Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN)

Gender and Social Exclusion - Position Paper

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Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations

A&E	Access and Equity
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFID	Department For International Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ESP	Education Sector Plan
ESSPIN	Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria
G&SE	Gender and Social Exclusion
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IQTE	Islamiyya, Qur'anic and Tsangaya Education
MTSS	Medium Term Sector Strategy
SAVI	State Accountability and Voice Initiative
PATHS 2	Partnership for Transforming Health Systems 2
SLP	State Level Programme
SPARC	State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
TA	Technical Assistance
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative

Introduction

1. This document outlines ESSPIN's initial plans, capacity and approach to address gender and social exclusion at the federal, state and at community levels. The approach is aligned with the Education Sector Plans of the Nigerian government authorities at the Federal and State levels. It presents the main issues faced by ESSPIN states and the way in which ESSPIN will aim to address those programmatically and in alignment with other DFID SLPs (SPARC, PATHS 2, and SAVI).

Conceptualization of gender and social exclusion

2. Gender equality refers both to the recognition that women and men have different needs and priorities, and the fact that women and men (and boys and girls) should 'experience equal conditions for realizing their full human rights, and have the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from national, political, economic, social and cultural development.

3. More specifically, by ''gender'' we refer to the non-biological differences between women and men (i.e. by opposition to ''sex''). Although ''gender'' is often used rhetorically as meaning ''girls/women's'' issues, this misconception is an impediment to addressing gender issues within ESSPIN. A simplistic (i.e. ''girls' issues'') definition of gender is problematic because it can justify ignoring issues, because those ''only refer to girls'' and because it fails to capture issues of practical and strategic importance to boys. As mentioned in the DFID Gender Manual: A Practical Guide: ''Promoting greater gender equality is about transforming women's and men's roles, identities and power relations to create a fairer society for all. Men are as affected by gender roles and expectations as women. There are situations where men's lives and opportunities are adversely affected by gender stereotypes, and where men and boys need targeted support. For examples, in some cultures, boys' education and attainment is undermined by images of manhood which are not associated with doing well in school.''

4. ''Social exclusion'' describes a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live''. (Reducing Poverty by Tackling Exclusion, DFID, 2005).

5. Gender is itself a driver of social exclusion. For instance, girls are often excluded of educational services by virtue of their gender identity. On the other hand, aspects of social exclusion are themselves gendered. Hence, we do not attempt to establish a hierarchy between gender and social exclusion but rather address those issues with a multidimensional and contextual approach. Those issues also ought to be addressed throughout all of ESSPIN programme outputs and beyond the scope of "Access and Equity"

Why should ESSPIN address gender and social exclusion?

6. In its document ''Killer Facts: Gender Equality and women's empowerment'', DFID makes a strong case for the education of women and girls.

   - Women account for almost two-thirds of the estimated 780 millions adults in the world who are illiterate. Globally, more than 77 million children are out of school; 44 million of them are girls (UNESCO).

   - In Africa, children of mothers who have received five years of primary education are 40% more likely to live beyond age 5 (Education factsheet/UNGEI).

   - On average, women with no education have about 4 more children than those with some secondary education (Ellis et al quoted in Gender and Growth briefing note).

   - Girls who stay in school are more likely to know key HIV prevention techniques, persuade their partners to use them and less likely to become HIV positive. In Swaziland, two-thirds of teenage girls in school are free from HIV, while two-thirds of girls out of school have HIV.

7. The recognition of gender issues in education faced by boys adds to the imperative of addressing gender within ESSPIN programming. Boys frequently under-perform in school and are often pressured to opt-out of school in favour of informal income-generating activities, such as hawking. *Al-majiri* boys or the children of nomadic pastoralists may be victimized into poverty as a result of the type of education they can access. Such issues remain largely under-reported and further justify ESSPIN's need to address gender and social exclusion.

What are the issues?

8. A basic capacity-needs assessment focusing on gender and social exclusion took place in April 2009. It included the visits to all five ESSPIN states and two of the programme log frame workshops. Some of the issues identified include:

   - Gender and social exclusion mean different things in different state contexts. Furthermore, gender issues are sometimes dissociated from the gendered nature (for instance, the issue of out-of-school boys in Lagos is often not seen as a gender issue because ''gender'' is mistakenly understood as meaning ''girls' issues'').

   - While ESSPIN staff understands civil society and how to work with stakeholders, their understanding of gender and social exclusion issues lacks some clarity.

   - Different SLPs are conducting activities aimed at identifying and addressing gender and social exclusion issues, but levels of cooperation/knowledge-sharing across SLPs varies.

   - Responsibility for addressing gender and social exclusion issues within ESSPIN needs to be further defined. It is generally assumed that A&E specialists will

cover these areas and that specialists for other outputs should focus on ''core'' issues.

- Specific activities to address discrimination need to be given greater emphasis within the log frames.

What does this mean for ESSPIN?

9. At the national level, commitments have been incorporated in the constitution and the national gender policy. Within the universal basic education platform, ESSPIN should contribute to the promotion of greater access and equity for girls and boys regardless of their religion, ethnic background, age, class or physical condition.

10. At the state level, each state Education Sector Plan (ESP) refers to specific commitments on equity and gender equality. Those commitments and the way in which ESSPIN state teams can assist state in delivering them are outlined in the following table.

State	ESP Commitments with specific relevance to G&SE
Jigawa	– Bridging Gender Gap with Special Attention to under –served geographical areas – Special Attention to Groups with special needs – Enrichment and mainstreaming of Islamiyya Education – Enriched Non-formal Education for Out-of-School population
Kaduna	– Provide free and compulsory basic education for all children by 2015 – Begin process of integration of BE curriculum within IQTE Schools – Improve adult literacy rates, with a focus on women
Kano	– Increase access to basic education – Eliminate gender disparities in basic education and narrow gender gaps in senior secondary access – Provide equitable educational opportunities for disadvantaged and vulnerable children – Increase the enrolment, retention and completion of children with special needs
Kwara	– Eliminate gender disparities in basic education and narrow gender gaps in senior secondary access – Provide equitable educational opportunities for disadvantaged and vulnerable children and increase the enrolment, retention and completion of children with special needs
Lagos	– Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) - Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children's group. – Access to Free Primary Education - Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to completely free and compulsory primary education of good quality – Literacy - Achieving a 50% improvement in all levels of adult literacy by 2015 especially women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults – Gender - Eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2015 and achieving gender equality in education for girls; full and equal access to basic education of good quality

11. At the federal level, commitments have been made on basic education, such as the Gender in Basic Education Policy and the recent federal Roadmap on education. The

federal Government should be equipped to identify and address gender and social exclusion issues and that ESSPIN should facilitate its capacity to do so.

12. At the purpose level in ESSPIN's national logframe, there are specific commitments to equity and gender equality. ESSPIN can play a role in assisting all education sector stakeholders to address gender and social exclusion issues.

How we will know we are making progress on gender and social exclusion?

13. While ESSPIN aspires to support the development of a fully gender equal and inclusive education system in Nigeria, the implementation of the G&SE strategy should provide progress in a number of areas.

14. At the federal level, gender-responsive budgeting, gender-aware budget tracking and budget envelopes for specific gender targets in education would indicate progress towards gender equality.

15. At the state level, a proactive and continual engagement to reduce the gender gap in education as part of the ESP and MTSS processes and the ratification of legislation on Gender Equity by State Houses of Assembly would exemplify important improvements.

16. In education quality, we could see the emergence of more gender-aware curricula and the recruitment and retention of qualified female teachers in both urban and rural areas.

17. At the community level, an increase in the number of girls attending school, a civil society which keeps states accountable on their ESP commitments on gender and a diminution of the stigma attached to the return of married girls to education are all examples of markers of progress which ESSPIN will keep its sight on.

Approach and methodology

18. ESSPIN's gender and social exclusion capacity-needs assessment and the process of designing the Gender and Social Exclusion Position Paper have taken place simultaneously with the State-level planning process. It has been possible to influence the development of State logframes and of the Access and Equity workplans by integrating newly generated information on gender and social exclusion. Similarly, meeting ESSPIN stakeholders (government officials, CSO representatives, ESSPIN employees, etc.) in each ESSPIN states has provided an opportunity to sensitize them to those issues.

19. While this work has provided an initial overview of the issues that ESSPIN plans to address, it is recognized that these issues have not been identified in completely exhaustive, systematic and prioritized way. Some of the factors which have

complicated this process include the lack of data on gender and social exclusion issues at state level, the relatively initial stage at which other SLPs have began identifying those issues, the weak understanding of gender within ESSPIN and the even weaker understanding of exclusion (i.e. often wrongly understood a synonymous for ''disability issues'').

20. ESSPIN's approach to tackling gender and social exclusion will revolve around the three areas, **capacity-building, communication** and **coordination**.

Capacity-building

Building a common understanding of gender and social exclusion and its implications in Nigeria

21. This should be done within ESSPIN, in cooperation with government officials and in alignment with other SLPs. The focus should be on capacity-building of state-level actors and government stakeholders. Resources from within ESSPIN state teams, experience from CSO representatives and additional TA will be needed to achieve this objective.

Committed individuals and organisations to represent G&SE issues in the MTSS process

22. The aim of this objective is to facilitate a process whereby government officials, CSO representatives and State Specialists can engage effectively in planning policy and activities to address gender and social exclusion issues as part of the MTSS process. This will require a mapping of the MTSS process to plan specific inputs and the creation and support to advocates for gender and social exclusion issues who understand the linkages between these issues and the realization of ESP commitments.

Communication

Experience-sharing amongst stakeholders

23. This objective allows for the circulation of best practices and lessons learned and the sharing of skills amongst education sector stakeholders. For instance, A&E specialists will be encouraged to meet more frequently in order to discuss successful approaches in using information on gender and social exclusion issues to influence policy-making for a more coordinated approach to capacity-building of government stakeholders at state level (as per item 15).

Communications and knowledge management

24. This will entail the translation of policies on gender into accessible forms, the identification of knowledge and data gaps and the communication of G&SE in an accessible way.

Coordination

Learn from the experience of past programmes

25. Gaining a better understanding of the progress, challenges and commitments made by the other donor programmes on Education (GEP/UNICEF on girls education, World Bank on CCT's, etc) on gender to avoid replication, utilize best practice and capitalize on past achievements. This will entail the creation of more effective mechanisms to share past experiences and the creation of forums for critical analysis and experience-sharing.

Coordinating and sharing resources with other SLPs

26. This could include lessons learning from the gender mainstreaming experience in Kaduna, coordinating gender mainstreaming approaches across SLPs and ensuring that baseline information on gender and social exclusion from all SLPs is available for planning within each state.