education.htm](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/issues/education/genderequality_education.htm)
- Find out more about ANCEFA at [www.ancefa.org](http://www.ancefa.org)
- Find out more about CAMPE at [www.campebd.org](http://www.campebd.org)
- Find out more about Steps Towards Development at [www.stepsbd.org](http://www.stepsbd.org)



<sup>1</sup> *Beyond Access* was set up in 2003 by Oxfam GB, the Institute of Education at the University of London, and the UK government's department for International Development. It aims to contribute to achieving Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3 – gender equality and the empowerment of women – by increasing knowledge and understanding of gender equality in education. An important dimension of *Beyond Access*' work has been to look at ways to support civil society organisations use the media to *advocate* for gender equality in education, and ensure that governments, international agencies and donors make achieving gender equitable education a top priority.

# 2

## Education Campaigning: The Global Context



### **This section looks at:**

- Who is involved in campaigning for education regionally and globally
- The Dakar framework for Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- Global action for achieving the EFA and MDG targets

## Who is campaigning for education?

Nationally, regionally and internationally millions of individuals and thousands of civil society groups and organisations are campaigning for quality education for all. Globally these groups come together under the umbrella of the **Global Campaign for Education (GCE)**. The GCE promotes education as a basic human right, and mobilizes public pressure on governments and the international community to fulfil their promises to provide free, compulsory public basic education for all people; in particular for children, women and all disadvantaged groups. The GCE brings together NGOs and teachers' unions in over 150 countries around the world.

At a regional level, in Africa, the **Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA)** emerged in 2000 following the World Education Summit in Dakar in April 2000. It seeks to promote, enable and build capacity of African civil society to advocate and campaign for access to free quality education for all. As a regional network, ANCEFA brings together **national education coalitions** and networks in four sub-regional groupings (sub-Saharan Africa, East, Southern, West and Central Africa). ANCEFA is a member of the Global Campaign on Education (GCE) and is represented on its international board. In Asia the **Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE)**, which was established in 1964 to promote adult education in the region, seeks to build and strengthen an Asia-Pacific movement dedicated to advancing equitable access to relevant, quality and empowering education and learning opportunities for all.

At a national level, **national education coalitions** bring together a wide range of civil society groups campaigning for quality education for all. In Kenya, the **Elimu Yetu Coalition** is an alliance of civil society organizations, professional groupings, education/research institutions and other practitioners in the education sector. In Bangladesh **the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)** is a network of more than 400 NGOs working in the basic education sector. There are national coalitions like this in many other countries.

The **Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)** is a worldwide alliance committed to making world leaders take action to make a breakthrough on poverty. Throughout 2005 GCAP focused on calling for trade justice, debt cancellation and more and better aid as well as campaigning for national efforts to eliminate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals in a way that is democratic, transparent and accountable to citizens.

The **United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)** is also working to promote education and gender equality. UNGEI was launched in April 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar. Its goal is to narrow the gender gap in primary and secondary education and to ensure that by 2015, all children complete primary schooling, with girls and boys having equal access to all levels of education. UNGEI is a partnership that includes the United Nations system, governments, donor countries, non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector, communities and families.

## Internationally agreed goals and targets

Much campaigning has been focused around the achievement of the goals set out in two international frameworks: the Dakar Framework For Action on Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Campaigners are demanding that governments meet their commitments to achieve the goals and that donors provide them with the support they need to be able to do this.

## The Dakar Goals

In April 2000 more than one thousand participants from 164 countries signed up to The Dakar Framework For Action on EFA. The Dakar framework is the most important international consensus on EFA, and reinforced the World Declaration on Education For All agreed in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. The Dakar framework sets out six broad goals with several targets building towards Education for All in 2015. The goals form the most comprehensive campaign agenda for EFA coalitions worldwide. They are as follows:

- **Goal 1:** Expand and improve comprehensive **early childhood care and education**, especially for the most vulnerable children and disadvantaged children
- **Goal 2:** Ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete **free and compulsory primary education of good quality**
- **Goal 3:** Ensure that the learning needs of **adults and young people** are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes
- **Goal 4:** Achieve a 50% improvement in levels of **adult literacy** by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults
- **Goal 5:** Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving **gender equality in education** at all levels by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality
- **Goal 6:** Improve all aspects of the **quality** of education and ensure excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills

These six goals are all interlinked with each other, and their achievement is mutually dependant. Gender equality in education is the subject of its own goal (goal 5), but it also cross cuts all the other goals. For example achieving gender equality is clearly essential for achieving quality primary education for all (goal 2) and for improving levels of adult literacy (goal 4).

## The Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are global targets set out in the Millennium Declaration, agreed by leaders of 191 UN member states at the Millennium Summit in 2000. The MDGs outline an agenda for reducing poverty and its causes and manifestations by 2015. MDGs 2 and 3 relate directly to education, and correspond loosely with Dakar goals 2 and 5:

- **Goal 1:** Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- **Goal 2:** **Achieve universal primary education**, *ensuring that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling*
- **Goal 3:** **Promote gender equality and empower women**, *eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005 and at all levels of education by 2015*
- **Goal 4:** Reduce child mortality
- **Goal 5:** Improve maternal health
- **Goal 6:** Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- **Goal 7:** Ensure environmental sustainability
- **Goal 8:** Develop a global partnership for development

The MDG targets provide a very minimum agenda for education, compared to the Dakar framework. The MDGs do however provide an opportunity for tackling poverty holistically, recognising the close links that exist between education, gender and other issues such as maternal health, HIV and AIDS and eradicating hunger. Governments and civil society should look at both the Dakar EFA goals and the MDGs as indivisible and interlinked frameworks.

The global momentum that has been built around the MDGs, particularly through the mobilisation of the Global Campaign for Action against Poverty (GCAP) coalition, also provides an opportunity for education coalitions to ensure that education, and the achievement of the Dakar EFA goals and the MDGs are kept on the international agenda. It is important to engage with the GCAP platform and use international platforms like the United Nations Assembly to make sure that gender and education are considered priority issues.

## Global Action – Focus on Teachers



During the Global Action Week which takes place in April every year the Global Campaign for Education brings together campaigners in more than 100 countries around a common theme or issue. This gives campaigners in different countries an opportunity to join their voices together and call for action at global, regional and national levels on an issue that affects the achievement of quality education for all in many countries around the world.

In 2006 Global Action Week was focused on teachers, reflecting the crucial role that adequate numbers of well trained and supported teachers play in enabling girls and boys to access school and receive a quality education. 18 million more trained teachers are needed if every girl and boy is to receive a quality education by 2015.

### **During the week campaigners called on rich countries to:**

- Increase aid and cancel debt
- Support countries' long-term education plans including teacher salaries
- End harmful donor conditions that prevent countries employing sufficient numbers of professional teachers

### **And on poor countries to:**

- Increase public spending on education
- Ensure quality teaching by training teachers to a professional standard
- Pay teachers a living wage and give them a say in education policy-making
- Reduce class sizes and improve classroom conditions

### **Find out more**

- Find out more about the Global Campaign for Education and the Global Action Week at [www.campaignforeducation.org](http://www.campaignforeducation.org)
- Find out more about ANCEFA at [www.ancefa.org](http://www.ancefa.org)
- Find out more about ASPBAE at [www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)
- Find out more about UNGEI at [www.ungei.org](http://www.ungei.org)
- Find out more about the Dakar Goals on the UNESCO website at [http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed\\_for\\_all/framework.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/framework.shtml)
- Find out more about the MDGs at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>





# 3

## Challenges and Campaign Issues



### **This section looks at:**

- Challenges affecting the achievement of quality Education for All, globally, regionally and nationally
- Priority issues for civil society campaigning on education

## The scale of the global challenge

Despite some encouraging trends, the challenge of meeting the MDGs and the Dakar EFA goals remains huge. Globally, around 100 million children are still not enrolled in primary school and 55% of them are girls. 23 countries are at risk of not achieving getting all children into primary school by 2015. At least 771 million people aged 15 and above live without basic literacy skills, and often the education received by girls and boys is of poor quality or not relevant to their lives.

Especially worrying is the fact that the first MDG target, to achieve equal numbers of girls and boys in primary and secondary school by 2005 was missed globally by more than 90 countries and in many countries the disparities between boys' and girls' enrolment remain high.

## Challenges at regional levels

In **Sub Saharan African** although some countries have made good progress towards getting more children into school, the region is still faced with a huge challenge in terms of providing access to basic education to all children by 2015. Severe teacher shortages in the region are one issue hampering the achievement of Education For All. Eliminating gender disparities also presents a major challenge in much of Africa (particularly West Africa). For example in countries such as Mali boys currently outnumber girls in primary school by a ratio of approximately 4:3. In Burkina Faso, fewer than one in three girls go to school at all.

In **South and West Asia** the progress in some countries towards getting more children into school has also been good. However, like Sub Saharan Africa, the region still has a long way to go in order to provide access to basic education for all children by 2015. Gender disparities are also very high. For example in Pakistan there are four boys for every three girls in primary school. Similarly, in **the Arab States** levels of gender disparity in enrolments are high in many countries.

In **Latin America**, although many countries now have high enrolments rates for both boys and girls there is still a need to improve education quality. Addressing high levels of adult illiteracy – especially among women also remains a serious challenge.

In **all the regions**, reaching marginalised groups – such as indigenous or pastoralist groups, girls and boys with disabilities and the poorest sections of society – is also a serious challenge. In much of Africa and increasingly also in Asia and Latin America the impact of HIV/AIDS presents an additional challenge to education systems.

Across **all the regions**, even where good progress has been made on getting as many girls as boys into school, achieving *gender equality* more broadly is a major challenge. There is a need to ensure that both girls and boys receive a gender equitable education that equips them with the skills they need later on in life (see section 4).

## Challenges at national level

Within regions particular challenges at national levels will vary according to the country's social, economic and political context, and the educational policies that it has adopted. Challenges in some countries will therefore not always follow the regional or global trend. In some cases, although countries may appear to be in similar positions regarding the achievement of the Dakar EFA and the MDG goals and have the same numbers of girls and boys in school, the reasons behind their current situation may be different and will point to specific challenges that need to be addressed. For example low enrolment may be linked to high school fees or cultural factors preventing girls or boys from going to school. Poor quality education may be due to large class sizes, poor infrastructure, few or poorly trained teachers, lack of text books or poorly designed curriculum.

### Challenges in Bangladesh



Participants in the workshop held in Dhaka, identified the following as some of the major challenges to achieving the Dakar EFA and education MDG goals in Bangladesh:

- High student: teacher ratios and inadequate financial and other benefits for teachers
- Inactive school management committees
- Corruption and nepotism in the education system and lack of proper and transparent monitoring
- Curriculum and texts that do not reflect cultural diversity or address life skills and which are not gender sensitive
- Education environments that are not gender friendly

### Activity 1



**In groups or individually identify the major challenges to achieving the MDGs and Dakar goals in your country. For each challenge think about what strategy might be needed to overcome it.**

## Campaign Issues

Identifying the major issues that affect the achievement of quality Education For All in a particular country or region helps education activists identify which areas they need to focus their efforts on for campaigning and advocacy. For example, in countries off target to meet the goals of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and gender parity, and where getting girls and boys into school is a major challenge, some campaigning is likely to focus on issues relating to access to education. Campaigning for getting rid of barriers such as school fees and charges has been used in countries such as Kenya and Malawi. In countries where free primary education has been introduced campaigning might focus on reducing adult illiteracy or on the need to improve the quality of education. Often priority campaign issues relate to improving both quantity (access) and quality of education. For more on campaigning and advocacy see section 5.

## Campaign issues in Africa



In the workshop held in Nairobi the following issues were among those identified as priority issues for education campaigning in the African region:

- 1 **Improving the planning process for EFA in Africa** to ensure political commitment for EFA; participatory, credible and gender sensitive EFA plans; and genuine, structured and institutionalised mechanisms for civil society participation in development, implementation, review
- 2 **Ensuring that education is enshrined as a constitutional right**
- 3 **Ensuring adequate financing for Education for All**, focusing on national level resource mobilization, dropping all user charges for primary education and ensuring budgets are gender sensitive
- 4 **Increasing the quantity and quality of donor aid for education**
- 5 **Investing in relevant high quality public education for girls and boys from poor and marginalised communities**
- 6 **Investing in teacher supply, development & motivation**
- 7 **Improving governance and mechanisms for civil society participation in education planning**
- 8 **Addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS pandemic** through support to all infected and affected children, teachers and parents and changes to curriculum and teacher training courses to include HIV/AIDS education and life skills
- 9 **Tackling gender disparities and inequalities**

### Find out more



- Find out more about progress towards the EFA goals in regional and national contexts in the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report available at [www.unesco.org/education](http://www.unesco.org/education)
- Find out more about what education coalitions are doing in different countries around the world, and some of the issues they are campaigning on at [www.campaignforeducation.org](http://www.campaignforeducation.org)

# 4

## Thinking about Gender in Education



### This section looks at:

- What gender equality in education means
- Issues that are preventing gender equality in education from being achieved
- What could be done to promote gender equality in education

## What does gender equality in education mean?

There are several different terms that are often used when talking about gender and education – gender parity, gender equality and gender equity. The MDGs refer to gender parity and focus on equal numbers of girls and boys in school. However it is important to also think about what happens once girls and boys are in school, and how this affects their ability to learn and to benefit from their education once they have left school.

### **Some definitions:**

**Gender parity** in education is generally understood to mean equal numbers of girls and boys being present in schools. Many countries are making progress on gender parity, but more challenging dimensions of gender equality and equity are not being monitored, measured or discussed.

**Gender equality and gender equity:** there is no consensus as to the precise difference between these two terms, exactly what they mean, or how they should be used. They are often used interchangeably. However, it is generally agreed that to achieve gender equity/equality, there is a need to remove deep-seated barriers to equality of opportunity for both sexes, such as discriminatory laws, customs, practices, and institutional processes. Achieving gender equality in education requires going beyond simply looking at equal numbers of boys and girls enrolled in school to also consider the experience that girls and boys have in school, and as a result of school.

**Gender Equitable, gender sensitive or gender responsive education:** Education that is gender equitable, gender sensitive or gender responsive takes into account the different needs of girls and boys / women and men, and promotes greater gender equality.

**Quality education:** An education system lacks key dimensions of quality if it is discriminatory or does not ensure that the education of all girls and boys is personally and socially worthwhile. Dimensions of educational quality which are crucial for the achievement of gender equality in schooling include the content of learning materials and curriculum, the nature of the teaching and learning materials, teacher-pupil relations and gender sensitive use of resources.

## Why does gender equality in education matter?

First and foremost participation in quality, gender equitable education is a right. All children, girls and boys, have the right to go to school, learn in a safe and welcoming environment and develop the skills that they need to help them in later life.

Gender equitable education is important for the empowerment of girls and women, and it can play a big role in changing other gender inequalities and practices that discriminate against women in wider society. It is also very important for the development of a country or region politically, socially and economically.

## What affects the achievement of gender equality in education?

Many of the challenges and campaign issues that are important to the achievement of EFA globally and in specific regional and national contexts at first appear to be *gender neutral*, affecting girls and boys or women and men equally. However, in reality, many of the issues that affect education in general are in fact gendered, as they affect girls and boys in different ways. It is important that these gendered impacts are understood and analysed in order to be able to think about how to ensure that both girls and boys have access to a gender equitable education and that gendered processes in schools are reformed.

For example when thinking about education financing it is important to ensure that budgets are gender sensitive, taking into account the specific needs of both boys and girls. A gender sensitive education budget would, for example, take into account the extra costs associated with providing adequate sanitary materials and facilities to allow girls to come to school during menstruation. When addressing issues of teacher supply and motivation it is important to consider the positive impact that good female teachers often have on girls' enrolment and attainment, as well as the particular difficulties many female teachers face, and the extra support that they may need when working in rural areas.

When advocating or campaigning on different education issues it is important to understand how such issues may affect girls/women and boys/men in different ways. It is important to make sure that what is being campaigned or advocated for takes into account the needs of girls and boys – that it is *gender sensitive*. Therefore, advocacy for increased financing for education should emphasise the need to ensure that budgets are *gender sensitive* and account for the specific needs of girls as well as boys. Advocacy around teachers' pay or working conditions should stress the need to address particular difficulties faced by female teachers.

## Activity 2



**Individually or in groups, go back to the education challenges for your country that you identified in activity 1. Think about the different ways in which each of the challenges identified might affect boys/men and girls/women differently. How would they need to be tackled to ensure that the needs of girls/women and boys/men are addressed?**

## Promoting gender equality in education

It is clear that there are many ways in which education issues, policy and practice may affect boys and girls differently. It is also clear that achieving gender equality in education requires not just getting equal numbers of boys in school, but also ensuring that girls and boys are given equal opportunities to learn and do well at school, and that the education they receive is empowering and useful to them. This means that when thinking about the gender inequalities that exist in education, and what needs to be done to change them, and promote gender equality, it is important to think about the issues that affect equality of access, retention, completion, achievement and life beyond school:

### ■ Access

Many issues affect the ability of girls and boys to go to school. Some of these affect both girls and boys, though to different extents and in different ways. For example poverty or school fees may prevent parents from sending girls and boys to school, though if forced to choose between a boy and a girl, they are more likely to keep the girl at home. Others may be “gender specific” affecting only girls (or boys), for example cultural beliefs that girls should not go to school.

### ■ Retention, completion and achievement

Many factors affect the ability of girls and boys to stay in school, do well and complete their education, and these often affect girls and boys differently. These can be things inside or outside school. For example external factors might include girls having to drop out to look after sick parents or to get married. Internal factors could include the sexual harassment of girls or practices in the classroom that discriminate against girls or boys (for example girls having to do the sweeping and other chores, or only boys being made prefects).

## ■ Life beyond school

A number of factors affect the extent to which education can provide girls and boys with the skills they will need when they have left school. These may also affect the extent to which education can be empowering for girls and women and help change other gender inequalities and practices that discriminate against women in wider society.

Such factors can include issues relating to the treatment of girls and boys in the classroom and textbooks that reproduce gender stereotypes (for example always showing women as carers, men as leaders) as well as external factors such as a lack of job opportunities for women.

As well as identifying the issues that prevent girls – as well as boys – from receiving a good quality education it is crucial to think about the changes that are needed to make education more gender equitable. Understanding how current education policy and practice affects boys and girls and men and women in different – gendered – ways is necessary order to be able to advocate for the development and implementation of gender sensitive and responsive policies that promote gender equitable practice.

On the next pages a game “Snakes and Ladders: the game of girls education” can be used to help explore what some of these gender sensitive policies might be, and what changes are needed to help promote gender equality in education.

### Find out more



- The Beyond Access Programme Insights papers on gender and education explore different aspects of achieving gender equality in education in a clear and accessible way. Download them at [www.oxfam.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/issues/education/gender\\_education.htm](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/issues/education/gender_education.htm)
- *Beyond Access: Transforming Policy and Practice for Gender Equality in Education*, examines the extent and causes of gender inequality in education and reports on original fieldwork in a range of local contexts where gender equality initiatives have flourished. It is available at <http://publications.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam/display.asp?isb=0855985291>
- UNESCO Bangkok have developed a tool kit for gender analysis in education programmes. It is available on their website <http://www.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=353>
- *Practising Gender Analysis in Education* explores frameworks for gender analysis in education in more depth. It can be ordered from Oxfam Publishing [www.oxfam.org.uk/publications](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/publications)



## Activity 3 – Snakes and Ladders: The Game of Girls' Education



In order to illustrate some of the obstacles that girls face when trying to access or complete their schooling and use their education later in life, the Beyond Access Project developed “Snakes and Ladders: the Game of Girls' Education”. It was used in many countries around the UN Millennium Summit in order to raise awareness of the issues that need to be tackled to achieve the 2005 MDG target to get as many girls as boys into school.

The game is played on a giant snakes and ladders board, by children or adults. Each player must imagine they are a girl trying to move onwards through her education. When the player throws the dice they move forward along the board according to the number thrown. Half way up the board they reach primary school. Further up they reach secondary school, and at the end of the board a smiling face represents the completion of a full and empowering education.

Landing on the head of one of the many snakes, which represent the obstacles to girls getting to or doing well at school, and finishing their education, sends the player sliding back down the board. Landing on one of the ladders -which represent policy changes that would tackle some of the “snakes” and so enable more girls to complete their education and be empowered – send the player climbing up the board.

### Play the Game!



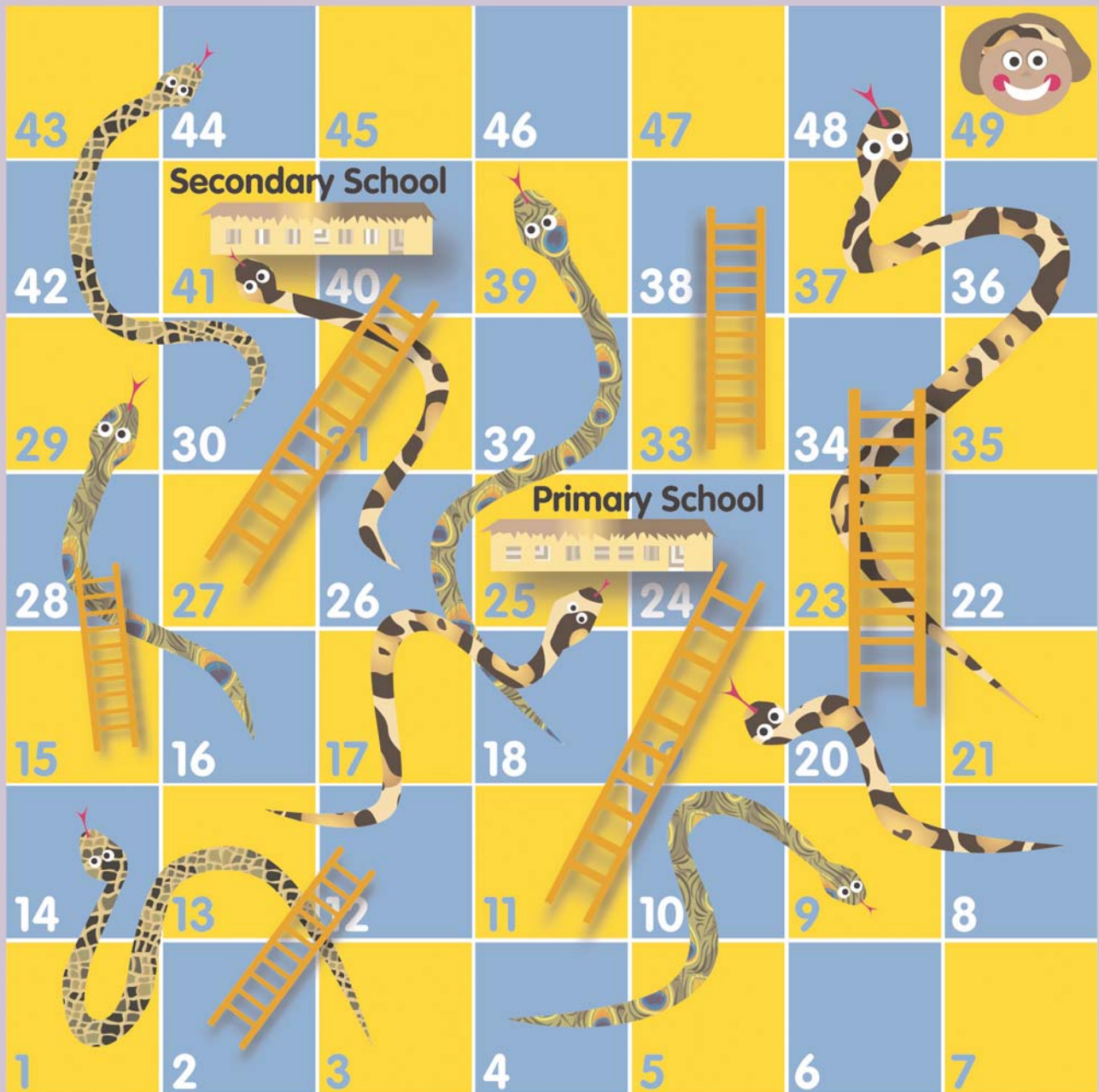
You can adapt a commercial snakes and ladders board or make larger copies of the board shown on the next page and play in groups of 6.

When a player lands on a snake, discuss as a group what it would be in your country or community that is preventing them from being able to access, or make their way through education. When a player lands on a ladder, think about what policy changes you would recommend – or advocate for – in order to make receiving a full and empowering gender equitable education a reality for more girls. Write a list of the snakes and ladders as you go.

If you are not able to play the game, think about and write a list of the snakes that prevent girls in your country from receiving a gender equitable education. Then think about how you would turn these snakes into ladders. For each “snake” think about what “ladder” or policy change you would recommend in order to ensure girls can access school, do well and finish their education.

Once you have finished look at the list of snakes and ladders that you have produced. Agree on 3 of the “snakes” that you think are priority issues that must be tackled most urgently in order to achieve gender equitable education for girls and boys in your country. Then decide what “ladders” – changes in policy or practice – would be needed in order to tackle them.

# The Game of Girls' Education



Let's Make All Girls Winners

On the next page examples of some of the “snakes” and “ladders” identified by workshop participants in Nairobi and Dhaka are shown. Some of yours may be similar, though others may be very different, as they will relate to your own national or local context.

## Examples of “Snakes” and “Ladders” identified by workshop participants:



- Education budgets are not gender sensitive, lack of funding priorities that specifically cater to girls' needs
- Early marriage means girls drop out of school
- Sexual Harassment or “eve teasing” of girls at and on the way to school affects their self esteem, prevents them from learning and forces them to drop out
- Gender stereotyping in curriculum and learning materials does not encourage girls to do well, or promote gender equality
- School girl pregnancy forces girls to drop out
- Classroom practice reinforces inequalities – for example when all prefects are boys and girls are class monitors. Teachers discourage girls from taking subjects such as science
- Lack of support and poor terms of service and working conditions/environment for women teachers and female education managers
- Female Genital Mutilation affects girls' health and causes them to leave school
- The academic calendar does not take into account the ability of boys and girls to attend school at different times
- Families prefer to finance the education of sons not daughters



- Revised budget policy to cater for the needs of boys and girls (for example providing sanitary facilities and materials for girls)
- Enforce laws regarding minimum marriage age, introduction of a penalty for early marriage
- Development and enforcement of sexual harassment policies. Children's forums where issues can be discussed. Improved security for girls on the way to school, school nearer to communities
- Development of gender sensitive curriculum and learning materials
- Re-entry schemes and policies to prevent pregnancy through children's forums and clubs
- Gender fully integrated into teacher training so teachers are able to treat girls and boys fairly. Introduction of local level best school and teachers awards with a focus on gender
- Implementation of women teachers quota and improved support for women teachers and education managers, especially in rural areas
- Campaigns to raise awareness and change behaviour
- Flexible timetables that take into account girls and boys work
- Free schooling, and stipend programmes for girls



# 5

## Advocating for Gender Equality in Education



### **This section looks at:**

- What campaigning and advocacy mean
- Different ways of doing advocacy
- Examples of advocacy for gender equality in education
- The role of the media in advocacy

## What is Advocacy?

There are many different ways in which advocacy is defined. However it is usually associated with action that involves trying to influence and change the policy and practice of decision makers (such as governments, national and international institutions, local leaders) and to transform public perceptions, attitudes and behaviour. This can occur at local, national and international levels and can involve:

- Advocating for new policies and practices
- Advocating for the modification of existing policies and practices
- Advocating for the enforcement of existing policies that are appropriate but are not being put into practice
- Advocating for the elimination of policies and practices that are harmful and create social inequality

Civil society participation, and building civil society capacity are important components of advocacy as non-state organisations are an important form through which people can collectively develop ideas and bring them to the attention of those in power.

## Campaigning and Advocacy

Sections 2 and 3 talked about “education campaigning” and “campaign issues”, when referring to the ways which civil society is trying to use its influence to ensure that the major challenges preventing Education For All from being achieved are addressed. The terms advocacy and campaigning are often used interchangeably and they both involve trying to bring about positive change. However, in some contexts they are used to refer to slightly different activities. Advocacy is often associated with trying to influence policy and the political process directly in order to get an issue onto the political agenda, whilst campaigning often refers to the process of mobilising people around an issue and building mass awareness of it. Often this is done to increase public demand and pressure on the government, politicians or other officials in order to help persuade them to change their policies or practice.

Seen in this way advocacy and campaigning can be understood as complementary parts of the process of bringing about change and can both be used to help achieve greater gender equality in education. For example, in Bangladesh, to promote girls’ education at primary and secondary level, advocacy was used to persuade the government to introduce free primary school and a stipend programme for girls. Campaigning was used to raise mass awareness of the issue, and disseminate the information regarding these programmes so that parents could send their daughters to school.

In this guide, the term advocacy is used in its broadest sense to refer to the whole process of influencing policy and practice at all levels (from the local level to the international level) in order to ensure progress is made towards achieving gender equality in education. This may include activities that in some contexts could be considered to be “campaigning activities”.

## Doing advocacy

There are many different ways of “doing advocacy”. These include: lobbying decision-makers, creating petitions, organising public demonstrations, community mobilisation, mass communications campaigns and media work.

What kind of advocacy you do will depend on a number of factors: *what* you are trying to achieve (your aim and objectives), *who* you need to target, what resources you have available, and *who* you can involve as allies to help you.

For example, in some cases direct lobbying of the government or policy makers may be important, through arranging meetings or lobby sessions or writing letters. In other cases it might be more important to raise public awareness of the issue in order change behaviour or to get the issue on the political agenda, through mass communications campaigns at local or national levels. Often a combination of different forms of advocacy will be most effective.

The boxes below give some examples of different ways in which civil society groups have carried out advocacy for gender equality in education.

### Global advocacy for girls’ education



“Snakes and Ladders: the game of girls education” was originally developed as an advocacy tool. It was played by school children and members of the general public in London, Scotland and New York before the G8 and UN World summits in 2005, in order to highlight the missed MDG target to get as many girls as boys into school by 2005, and raise awareness of the issues that need to be tackled in order to get more girls into school.

The game formed a part of a bigger advocacy and campaign strategy developed by the Global Campaign of Education which aimed to try and persuade world leaders at the G8 summit and the UN World Summit to commit to investing in education and to develop a concrete action plan to ensure that, by 2008 all girls – as well as boys – have access to a safe a welcoming place to learn. As part of this strategy millions of campaigners around the world made cut out “buddies” – paper representations of out-of-school children – and sent them to world leaders, demanding that they take action to “send my friend to school”. Colourful and creative activities like the snakes and ladders game were used to ensure that education, and the missed 2005 target were given media coverage in the run up to the event.

Leaders at the G8 summit responded to this lobbying, as well as pressure from millions of other campaigners who were calling for debt cancellation and more and better aid through the GCAP coalition. They promised a \$50 billion increase in aid to developing countries over the next ten years and to cancel the debts owed by 40 of the world’s poorest countries to the World Bank, IMF, and African Development Fund.

## National and district level advocacy to change policy and practice in Kenya



The Kenyan chapter of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) works closely with the Ministry of Education in order to influence policy formulation directly. Their lobbying work has resulted in the government taking affirmative action on bursary allocation. Two million shillings, channelled through FAWE, have been allocated to girls in every province to allow them to continue their education into secondary school.

In the Kajiado district in Kenya, women's lobby groups, supported by the Basic Education Fund have been campaigning against retrogressive cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and early marriages. Preventing the practice of FGM altogether is very difficult. However, by sensitising communities to the impact that circumcision has on girls' education, the lobby groups, with support from government officials have persuaded them to change the circumcision calendar. Circumcision used to take place at any time of the year but it is now performed during the December school holidays, which are long enough for wounds to heal. The female circumcision term has also been reduced to one month to allow girls to go back to school.

### Doing Advocacy: Planning

When planning advocacy around a particular issue it is important to think about what your long term *aim* is – what it is you want to achieve in the long term. You also need to identify a more immediate *objective* that will help you achieve your aim. It is important that your objective is SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound.

For example if your aim is to “to ensure that all children have access to learning materials that are free of gender bias”, an objective could be to ensure that “all new textbooks that are being considered for use in the classroom in the coming school year are reviewed and revised so that they are free of gender bias.<sup>2</sup>”

Once you have identified your aim and objectives you need to think about *who* is able to influence the changes you want to occur, and therefore who it is that you need to target with your advocacy work. This will depend on the type of change required – for example whether it is a change in policy or practice – that needs to happen, and where it needs to occur.

For example if you want to change the way that national budgets are spent, then you will need to target finance and other key ministers at a national level. You may also need to try and influence the international finance institutions that also affect national budgets. In other cases your targets may be education or other officials at district or local levels, head and other teachers, students, local or community leaders, parents or a combination of all of these. Who you are targeting will of course also affect the forms of advocacy you chose to use.

It is also important to think about who your *allies* are and who else may be able to help you achieve your aim. Working within alliances and coordinating your messages is critical to the success of an advocacy campaign.

<sup>2</sup> Example from UNESCO Bangkok <http://www.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=353>



Getting the support of local, national or international celebrities or high profile or influential figures who can act as “Gender and Education Champions” can also be invaluable. This can be particularly useful when trying to work with the media (see section 7).

## Activity 4



Choose 2 of the “ladders” that you identified as policy or practice changes needed in activity 2. Now use the following questions to think about some of the ways in which you could advocate for the policy or practice changes to be implemented:

- What is the aim of your advocacy? What is it you want to achieve?
- Who is your target: who do you need to influence in order to achieve your aim?
- What activities or types of advocacy would you use to influence you target?
- Who could help you do this?

## Using the media for advocacy

The media – particularly the mass media – can have a powerful influence over how and what we think. It can shape public perceptions about particular issues and influence what issues are perceived to be important. It therefore has the power to affect how the general public thinks and acts in relation to different issues.

Media support of a particular issue can often be a way of generating public support and momentum behind that issue. Politicians and policy makers often pay close attention to what the media says, and are influenced by it when thinking about making policy decisions.

If worked with effectively, the media can be an important ally for advocacy work on gender and education issues. It can be used to raise awareness of a particular issue, generate public support, and influence government and policy makers.

In order to work with the media successfully as part of advocacy on gender and education, you need understand how the media works in your area and how to make the media work for gender equality in education. This is explored in the next sections.

### Find out more

- Save the Children has produced a manual on advocacy and education, available at [http://www.campaignforeducation.org/resources/Jul2001/SCF\\_Handbook01.pdf](http://www.campaignforeducation.org/resources/Jul2001/SCF_Handbook01.pdf)
- The Unesco Bangkok website has information about gender, education and advocacy and links to other resources <http://www.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=353>
- *Gender, Development and Advocacy*, an on line journal from Oxfam considers gender advocacy on a number of levels in society from grassroots women demanding community level change, to coalition-building to promote change to international trade laws [http://publications.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam/add\\_info\\_026.asp](http://publications.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam/add_info_026.asp)





# 6

## Education and Gender in the Media



### This section looks at:

- What the media is
- How gender sensitive media reporting is
- How the media covers gender and education issues

## What is the media?

The term 'media' is used to refer to all forms of written, spoken and printed communication. The mass media is used to refer to those forms of the media that are designed to reach a very large audience. The media exists to educate, inform or entertain. There is a diverse range of types of media which are produced in a wide range of different languages. Types of media include printed media such as newspapers and magazines, as well as the radio and television. Traditional forms of media such as drama, music, dance and community theatre are often popular at local levels. Globally new information technologies such as the internet play an increasingly important role and permit interactive forms of media such as news blogs. The internet can also increase the audience for locally produced media.

The degree of independence of the media varies between countries. In some countries the state maintains strong control over media reporting and in others the media may be monopolised by a few powerful individuals or corporations. This may limit the media's ability to report freely and objectively on certain issues and prevent a variety of different perspectives from being presented. However, many countries throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America are witnessing an increasing liberalization of the media and the growth of a range of independent media.

### The media in Kenya



Kenya has four main daily newspapers published in English – *The Nation*, *East African Standard*, *Kenya Times* and *People Daily*. *The Daily Nation* circulates about 200,000 copies daily, *East African Standard* 70,000 copies daily and *Kenya Times* and the *People Daily* about 5,000 copies daily. Media houses supplement reporting through pullouts and features articles. *The East African Standard*, *Kenya Times* and the *People Daily* publish a weekly education supplement and it is hoped that the *Nation* may resume its education supplement in the future.

Kenya also has a number of television and radio stations, which include many local and community radio stations broadcasting in local languages.

## What is the news?

The basic definition of news is: new information on specific and timely events. An event or piece of information that is *newsworthy* is something that is considered sufficiently interesting to be reported in the news. Newsworthy events are often unusual and unexpected. What events get reported as news is affected by value driven judgements concerning what is considered to be important and what audience interests will be.

The news tends to have the following characteristics:

- 1 Timely – about recent or recurrent events;
- 2 Perishable – it lives only when the events themselves are current and for the purpose of record;
- 3 Unsystematic – it deals with different events and happenings.

## Is education a priority?

On the 16th of February 2005, civil society groups in 73 countries around the world analysed the day's news reporting (television, TV and newspapers) in their country. The data was brought together by the World Association for Christian Communication in the Global Media Monitoring Report 2005. The report found that globally the news agenda is dominated by stories on politics and government and economic and business news. Education and childcare make up only 2% of the overall total of news reports (including television, radio, and newspapers), and therefore do not appear to be a priority for the media.

This trend can partially be explained by the media's "frying pan orientation". The news tends to focus on personalities, events and controversies, not on processes. Issues such as gender, education, culture and development are process-oriented, not instantaneous, which is why they tend to get less attention. Where education related issues do get coverage it tends to be in supplements not as main news stories. However there is potential for education to make news. This is because:

- It affects the lives of, and therefore is of interest to, many people.
- Education policies can be sites of controversy.

## How gender sensitive is reporting?

The Global Media Monitoring Report 2005 found that globally women are dramatically under-represented in the news. Overall, only 21% of news subjects – people who are featured in the news – are women. Even when women appear in news stories they are unlikely to be the central figure – they are only central in 8% of politics stories and in 3% of stories about the economy. When women are central to the news it is generally outside the mainstream "serious" part of the news agenda.

The report found that the absence of women in stories is not the only problem. Many stories miss opportunities to explore how issues affect men and women differently and news stories are twice as likely to reinforce as to challenge gender stereotypes. The language and images used frequently reinforce gender stereotypes in subtle ways. Women are more than twice as likely as men to be portrayed as victims – perpetuating a stereotype of female weakness. However, topics that specifically affect women – such as sexual and domestic violence and cultural practices that are harmful for women – are given little coverage. Gender based violence only accounts for 1% of total stories globally. And even in stories about issues that affect women profoundly such as gender-based violence, it is the male voice (64% of news subjects) that dominates. News reporting on gender (in)equality is virtually non-existent, with only 4% of stories highlighting equality issues, such as differences in pay or in access to education or jobs.

## How gender sensitive is education reporting?

Education is not currently a priority issue for much of the media and general news reporting is not always very gender sensitive. So how does the media address gender in education?

When thinking about how the media covers gender in education it is important to consider two closely related things:

- 1 How much and what type of coverage does the media give to gender issues in education (For example sexual harassment of girls in school)?

2 How is gender addressed in general education reporting? For example, if we are told a story about numbers of children out of school, are we told how many are girls and how many boys or about how boys *and* girls are affected?

## Media coverage of education in Kenya



A study conducted in 2001 and published in *Kenya Education Journal*, 2005, looked at how the media has reported on education issues. It showed that the issues covered include (in order of frequency, number of articles in brackets):

- Teaching profession (154)
- Education management and administration (149)
- Access, quality and equity (145)
- Discipline (116)
- Examination and performance (103)
- Politics of education (52)
- Policies in education (47)
- Gender issues (46)
- Cost and financing and others (37)
- HIV/AIDS and family life education (14)

A quick glance at the box above shows that in education reporting in Kenya, gender issues were given low importance, being one of the topics least reported on. The pattern is similar in many countries, which suggests that the media does not currently consider gender issues to be a high priority for education reporting.

An analysis of general education coverage reveals that it is not always gender balanced or gender sensitive. The Global Media Monitoring Report 2005 found that even though women feature more frequently in stories about education when compared to politics or economics, they are still outnumbered by men (36% women to 64% men) and are only the central focus of the story 5% of the time.

As with reporting on other issues, very often education stories reproduce gender stereotypes or do not explore the implications of the issue in question on both sexes, nor look at what this means in terms of gender inequality, and the need to change practices to achieve greater equality. Some examples of this include:

- Men being invisible in some stories where they should be visible, for example stories about early marriage or teenage pregnancies.
- Stories that simply talk about 'children' or 'people' in general and fail to show how they affect girls and boys or women and men differently. For example a story about the lack of secondary school places that failed to show how it was girls who were most affected by the shortage of places as parents prioritised sending boys to school.

Whether the story in question is specifically about a gender issue, or is covering a general education issue it is important to make sure that it is *gender sensitive*. Some elements of gender sensitive reporting include:

- Balanced and well-researched
- Contain voices and perspectives of women/girls and men/boys
- Contains gender-disaggregated data where appropriate
- Does not contain stereotyping language
- Does not contain assumptions regarding the roles, activities, profession or capabilities of women/girls and men/boys
- Rejects discrimination, questions inequalities, promotes equality

## Activity 5 – Gender news critique



Working individually or in groups, identify one or more news articles about a topic that interests you. This could be a topic relating to education, or a topic that is currently in the news. Examples of topics chosen by workshop participants include: access to school, women in politics, domestic violence, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

As you look at each article think about how gender has been addressed. Has the article been written in a gender sensitive way? You may like to use the following questions to help guide your analysis and discussions:

- 1 What is the story about?
- 2 Who is telling the story?
- 3 Whose story is told? Whose story is not told?
- 4 What does the image show? Are women and men shown? Who is shown in the foreground, who is in the background?
- 5 What adjectives are used to describe the girls/women? And the boys/men?
- 6 What does the image or article tell you about girls and women – age, occupation, skills, physical appearance? What do they tell you about the men?
- 7 Is all that information relevant to the story? If not, why is it included?
- 8 Is there information missing from the story that would help you understand how men and women are affected by the issue being addressed?
- 9 How are other issues such as poverty, HIV/AIDS addressed?
- 10 What does the story make us think about women? About men? About the relationship between them?



When analysing media reports covering school examination results, participants in the gender education and the media workshop held in Dhaka workshop found that:

- Lack of adequate data or analysis meant that media coverage of examination results was misleading. Media reports suggested girls to be doing well in secondary school leaving exams. However in reality the girls who get good results mainly come from good schools in urban areas. In contrast, rural girls are not getting adequate opportunities to enter for the Secondary School Certificate examinations. Overall there is in fact a 12% gender gap in favour of boys in terms of examination entry and achievement. However this gender gap goes unreported and the reasons for it are not explored.

A more general analysis of media reporting in Bangladesh revealed that:

- Women and girls are totally absent from many articles
- Positive adjectives are used for men/boys even when they are guilty of extreme violence. For example a man who killed his wife by beating is described as a “very intelligent engineering student”
- Positive initiatives for women/girls are portrayed as privileges rather than rights
- No articles or images challenge the traditional roles of women and men and most reinforced patriarchal ideologies

### Why is gender often not adequately addressed?

It is clear that gender is often inadequately addressed in education reporting, both through a lack of attention to gender issues, and a lack of gender sensitivity and gender analysis in general. This is due to a combination of factors, which include:

- Lack of gender sensitivity and awareness among journalists and editors
- Lack of support from media owners and managers
- Lack of policy or guidelines on gender reporting
- Shortage of women in senior positions in media houses
- Negative attitudes towards gender-based stories
- Lack of sympathy with gender equality
- Fear of religious misinterpretation

As seen in section 5, the media can play a very important role in shaping how the general public, teachers, parents, NGOs and politicians and policy makers perceive and understand issues. Therefore media coverage (of education or other issues) that is not gender sensitive will affect the way in which gender relations are understood. Gender insensitive or gender blind media reporting plays a role in reproducing gender stereotypes and inequalities. On the other hand, media coverage that is gender sensitive can play a positive role in helping to transform these inequalities. It can do this by drawing attention to the way in which policies or practices often discriminate against girls or women and by promoting positive changes to help change these.



## What can be done?

Having a clear understanding of how the media currently reports on education, and how gender is addressed within this reporting is an important first step to enable activists to work with the media on education and gender issues and support them to give more, and more gender sensitive coverage of gender and education issues. This will require being able to explain the meaning of gender clearly, avoiding jargon. It will also require developing strategies of how to work with the media, in order to increase media interest in the issues, and sensitise media personnel so that they are able to address gender issues in education and promote gender sensitive reporting. This is explored in section 7.

### Find out more



- The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) publishes the Media and Gender Monitor which looks at how the media globally addresses gender. It is available on their website [www.wacc.org.uk](http://www.wacc.org.uk)
- The Global Media Monitoring Report 2005, *Who Makes the News* is available at [www.whomakesthenews.org](http://www.whomakesthenews.org)
- The FAWE ABC Gender Analysis Tool has detailed advice for conducting gender analysis of textbook materials which can be adapted for carrying out analysis of media articles [www.fawe.org/publications/Manuals/abcgenderanalysis.pdf](http://www.fawe.org/publications/Manuals/abcgenderanalysis.pdf)



# 7

## Working with the Media



### This section looks at:

- What media-advocacy is
- How to develop a media-advocacy strategy to help get more, better, and more gender sensitive coverage of issues relating to gender equality in education

## What is media-advocacy?

Section 5 showed that advocacy involves action that seeks to influence and change policies and practice at local, national and international levels. Media-advocacy is the use of mass media to help do this, by bringing problems and their potential solutions to the attentions of policy makers and the wider community. Media advocacy involves using and working with the media to change ideas and beliefs about a particular issue and influence the policies, practice and behaviour of individuals, governments and other institutions and organisations at local, national, regional and international levels.

## What is a media-advocacy strategy?

In order to ensure that your media-advocacy work is effective and systematic it is useful to develop a media-advocacy strategy. Having a media-advocacy strategy also can help ensure that media activities are integrated into your wider work plans and activities and that they form a central part of your advocacy and change agenda.

A media-advocacy strategy can be understood as:

- A strategy or plan for packaging, targeting, channelling and disseminating messages through the mass media in a systematic and coordinated way.

## Developing a media-advocacy strategy

Developing a media-advocacy involves defining *what* you want to achieve, and how you can do it. Here are some of the steps and activities that are necessary to do this.

### 1. What is your aim? Your objective?

Before carrying out any kind of advocacy, including media-advocacy it is important that to define what it is you want to achieve. This involves defining your aim – what you hope to achieve or change in the long term, and your more immediate short-term objective. Remember to make your objective SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound (remember section 5).

### 2. Who do you want to influence – who is your target audience?

Which individuals or groups it is you want to target is key to realising your aim and objective. You need to think about *who* has the power to make the changes (in policy, legislation, practice, behaviour) needed to achieve your objective (remember section 5).

### 3. What media channel(s) should you use?

Different audiences are reached through different media. You need to identify which forms of media will best reach those who you wish to inform and influence (your target audience).

For example, if you are targeting a government official at national level the national printed press and TV might be suitable. If however your target is community leaders in remote areas not reached by the national press then local media, such as local radio stations broadcast in local languages might be more appropriate. It is also important to remember that men and women may also sometimes receive information and be able to access the media in different ways and at different times.

It is also important to consider the literacy levels of your target audience. If for example you are aiming to change ideas and beliefs of parents about the value of sending their daughter to school in areas where levels of illiteracy are high, then the radio may be more suitable than printed media.

Finally it is very important that you think about the language used by your targeted audience. If you are targeting government officials then media channels that use the country's main official language may be most appropriate. However if you are targeting areas local or community leaders, teachers, parents or students in areas where other languages are spoken it is important to ensure that the media you chose is available in a language that is accessible to them.

Remember that women and men may often have different levels of literacy and different levels of access to local and official languages.

When deciding which media channel to use it is helpful to consider the advantages and disadvantages of each:

- **Radio** – wide appeal but message cannot be stored for future reference. Radio stations often available in local languages. Phone in programmes in some countries give wide access.
- **Television** – powerful because it uses vision and sound. However it is not always accessible to all sections of the population due to cost and infrastructure limitations.
- **Newspapers** – large audience if the country has a high literacy level and can be stored for future reference. However they have circulation limitations – for example they may not be sold outside the main cities – and are not always available in local languages. They can only be read by those with good literacy skills.
- **Traditional media** (drama, music, dance, folklore and community theatre) – has grassroots appeal but very labour intensive if used to reach large audiences. Useful for local-based advocacy issues.
- **New media** (information and communication technologies) – quick, spontaneous and allow for interaction, take the news beyond national boundaries. However they are limited to those with access to technology and the skills to use it.

Often it is helpful to use a combination of various different media channels for effective communication. This helps to reinforce the message, reach many people and keep the message in people's minds.

## Activity 6



Identify what media channel(s) you would use to reach each of the audiences listed below:

- Finance Minister
- Community elders
- Donor agencies and World Bank officials
- Women's Affairs Minister
- District Education Officer
- Male headteachers and education managers
- Female headteachers and education managers
- Secondary school students (boys)
- Secondary school students (girls)
- Female teachers
- Male teachers
- Fathers
- Mothers

#### 4. What is your message?

Defining your messages requires asking what is the key thing that you need communicate to your target audience order to achieve your objective? When identifying your message there are a number of factors that you need to take into account. These include:

- Audience: Who are you trying to reach? Will the message be accessible to them?
- What do people already know about the issue and what do they need to know?
- Is the message clear and simple? The more complex the message is, the more difficult it is to present and comprehend.
- Is the message appropriate? Does it take into account the socio-cultural circumstances of the people addressed?
- Is the message relevant? Will it help you to achieve your objectives?
- Scale: How will the communications be carried out? The magnitude of what you want to communicate will influence your message.
- Is your message *gender sensitive*? Does it take into account the different needs of girls/women, boys/men? Does it contain gender stereotypes? Will it help promote greater equality between girls/women and boys/men?

### Activity 7



**Go back to the 3 priority “snakes” and “ladders” that you identified in Activity 2. Identify what your aim, objective, audience and key media message would be for each one of them.**

Have you got your message right? Once you have developed your message it can be useful to pre-test it to ensure that it can be clearly understood and that it is well received by your target audience.

#### 5. What materials do you need to develop?

Once you have identified your key message and media channels you need to start developing your materials. These should be closely based on and reinforce your key message and provide the journalist or editor with clear information about the issue you want to address. The types of materials you may need to produce include:

**i. Press release.** These are sent to a journalist to get him or her interested in the issue – up to a quarter of all media stories come from press releases.

It is important that you state your message clearly and concisely and use clearly written jargon free language. If possible the press release should cover no more than one side of A4 paper, using double line spacing but go onto two if necessary as it must be easy to read. Make the issue as interesting and newsworthy as possible and support your key message with facts and figures. Include a quote from a spokesperson, or someone affected by the issue you are addressing, to bring the story to life. The most important information should be included in the first paragraph of the release, including the five W's: Who? When? What? Where? Why?

You may need to write more than one version of the release, using different angles for different target. For example a local radio or television station might go for a different (more local) slant than a specialist publication or a national newspaper.

# An example of a pro-forma press release



## For immediate release

or

**Embargoed until** ...an embargo allows you to keep control over when your story is publicised and gives journalists a date to work to.

## NEWS RELEASE

### Heading:

The heading should be typed in bold capitals and centred. Keep it short, snappy and to the point.

### First paragraph:

Start with a bang, get the five W's in straight away. Remember to use double line spacing throughout.

### Following paragraphs:

Make your points in order of importance. The second paragraph should elaborate on the first one. You are essentially telling a story, so you must give the reader the full picture. Spell out the facts, give statistics, quote names and numbers of people involved

### Quotes:

Include a direct quote from the most relevant person involved, it will humanise the story. Keep the quote brief, providing an overview of the event or issue. If writing a quote for somebody else, get their approval before using it. Remember to give the person's full name and job title.

### More follows...

If the press release spreads to a second page type "more follows" at the bottom right hand corner and "continued" at the top of the second page. Never split paragraphs or sentences.

## ENDS

Make sure it is clear where your story ends.

**Contact:** Give names and telephone numbers of people a journalist can contact for further information.

**ii. Press pack.** A press pack can be used to back up a press release. This is a pack of materials that a journalist may find useful when writing up the story. It always contains a press release. Other contents may include: a report, an information sheet about the issue, a background information sheet about your organisation or coalition, graphics, statistics or photographs.

When developing media materials it is important that you:

- Look out for the human side – put faces to stories;
- Produce audience-centred reports – stories should have an impact on the readers, viewers or listeners;
- Consider the general audience – communicate to the general public, not specialists.
- Avoid unnecessary details or figures that do not add value to a story;
- Avoid jargon and unfamiliar terms.
- Ensure that your materials are *gender sensitive*.

Gender sensitivity checklist:

- Balanced and well-researched
- Contain voices and perspectives of women/girls and men/boys
- Contains gender-disaggregated data where appropriate
- Does not contain stereotyping language
- Does not contain assumptions regarding the roles, activities, profession or capabilities of women/girls and men/boys
- Rejects discrimination, questions inequalities, promotes equality

Using media materials to tell the personal stories of individuals affected by particular issues can help get interest in the issue. And giving girls and women and people from groups that are marginalised from the political process a chance to tell their own story and make their demands directly through the media can be empowering to them. However before using someone's name and their personal story it is important that you get their permission, and think very carefully about the impact that media exposure could have on them and the people around them.

## 6. How can you make sure you get media attention?

Once you have developed your media materials you need to make sure they get passed to the journalists who would cover the issue in the media. However good your media materials are, and however important you believe your message to be, unless you can get the journalist, editor and their media house interested in the issue, and keen to cover it, your impact will be limited. Just sending them a press release and media report may often not be enough. You should be prepared to follow up with phone calls and think creatively about how you approach the media.

Some ways in which you can increase your chances of getting media coverage include:

- **Identify key journalists / people in the media**, especially those who might be sympathetic to the issue, and target them directly. Offer to meet them informally first for tea or coffee. Keep a record of all your media contacts.
- **Think about timing:** When planning when to carry out your media activities you need to make sure you do not clash with other events that might capture media interest. Often there is less news at the beginning of the week and so journalists may be more willing to cover your issues. Using *newspegs* – key international or national days or events (for example World literacy day, the GCE Global Action Week, or a major national conference about HIV) that you can link your message and materials to – will help make your issue *newsworthy* and more interesting to the media. Keep a list of key future events to help you plan ahead.
- **Involve celebrities or public figures:** High profile figures can help raise the profile of your issue (remember section 5). The media will often be more interested in an issue if a celebrity, high profile, or international figure is involved. Highlighting celebrity involvement in your press releases will increase their chances of being noticed by journalists. Offering interviews with celebrities/high profile or international figures is another way of getting interest. Involving celebrities or politicians in press conferences makes them more likely to attract the media.
- **Be creative:** presenting your message in creative and unusual ways can help make it more interesting for the media (an example of this is the giant girls' education snakes and ladders game used by the Beyond Access Project).
- **Provide photo opportunities:** A good photograph can double the amount of editorial space given to a news item. Many stories are in fact an excuse to print a good picture. Organise a photocall in an outside location that is easy to get to and send a press release to picture editors or



TV stations. This should be shorter than a normal press release but must contain the five W's (who, what, where, when, why). Good ingredients for successful photocalls include: fancy dress, celebrities (local or national), children, humour.

- **Organise informal media briefing sessions** with journalists to explain your work and the issues involved. These provide an opportunity to build contacts and interact with the media, and interest them in the issues.
- And finally... **consistency and persistence** make a difference – never get tired, don't be put-off by initial rejections, keep chasing the media!

## 7. Who are your allies – who can you work with?

Working in alliances is crucial for any advocacy work and will increase your chances of getting media attention. Identify key allies and make sure you coordinate your activities with other organisations, working in coalitions or alliances. Make use of the different resources and contacts of different organisations, and coordinate timing and messages.

## 8. How should you time your activities?

Timing is important in determining your chances of getting media coverage (see above). It will also affect the effectiveness of your message. Think about your target audience and when they are likely to be most receptive to your message, or able to effect change.

## 9. Is your strategy working – how will you evaluate?

It is important that you evaluate the impact of your message, and your methods of disseminating it regularly to ensure that your strategy is working and is helping you move towards achieving your objective. Keep a file of press cuttings to document your successes.

## Giving Voice to Female Teachers in Tanzania



During Global Action Week 2006 in Tanzania, education campaigners worked with the media to promote the message that “Every Child Needs a Teacher” and to ensure that the government listened to teachers and children.

The majority of primary school teachers in Tanzania are women, and so it was important that media coverage of Global Action Week gave voice to female teachers and highlighted the links between education and women's empowerment and the need to support female teachers for their own empowerment. Education campaigners enabled female teachers to speak on national radio and TV, in order to explain their work and the challenges they face, and make their own demands to the Minister of Education. One of the TV programs brought together national Education For All coordinators with people from the Ministry of Education in a discussion that was facilitated by a teacher. Work with the national radio meant that the teachers' messages reached the whole of the country, even areas with high levels of illiteracy.

To get media interest Action Week coordinators researched journalists who were interested in the issue and used contacts that had already been made with journalists and government officials at a previous conference. They made personal phone calls to these journalists who in general were friendly and responded very positively. Ellen Binagi, who coordinated the media work for the week, advises other education and gender campaigners not to be scared of approaching the media directly – many journalists are keen to engage with gender and education issues and can be an extremely important ally for advocacy.

## Activity 8



Go back to the priority “snakes” and “ladders” that you identified in activity 2. Chose one of the ladders that you identified as policy changes needed. Plan how you would develop a media-advocacy strategy to influence the development and implementation of this policy. Try to answer questions 1-9 above, using the guidance given for each question.

## Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the end of this guide. The next step is to put what you have learned into action!

If the MDG and Education For All targets on gender equality and education are to be met by 2015, it is crucial that by 2009 all girls and boys are in school and receiving a quality and gender equitable education in a safe learning environment. For this to happen urgent action needs to be taken at local, national and international levels in order to overcome the many challenges that currently prevent girls from being able to go to school, or prevent girls and boys from learning in a gender equitable environment that is empowering to them and enables them to develop the skills that they will need throughout their lives.

Engaging with the media to make sure that they give good, gender sensitive coverage to gender and education issues has a crucial role to play in building awareness and support, changing attitudes and behaviour, and influencing policy and practice in order to ensure that this urgent action takes place and that achieving gender equality in education is made a reality.

**The Beyond Access team would be very interested to hear from anyone who has used this guide, or carried out work with the media on gender and education issues. Email us at [beyondaccess@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:beyondaccess@oxfam.org.uk) to let us know how you get on.**

### Find out more

- More detailed advice about developing media strategies can be found in A Media Handbook for Creating Social Change from the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy. A PDF version is available at <http://www.crlp.org/pdf/mediaguide.pdf>





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