

9. Gender, missing data and SDG 4

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most striking ‘success stories’ in many countries over the past two decades has been the increase in girls’ enrolment in and progression through primary and secondary schooling (UNDP, 2020; UNESCO, 2021, 2022b). In most low- and middle-income countries, significant progress has been achieved in gender parity, which measures the ratio of girls to boys or women to men in a given aspect of education, particularly parity in enrolment and attendance. Yet despite policy attention at national and international levels to girls’ education and gender equality, including in the UN’s current Sustainable Development Agenda, and the increased emphasis on and availability of data to document changes, progress towards more substantive gender equality in education beyond gender parity has been piecemeal and unclear. Significant challenges remain, such as addressing gender-based violence and the persistence of discrimination linked to racism, sexism, xenophobia and poverty (Booth, 2022; DeJaeghere, Parkes & Unterhalter, 2013; Equal Measures, 2022; Psaki et al., 2022; Unterhalter et al., 2014; Unterhalter, Robinson & Ron Balsera, 2020). Importantly, there are also problems documenting, both quantitatively and qualitatively, the nature and form of gender and intersecting inequalities in education and their significance in realising Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 5, partly because of conceptual debates and disagreements and partly because of the uneven availability of relevant data (Faul, Montjouridès & Terway, 2021).

This chapter sets out how gender equality in education appears in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the data requirements associated with the targets for SDG 4 (the education goal), and some aspects of gendered missingness associated with the current indicators. In doing

so, the chapter reports on views on inadequate or missing data that have emerged from participatory discussions and interviews held as part of the AGEE (Accountability for Gender Equality in Education) project with a range of experts working on gender equality in education in South Africa, Malawi and internationally. The chapter explores some of the ‘drivers of missingness’ associated with these data gaps, and outlines steps for improving data for gender equality in and through education.

GENDER AND SDG 4 MEASURES

The SDGs spotlight gender equality as a key dimension of sustainable development (Sen, 2019). SDG 5 expresses an overall vision for gender equality, while targets associated with gender equality are linked with many other goals (Equal Measures, 2022). In SDG 4, gender parity is a feature of 8 of 12 indicators.¹ Targets 4.1 – 4.3 and Target 4.5 are concerned with eliminating gender disparities in access to, participation in, and skills and knowledge development in all levels of education from pre-primary to adult and vocational education. Target 4.7 includes ‘gender equality’ in the list of knowledge and skills to be achieved, but there is currently no indicator for this particular dimension. For three targets – Target 4a–c – concerned with means for implementing expanded provision and improved attendance, progression and attainment, looking at infrastructure, sanitation, vocational training and teacher training and supply, there are no gender indicators. Both the narrow focus on gender parity and the lack of gender indicators for some of the targets means there are currently serious gaps in the SDG framework relating to data that can adequately measure the full complexities of gender inequalities relating to education, which has consequences not only for realising SDG 4 but the whole SDG agenda.

The targets and associated indicators for SDG 4 are, nevertheless, more comprehensive than in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000–15), which, to some extent, demonstrates increased interest and experience in using data in educational management and governance since 2000 (Criado-Perez, 2019; Fontdevila, 2023; Scott, 2020; Sen, 2019; Smith & Benavot, 2019). The increased use of gender parity, meanwhile, partly reflects progress on collecting gender disaggregated

¹ For full list of SDG 4 targets and indicators, see: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4>

data linked with activism around the need for better data associated with women's rights and understandings of gender inequalities (Criado-Perez, 2019; Scott, 2020; Sen, 2019). Yet gender parity, as noted by many commentators on gender and data, does not fully capture the many complexities of gender inequalities and how these could be documented (Merry, 2016; Sen, 2019; Unterhalter, 2014). Thus, a key question is how we mobilise both the increased expertise in data use and available data to shift the focus in policy on gender equality in education beyond gender parity.

Gender parity in basic education indicators such as participation, progression and achievement is a measure widely used by educational planners, governments and campaigners. Examples include national education sector plans (ESPs), data collected and analysed by UNESCO's Institute for Statistics (UIS), and the related Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Reports published by UNESCO (e.g., UNESCO, 2018, 2020), as well as regional learning surveys, such as Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems (PASEC) and Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (TERCE). Huge advantages of gender parity as a measure for education indicators are that it is conceptually clear and methodologically straightforward, it uses existing data collection systems, such as Education Management Information Systems, examination boards or household surveys, and it is easily applicable and uses comparable data across different contexts (Unterhalter, Longlands & Peppin Vaughan, 2022).

When the SDG indicator framework was confirmed, specific 'custodian agencies' were identified for each goal and assigned overall responsibility for producing related data and the means for users to access them. For most global indicators for SDG 4, the custodian agency is UIS, which has compiled and maintains a comprehensive database on SDG educational indicators, including on enrolment, attendance, completion and learning achievement in reading and mathematics, with some disaggregation depending on context.² UIS does not, however, collate data on a range of issues relevant to how educational experiences vary by gender, such as discrimination associated with sexual orientation, gender-based violence, social norms and values relating to gender, social and institutional gender biases, or more detailed information on intersecting inequalities, some of which are currently collected through cross-national surveys.

² The UIS SDG database can be explored online at: sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org

Further, because UIS has not taken a leading role to improve gender and education data (Fontdevila, 2023), this task has increasingly been taken on by other initiatives, which build on scholarly work that has used critical perspectives to explore the gender data bias (Criado-Perez, 2019; Ferrant, Furet & Zambrano, 2020; Scott, 2020). These include ‘Women Count’³ led by UN Women, which aims to shift how gender statistics are created, used and promoted; ‘Equal Measures 2030’⁴ which aims to ‘connect data and evidence with advocacy and action on gender equality’ and the ‘Evidence for Gender and Education Resource’ (EGER)⁵ – an interactive database which documents research and evidence on gender and education for the global education and gender community. In most of these initiatives, however, there has been some discussion and interest in education, but limited exploration around how to improve education data beyond basic measures like enrolment and completion in formal schooling.

Overall, the SDGs represent an expanded vision of education, and gender equality in education, particularly compared to the MDGs (Wulff, 2020). In practice, however, the SDG measurement framework and the ways in which it uses existing data do not orient to a fuller engagement with the complexities of and the urgency of addressing gender inequalities associated with education.

MISSING DATA

As many critical commentaries highlight, key areas of gender associated with education, which are important for achieving SDG 4 as well as the broader Sustainable Development Agenda, are not captured in the current SDG measurement framework (Durrani & Halai, 2020; Unterhalter, 2019a). Yet little work has been done in terms of practical steps to address these gaps, either through careful review of what is missing or through systematic projects to build the required data infrastructure.

One exception is the Accountability for Gender Equality in Education (AGEE) project,⁶ which is developing an innovative indicator framework for gender equality in education (see below) that can support the SDG framework and help advocate for shifting the policy focus at both national

³ See: <https://data.unwomen.org/women-count>

⁴ See: <https://www.equalmeasures2030.org>

⁵ See: <https://egeresource.org>

⁶ See: <https://gendereddata.org>

and international levels beyond gender parity. Through a series of critical participatory discussions and in-depth interviews, the project has, as of January 2023, consulted with over 400 representatives from government education departments, national statistical offices, civil society, academia and youth advocacy groups in South Africa and Malawi and with a wide range of international students and organisations working on gender and education issues. These discussions have provided insight into what constitutes gender inequality in education in different locations and contexts as well as what issues are more applicable across diverse contexts, what data is perceived to be key to evaluating these inequalities, and how data and indicators might be used to bring about change. In addition, a range of pressing gender issues in education for which there are insufficient or no data have been highlighted. In South Africa, for example, important data gaps noted are associated with marginalised individuals and groups; intersecting inequalities; gender-based violence and safety around schools, universities and other sites of education; discrimination in education on the basis of sexuality and/or gender identity; and opportunities, achievements and what is valued in and through education beyond foundational subjects of mathematics and literacy. Participants also noted a need for detailed, disaggregated information about government budgeting and expenditure on education, including spending on gender equality, and some documentation of what levels of cooperation exist between government departments whose work connects to social policy and practice on gender and education (such as health, and women and children's affairs). While some of these issues arise from specific concerns in South Africa, similar points have emerged in consultation on the AGEE Framework in other countries in Africa (Malawi and Sierra Leone) and in discussion with staff from international organisations working in a range of countries (Peppin Vaughan & Longlands, 2022).

Analysis of the AGEE consultations suggests missing data on gender and education not captured in the SDG framework fall into three broad categories (Peppin Vaughan & Longlands, 2022). The first category concerns data gaps within existing indicators. While participants across locations noted significant data gaps, the nature of these gaps vary greatly by region. For example, many of the gaps noted relate to the inability to disaggregate data in multiple ways: while it is usually possible to disaggregate by gender, it is typically difficult to relate this to wealth quintiles, rural/urban depending on region, or ethnicity. One example is the indicator for 4.1.1, linked to the quality of education and the skills gap

for which there is insufficient information on intersecting inequalities, as additional forms of disaggregation are not yet uniformly available.

The second category of missing data concerns data which are collected but not yet used. Exam boards, for example, collect data on girls and boys entered for and attaining in examinations, but this information is not publicly available. With the exception of predominantly high-income countries involved with international large-scale assessments in education, such as PISA and TIMSS, it is difficult to assemble data looking at how different inequalities (e.g., ethnicity, language, income, rurality and gender) intersect in academic proficiency levels. Even when such data can be generated from existing surveys such as the Demographic Health Survey/Multi Indicator Cluster Survey (DHS/MICS), there has been hardly any use of data to explore and address the intersections of gender with other areas of educational inequality (Unterhalter, Longlands & Peppin Vaughan, 2022).

The third category of missing data, noted as key to understanding and tracing gender inequalities and equality in education, are data which are not yet collected (Unterhalter, Longlands & Peppin Vaughan, 2022), such as data for the gender equality component of SDG Target 4.7, which centres on what is taught on gender equality in schools. While the target lists a broad range of knowledge and skills (education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity), the current indicator only captures information on global citizenship education, and education for sustainable development. Information on knowledge and skills relating specifically to gender equality would require a new form of data collection; for example, adding to an existing UNESCO questionnaire to national governments on whether it is included in education policies, curricular frameworks, teacher training and student assessments (Unterhalter, Bella & Davies, 2019).

One important data gap identified by participants in AGEE consultations from across diverse contexts is the lack of systematic measures relating to gender-based violence in and around schools. Some comparable information can be gathered from existing population-based surveys (e.g., MICS, DHS) or school-based surveys (e.g., Global School-Based Student Health Survey (GSHS), Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children Study (HBSC) and TERCE), but country coverage and survey frequency vary greatly as does data disaggregation (Delprato, Akyeampong & Dunne, 2017; Heslop, Tamez & Parkes, 2021). Recent

research by Parkes et al. (2022) reveals a distinct disconnect between qualitative and quantitative research on sexual violence in schools, which contributes to the silence around the topic; the authors argue that greater dialogue between qualitative and quantitative data would facilitate more effective policy and practice.

Participants have also frequently noted how understanding intersecting inequalities, and how they play out in local settings, is key for allocating resources appropriately and appreciating how to disaggregate when looking at national and regional averages. Other areas of missing data that were mentioned include information on girls' leadership; girls' and boys' participation in life-skills and education about climate change and the environment; access to technology in and out of schools; some of the nuance about gender issues associated with forms of financing and education budgets; gender representation in curricula and textbooks; gender and sexual identities and understandings among children and young people; and the kinds of work, roles and identities girls and boys move into after formal schooling. A further repeated theme was missing gender data regarding out-of-school children, mobile populations, refugees, people who live in illegal settlements, and other vulnerable individuals and groups who are discriminated against and marginalised and thus often missed out from official data collection processes. There is scant data on processes linked to dismantling unjust, gender inequitable structures.

The data from the AGEE discussions highlight some recurrent themes with regards to missing data: first, the ongoing lack of data is an obstacle to understanding some of the conditions of the most marginalised and discriminated against individuals and groups. Second, these gaps are reinforced by the consistent under-resourcing of national statistical offices, which are unable to work towards improvements in data despite often being aware of the gaps. Third, there is an ongoing disconnect between the planning processes and projects concerned with what data to collect, and the insights among people working on gender education issues on the ground regarding what data it is important to collect.

Some of the issues with missing gender data are organisational and institutional, but the gendered missingness of data is also linked with the politics of engaging with gender equality, women's rights, and sexuality and non-binary identities, areas which remain contested and controversial (Jolly, 2022). An overarching issue in the lack of sustained work on gender and education data is the difficulty of constructing a shared understanding of gender equality and women's rights in and through edu-

cation. Understandings of gender equality in education tend to be narrow, centring on parity of basic education indicators, such as enrolment, attendance and academic proficiency. However, this limited framing and associated measures miss a wide range of educational experiences and processes through which gender and other intersectional inequalities can have a significant effect (Unterhalter, 2019a; Unterhalter, Robinson & Ron Balsera, 2020). Moreover, within the range of feminist perspectives on gender equality and gender equality in education, there are important differences; for example, distinctions between Western, Black African, Indigenous and Islamic feminist understandings (El Omari, Hammer & Khorichide, 2021; Hokowhitu et al., 2022; Kwachou, 2023).

A more substantive approach, therefore, requires sustained discussion and a multifaceted approach, convening across diverse perspectives and considering different and additional sources of data and measures that can capture how gender and intersecting inequalities have an impact in a wider range of areas, such as the values and norms in education systems, institutional resources and processes, classroom experiences, pedagogy and curriculum, teacher training, and outcomes beyond exam results in basic subjects. The ‘Call to Action on Advancing Gender Equality and Girls’ and Women’s Empowerment in and through Education’, launched at the Transforming Education Summit at the UN in New York in September 2022, recognised the importance of engaging with a wide range of actors. But it also specifically called on governments and international agencies to invest more in data and evidence on gender and education, particularly enabling disaggregation that would allow intersecting inequalities to be tracked more effectively (United Nations, 2022). This is an important beginning, but more needs to be built around this initiative. If national governments and the international community follow this commitment, it could be the start of some significant improvements in data systems during the remainder of the SDGs and could serve to feed into further discussions of how to better link the policy and practice needed to address transformations of unjust structures and the data to document these.

In many contexts, some gender issues can be controversial and sensitive, meaning that gaining policy attention and gathering relevant data can be politically difficult – for example, identifying sexual orientation as an area of inequality. In addition, there may also be silences and shame around documenting dimensions of poverty, gender-based violence, adolescent pregnancy, female genital mutilation (FGM) and non-binary gender identities. Much clearer coordination is needed between the forms

of public policy needed to address gender injustices associated with education and the data to support this.

A further issue is that, while there has been significant mobilisation around gender data in both international, and some national women's campaigns, there is a disjuncture between these initiatives and the education sector (Peppin Vaughan, 2019). The conceptualisation of education as a sphere separate from other social relationships and areas of social policy has resulted in a separation between gender activism and education reform in many countries, and at the international level. For example, recent initiatives to improve gender statistics under SDG 5, for example, 'Women Count', and various related national initiatives (led by UN Women) have not engaged in depth with education campaigns.

Thus, missing gender data in SDG 4 are linked in with ideas, politics and processes of building a gender and education infrastructure and how data are selectively used or overlooked in public policy. We turn now to outline work we have done in the AGEE project to address some of these gaps.

ADDRESSING GAPS: THE AGEE PROJECT

In the AGEE project we have worked to delineate what further steps are needed to address data gaps on gender equality in and through education and what can be done to make better use of data that are currently available. We have integrated suggestions from the project's consultation phase (see above) in the development of a framework for understanding gender inequalities in education and progress towards gender equality and enhancing women's rights. This work has entailed developing a substantive definition of gender equality in and through education, drawing on the capability approach (see Unterhalter, Longlands & Peppin Vaughan, 2022).

The resulting AGEE Framework sets out six distinct but interconnected 'domains' that we consider (based on conceptual and empirical work) should be represented within a more holistic measurement framework for gender equality and education: Resources; Values; Opportunities; Participation in Education; Knowledge, Understanding and Skills; and Outcomes.

The Resources domain reflects the goods and services required for a gender equitable education system. Resources include, for example: funding, policies, school infrastructure, trained teachers, administrators, support workers and information. The Values domain contains informa-

tion on norms relating to gender and education, for example, provisions in constitutions, and survey data on attitudes to girls' and women's education. The Opportunities domain reflects the policy context and economic and social environment, such as laws, and national curricula. This domain includes ideas about, for example: the policy context and how this is put into practice; gendered aspects of the political, economic, geographic and cultural/social environment; and gender relations within educational institutions. The Participation domain considers gender differences in the capability to participate in education, and levels of participation and progression of girls and boys in all levels of education. Measures in this domain might include, for example: looking at differences in participation in education by socio-economic status, location, race, ethnicity. The Knowledge, Understanding and Skills domain captures information about learning across all areas of the curriculum (not just literacy and numeracy), ideally including values around rights and gender equality; and forms of learning and teaching. Finally, the Outcomes domain takes a broad definition of the results of education, for example, to include economic empowerment, political participation, and speaking out against gender-based violence (Unterhalter, Longlands & Peppin Vaughan, 2022).

By gathering information across all six AGEE domains, it is possible to provide a substantive picture of gender equality in an education system, as well as a range of forms of inequality and marginalisation. The AGEE Framework is also designed to be flexible to context, so that it is possible to get a sense of levels of inequalities in capabilities across different locations and situations.⁷ In the longer term, it is envisaged that the AGEE Framework will inform data use at international, national and local levels.⁸

Work in the AGEE project between 2021 and 2023 is concerned with the global aims of the SDG measurement system and entails creating a cross-national dashboard of indicators linked to the domains of the AGEE Framework. This dashboard will allow evaluations of how suc-

⁷ Flexibility and responsiveness are important because of the variability of data availability and issues across different regions and countries, for example, if completion data are hard to collect, or certain forms of violence are of particular issue in a specific context, there can be some flexibility for which measures are used.

⁸ For more detail on the application of the AGEE Framework, see <https://genderdata.org>

successful initiatives and policies have been in addressing the injustices associated with the multiplicity of forms of gender inequality in education.⁹ In developing this dashboard, the aim is both to construct an alternative measurement framework by drawing on existing data that have not yet been used in SDG 4, and also to lobby for further improvements in data collection in response to gaps identified.

While this cross-national dashboard is still under construction, based on analysis of the views from the expert survey, Table 9.1 shows some of the candidate indicators for each of the domains.

While there are many areas that the AGEE cross-national dashboard does not currently cover, it is a pragmatic attempt to consult on the important issues affecting gender and education, survey which data are available (and which may be available shortly, or may need to be lobbied for), and then take an appropriate selection of indicators that represent different areas of gender inequality in education that reflect a more substantive and holistic approach. Further, the process of building the dashboard has illustrated that more gender education indicators exist in some domains (e.g., Resources and Participation) than others, as it has been much harder to identify sources of data for Values relating to gender and education, Opportunities (especially those which reflect intersecting inequalities associated with ethnicity, region and poverty) and information relevant to a broader understanding of gender equality in Outcomes to education beyond exam results.

To help address the serious disconnect between public policy on gender equality in education and the ways in which data are currently used, a key aim of the AGEE project is to develop a global community of practice with actors from across different fields, to gain a more holistic perspective on gender and education data. Further, the hope is that this cross-sectoral community will be better able to lobby and advocate for improvements in data collection to address data gaps in future.

A key challenge is the level of resources that can potentially be mobilised to both collate existing data and collect new data, across the range of institutions and agencies involved in education data for SDG 4. At the national level, statistical offices are often very stretched and focused on meeting requirements of existing SDG measures and national data collection responsibilities. The exploration, collection and monitoring of new

⁹ Details on the process of developing this dashboard can be found on the project website, <https://genderdata.org>

Table 9.1 Candidate indicators for the AGEE cross-national dashboard, and data which are not currently able to be included

Domain	Examples of candidate indicators that meet the criteria for inclusion in the AGEE cross-national dashboard and the number of countries for which data are available	Examples of data which are available but require intensive work to compile from a range of sources	Examples of data which are not currently collected in a form that meets the AGEE criteria
Resources	Proportion of total government spending on education (SDG indicator 1.a.2; 156 countries with at least one data point for the period 2010–19) Proportion of population with access to a mobile phone network (SDG indicator 9.c.1; data for this indicator exist for more than 160 economies)	Household expenditures on education as a proportion of average household income	Proportion of budget of education which is gender responsive/transformational
Values	Women and men over 15 guaranteed full and equal access to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education (SDG indicator 5.6.2; 153 countries have completed or partial data)	[No indicators currently identified]	Attitudes on whether boys are more suited to STEM than girls

Domain	Examples of candidate indicators that meet the criteria for inclusion in the AGEE cross-national dashboard and the number of countries for which data are available	Examples of data which are available but require intensive work to compile from a range of sources	Examples of data which are not currently collected in a form that meets the AGEE criteria
Opportunities	Proportion of children aged 5–17 years engaged in paid child labour (SDG indicator 8.7.1; nationally representative and comparable data are currently available for around 100 low- and middle-income countries)	Percentage distribution of households and de jure population by time to obtain drinking water	Positions/management positions of female teachers
Participation in Education	Adjusted GPI of GER in tertiary education (UIS/SDG indicator 4.3.2; widely available from administrative data)	Proportion of girls in three lowest socio-economic status (SES) quintiles whose mother has completed primary school, and proportion who have completed secondary school (calculate from DHS)	Measures bringing together conflict status with refugees and participation in learning

Domain	Examples of candidate indicators that meet the criteria for inclusion in the AGEE cross-national dashboard and the number of countries for which data are available	Examples of data which are available but require intensive work to compile from a range of sources	Examples of data which are not currently collected in a form that meets the AGEE criteria
Knowledge, Understanding and Skills	Gender Parity Index (GPI) of students enrolled in STEM courses (UIS; varied availability) GPI of students accessing ICT skills training (SDG indicator 4.4.1; as of 2020, 91 economies have ever reported ICT skills data since 2005).	Women enrolled in research degrees as a proportion of women with undergraduate degrees	Learning outcomes relating to gender equality
Outcomes	Proportion of women in positions in national and local institutions, including (a) the legislatures; (b) the public service; and (c) the judiciary, compared to national distributions, by sex, age, disability and population group (SDG indicator 16.7.1; availability varies by component but often available for 193 countries) Proportion of time spent by women and men on unpaid domestic and care work (SDG indicator 5.4.1; 90 countries with data between 2000 and 2020)	Access to essential health services for women (taking account of SES, location and level of need – may need calculation from DHS)	Speaking out about gender-based violence (GBV) (e.g., presence of girls' and women's voices on aspects of school-related GBV) Women's leisure time/ GPI leisure time

Source: UN Stats SDG Metadata portal (2022) [<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal/SDMXMetadataPage>, accessed December 2022] and UIS database.

data sources may thus be a step too far unless more investment is made in national statistical offices and building education departments' capacity. But the lack of detailed data on gender and other intersecting inequalities both reflects and limits the opportunities to integrate a more substantive gender perspective in national government and statistical institutions (Fukuda-Parr, 2019; Jerven, 2019).

Similarly, international agencies often have limited capacity to undertake the harder task of producing additional gender data. Projects from aid agencies, even those that are large and have a focus on girls' education, may be irregular or limited to narrow monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) frameworks, rather than working up more nuanced metrics, because of wider accountability structures they are part of. Likewise, civil society organisations, especially smaller, grassroots entities which have the relevant experience of the most pressing gender issues in education in particular contexts are likely to have limited resources to either collect new data or lobby for improved measurement frameworks.

Compounding this issue, particularly since 2015, is that many contemporary crises relating to health, climate, conflict and political and economic instability have brought substantial disruption to even basic data collection processes, while at the same time creating the need for additional measures to adequately capture the gendered effects of these events. Conflict and climate-related emergencies in specific contexts, for example, have severely affected the capacity of national statistical agencies to gather routine statistics (Fukuda-Parr, 2019; Jerven, 2019). Emerging research has demonstrated the gendered effects of climate injustices on education, which are not currently measured (Pankhurst, 2022). The Covid-19 pandemic has had a global impact on the collection of education data, while simultaneously creating an urgent need to gather new information to understand the gendered effects on children's learning and wellbeing (UNESCO, 2022a).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the ways in which gender does and does not appear in SDG 4, highlighting key aspects of gender and intersecting inequalities in and through education on which data are missing or inadequate. These data gaps hinder processes to better understand, analyse, monitor and address the many and complex gender injustices associated with education and various connected areas of social policy. These gaps, therefore, have consequences for the wellbeing of individuals, social

relations and societies, and the achievement of the overall orientation of SDG 4, SDG 5 and the broader sustainable development agenda. There is extensive work to be done at cross-national, national and local levels. Particular forms of coordination are required between governments, organisations, institutions and individuals that do not validate harm, violence or reinscribe inequalities, but rather, aim to pool resources and knowledge to dismantle deeply entrenched forms of injustice. Positioning gender as a key element is a vital step to progress.

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