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Gender Review

Meeting our commitments to gender equality in education

Accountability for gender equality

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1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to consider approaches to understanding and evaluating accountability in education from the perspective of concerns with gender equality in education. This task has a number of facets and complexities, because ‘gender’ is not one simple set of relationships, and the notion of gender equality in education can be read in a number of different ways. Thus developing adequate conceptualizations for the key terms (accountability, and gender equality and education) needs to take account of gender as a particularly fluid, contextually located and contested idea signaling processes, which link with different formulations of policy and practice to enhance gender equality and accountability in education. In this paper we look at a range of different meanings of accountability, distilled in the main GEM Report (UNESCO, 2017) and consider their implications in relation to debates about gender and gender equality in education. The aim of the paper is to develop a ‘bespoke’ interpretation of accountability and different forms of gender equality in education through which we can assess a number of research studies and country examples of forms of accountability.

The structure of the argument is as follows: Section 1 presents a review of different meanings of gender and gender equality in education and considers how these can be used to interpret different facets of accountability. Section 2 considers gender issues associated with three of these facets of accountability – forms of participation, accountability structures and processes, and evaluations of accountability aims and outcomes. This section of the paper reports on some published research in this area, and highlights some research gaps. Section 3 looks at some of the gender effects of accountability mechanisms in education, looking particularly at current and recent historical examples, drawing out where outcomes appear to have enhanced gender equalities and where perverse effects are apparent and how these might be addressed. A conclusion attempts to bring the threads of the argument together commenting on some gender issues associated with who is accountable and who holds whom to account, some gendered effects of accountability processes, and how this varies across different sites, looking particularly at governments, schools, the organisations which support teachers, and present the concerns of parents.

2. Meanings of gender and gender equality in education and how this links with different facets of accountability

There are a number of different ways to understand gender, and this has implications for approaches to developing policy and practice on gender equality in education. As highlighted in the GEM Gender Review 2016 (UNESCO, 2016) gender equality in education entails not just securing gender parity and equal numbers of girls and boys, women and men, in different phases of education, but also building an integrated and substantive policy and practice environment for gender equality in education linked with decent work, forms of participation, and relationships to sustain health and wellbeing. There is sometimes confusion of the ‘thin’ notion of gender parity (equal numbers participating) with the ‘thick’ notion of substantive gender equality that looks beyond counting numbers of boys and girls and is concerned to address and change some of the causes of gender inequalities and develop an agenda linked with advancing and protecting women’s rights. Thus, a more substantive notion of gender equality in education may be concerned with what is taught, a challenge to stereotyped portrayals, pedagogical processes, the outcomes of education and whether an education system supports a women’s rights agenda, or is complicit with undermining this. However, the relationship between the thin notion of gender parity and the thicker notion of substantive gender equality in education is not always clear. For example, is it necessary to have gender parity in access and progression in order to advance some of the processes of change in the curriculum and pedagogic processes, and is monitoring this as an accountability mechanism essential; or can these two happen independently of each other? Can gender parity in enrolments or progression and the functioning of the accountability structures, which monitor this, be associated with an undermining of gender equality in curriculum or labour market access and political participation? To shine some light on these issues a number of distinctions are useful.

A number of reviews (Unterhalter, 2005; Daly, 2005; Fennell and Arnot, 2007; Connell, 2010; Aikman, Halai, & Rubagiza, J. (2011); Aikman and Rao, 2012; Aikman and Unterhalter, 2013; Holmarsdottir, Nomlomo, Farag and Desai, 2013, Unterhalter, 2016) consider how the term gender has been deployed in discussions of education policy and practice. In a recent analysis we have made (Unterhalter and North, 2017) we separate out three kinds of meaning associated with gender, highlighting how these different formations of the concept lead to different formulations of what gender equality in education entails. These different formulations in their turn can each be associated with a different facet of understanding accountability in education. All these distinctions rest on the proposition that gender is a *fluid* rather than static category of analysis, policy and practice, and can be understood in a range of different ways. However, these contested and contrasting notions of gender are in tension with some particular forms of the idea that are powerfully fixed through law, religious sanction, cultural stereotypes, and everyday practices. Unterhalter and North (2017, 30) point out that meanings of gender range along a continuum

from thinking at one end about gender as a socialised version of sex, conceptualised only along one binary division of male/female, moving through multifaceted structural relationships and mutable performances and intermixtures of sex, sexuality and gender, to at the other end an ideal, ethical or aspirational version of gender equality that dissolves or recognises particular forms of similarity or difference, and is more or less interested in how ideas are realised in practice. There are a number of positions in between and various permutations that combine elements along this continuum.

We draw on this notion of a continuum to highlight a number of ways in which the idea of gender is implicated in different ideas about gender equality in education and different forms of accountability. Thus ideas about gender equality in education and approaches to thinking about accountability to support this can be analysed, in terms of the distinctions made in Unterhalter & North (2017, 30-38), which separate out strands of thinking concerned with discussing i) what gender is, ii) what gender as a framework of analysis does, and iii) what the concept of 'gender', linked to normative aspirations regarding justice and equality, aims for and thus how outcomes may be evaluated

If we consider these three strands in relation to discussions of gender equality in education and forms of accountability, when gender is understood as a 'thing' it is usually linked with biological categories of sex (men and women, boys and girls) or politically, economically or socially constructed roles or relationships assigned to these groups. From this perspective the notion of gender equality in education can be captured by the idea of gender parity. This entails ensuring equal numbers of girls and boys, or women and men, access and progress through school or higher education. It also looks at ensuring equal numbers are employed in different kinds of work, at various levels of seniority and included in decision making in educational institutions. Gender parity as a form of gender equality in education here becomes a key aspiration for policy and practice and the main method of evaluation is counting.

With regard to education accountability, this meaning of gender and gender equality in education entails ensuring participation by equal numbers of women and men as actors in all the relevant decision-making and review processes associated with education accountability, notably governments, schools, organisations which work with teachers and parents. This could entail considering the numbers of men and women engaging in different structures where citizens hold government to account, governing bodies and management committees hold education institutions (schools, colleges and universities) to account, and teachers unions, professional organisations and teachers as a body in employment are held to account by their members, organisations concerned with professional practice, organisations of employers and parents. The gender patterns of participation in sites of education decision making where actors are held to account thus need investigation. These sites comprise parliaments, committees, cadres of civil servants, education institutions, organisations at

global, national and local levels including school boards and teacher union structures. Intersection with other demographics, such as race, ethnicity, class or sexuality can give more nuanced and refined readings of this form of accountability. Assessing gender accountability in this form is thus concerned with documenting the politics of presence and participation primarily in terms of numbers.

A second set of meanings focuses on what the concepts associated with gender as a critical framework or approach to analysis, *does* to define and explain inter-related processes associated with the exercise of political, economic, social and cultural power, the formation of hierarchy, social division and exclusion all of which bear on accountability processes. This approach is concerned to expose and critique the intersecting, cross-cutting relationships that encompass global, national and local networks that support intersecting inequalities, and different processes associated with the exercise of power. This critical framework entails implicit or explicit efforts to support and sustain equalities and consider women's rights as a key dimension of accountability in education. This kind of analysis allows us to develop a thicker meaning of gender equality in education that directs attention to the ideas, practices, and relationships entailed. It goes considerably beyond a concern with simple gender parity and equal numbers participating as accountable actors, and would entail examining processes, assumptions, and practice regarding gender equality for example in developing and reviewing curriculum, organising teaching and formulating values around pedagogy, reflecting on assessment, decision making and management, and employment. Deploying this conceptual framework of critical analysis associated with gender leads us to understand gender equality as connected with other formations of equality, supported by work within and beyond education, entailed in structures and processes of representation, analysis of the social determinants of health, and long chains that connect policies and practices across global, national and local divisions. Drawing on frameworks which utilise the concept of gender and questions structures of power and inequality in education presents us with questions about how or whether accountability processes work to support or undermine more substantive ideas about equality both within and beyond education.

From this perspective, we would look beyond counting the presence or absence of particular accountability actors, and would also consider the ideas and practices associated with gender in a range of institutional processes concerned with different forms and sites of accountability. These range from policy formation to implementation in a range of different settings such as central government, middle ranks of administration, schools, teacher organisations and civil society groups. We have written that across the arc from policy to its realisation there are a range of groups situated in what we have called terrains of a middle space (Unterhalter and North, 2017), and some of these such as the media, middle level administrators, professional associations and civil society, are important sites for building and connecting accountability structures and processes. In examining these we would look for research data on how ideas about gender are deployed in decisions about leadership, decision-making, and professional practice. Critical policy analysis which investigates what the concept of gender 'does' might consider, how power is exercised in education accountability processes. Thus, questions about accountability in education might consider who sets agendas, what these comprise, and how gender appears or disappears in these. Forms of language and the connection or disjunction between ideas associated with gender and education delivery is also a key concern. Assessments of the distribution of resources in terms of gender and power, the indicators selected for monitoring and evaluation, and negotiations in response to evaluations are all processes associated with accountability in education that this perspective brings under scrutiny. Other areas of accountability to investigate include gender mainstreaming in education policies, and forms of gender planning and budgeting to distribute resources more fairly. Further nuance can be added

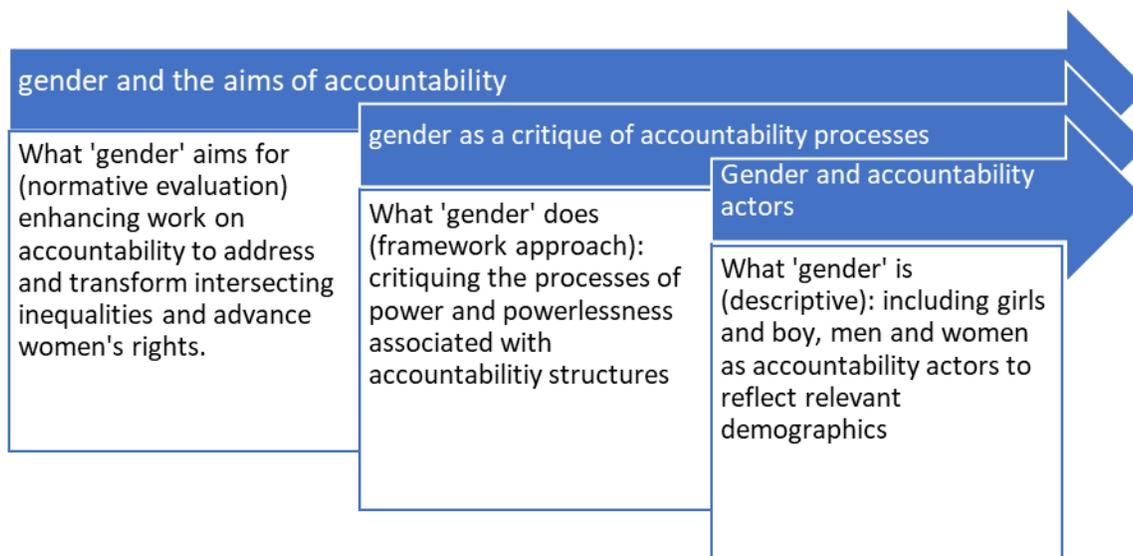
to this critical perspective on accountability processes by understanding the reproduction of gender inequalities as a complex relationship of power, which intersects with other formations of social division.

A third set of meanings considers the term gender associated with aims around articulating and defending normative ideas about equalities and advancing women’s rights, deepening forms of decolonization, and questioning existing forms of economic, political and social power. In this meaning gender equality in education is linked with various formulations around human rights, women’s rights, thinking about education as a space to secure and advance equality of capabilities, opportunities and aspiration, and considering the links between education and various forms of social justice. Here accountability entails particular attention to the connection between aims and outcomes, and critiques of sometimes perverse gender effects of accountability policy in practice. This facet of reflection on accountability might entail responsiveness to voices of dissent from many oppositional interlocutors, or marginally located actors, linking these to consideration of how to consider accountability processes to achieve more equitable and effective processes and outcomes in education.

Schematically we can show these three approaches to thinking about gender, gender equality in education and forms of accountability as follows:

	Meaning of gender	Meaning of gender equality in education	Facet of education accountability
What gender ‘is’	Biological sex or socially constructed roles and relationships	Gender parity; removal of structural barriers which prohibit gender parity	<i>Participation</i> by equal numbers of men and women, boys and girls in decision making and evaluation
What the concept of gender ‘does’	A critical lens to consider power and intersecting inequalities	Substantive equality within and beyond education institutions considering structures and forms of agency	<i>Accountability processes</i> that support building the transformative conditions for gender equality and sustain equitable institutions
What the concept of gender aims for	A link term connecting discussions of equalities and rights, particularly women’s rights	Policies and practices within and beyond education that support the connection of rights, equalities and social justice visions	Critical review of <i>accountability outcomes</i> in education considering whether they do or do not advance and protect normative frameworks (rights, capabilities, social justice)

In policy and practice these three meanings of gender, gender equality in education and accountability may be separated out, selectively combined or intertwined. The diagram below shows an ideal form of the relationship where the three forms of accountability build on each other,



But as we will show in the following sections, from some of the research we discuss, this ideal form of the three facets of accountability working together is rarely present in practice.

In the next section we present a range of research evidence around forms of understanding gender and three facets of accountability – actor participation, processes, and outcomes from normative evaluations which review aims.

3. Gender and actors’ participation in accountability structures

How much are women and men from different demographics present as actors in the institutions that are formally accountable for delivering on gender equality, such as governments, multi-lateral organisations and a range of state structures at district and local level? Are these patterns similar or different in non-state bodies, such as NGOs, concerned with education, and CSOs which can represent parents’ and teachers’ views? And what does the picture look like in education institutions, such as schools, colleges and universities? What processes to enhance the participation exist and can any connection be made between gender equitable participation in various structures, and forms of education provision and outcome?

We have reviewed a range of institutions which comprise formal structures that are accountable for the delivery of global and national gender and education policies. As of January 2017, 10 women are serving as Head of State and 9 are serving as Head of Government out of a total of 193 countries represented at the UN (UN Women, 2017). Table 1 shows the proportion of women working as Members of legislative bodies.

Women's Representation in National Parliaments

REGIONAL AVERAGES

	Single House or lower House	Upper House or Senate	Both Houses combined
Nordic countries	41.7%	---	---
Americas	28.2%	27.6%	28.1%
Europe - OSCE member countries including Nordic countries	27.5%	26.0%	27.2%
Europe - OSCE member countries excluding Nordic countries	26.1%	26.0%	26.1%
Sub-Saharan Africa	23.9%	22.9%	23.8%
Asia	19.7%	16.0%	19.3%
Arab States	18.2%	12.6%	17.5%
Pacific	14.6%	37.1%	17.2%
<i>Regions are classified by descending order of the percentage of women in the lower or single House</i>			

Source: Inter Parliamentary Union, 2017

It can be seen that only in the Nordic countries is the proportion of women approaching the same ratio to that of women in the population. In all other regions women comprise around a quarter of less of those accountable through holding office in law making bodies. Women have the lowest level of presence in legislative bodies in Upper House or Senate type bodies in the Arab states (12.6%) and when women's presence in both lower and upper house legislatures are combined the smallest proportions of women serve in the parliaments of the Pacific region, the Arab states and Asia.

While lawmakers are accountable to their constituencies to develop and oversee policies in education and the range of areas (health, housing, transport, employment, finance) that contributes to the development of the education system, the people directly accountable for delivering these policies are civil servants. We have 2010 figures for Central Government Employment (Civil Service) in OECD countries: Women comprise 57% of the general government workforce and 50% of the central government workforce (OECD / EUPAN, 2015, p.11). However, the share of central government jobs filled by women differs in respect of different occupations. Thus, female employees comprise 65% of secretarial positions, 35% of middle managers, 27% of top managers, and 80% of part-time employees. The most senior management positions are filled by men in most countries (OECD / EUPAN, 2015, p.11). Thus the more senior the civil servant post in OECD countries, with the more strategic responsibilities for gender equality in education policies and practices, the less likely it is that women will be in post. For example, the UK, women make up 54% of all civil servants, but only 40% of those in senior roles (Lilly, 2016). There is also great variation in women's representation, and strategies to increase it, cross nationally. For example, in Pakistan gender quotas have been used to increase the number of women employed in the civil service but progress towards parity remains slow. Within the country's regions, women are best represented in Punjab following an increase in women's quota from 5% to 15% in the 2016/17 budget (Agha, 2016).

With regard to those branches of the civil service that have a specific brief comprising international development, with concerns which focus on education and development assistance the picture is uneven, though generally there are higher proportions of women working in these departments in OECD countries than the average for the civil service. The total workforce of USAID comprises 47% women. Among total permanent officials and managers, women make up 48% of 'Executive/ Senior Level' posts, 44% of 'Mid Level' posts, and 60% of 'First Level' posts (USAID, 2016). USAID human resource policy has a special incentive system to promote women who are interested in gender issues "the existing awards system and other incentives [is intended] to recognize gender champions in Washington and missions who demonstrate exemplary efforts to promote gender integration and to achieve the goals of this policy" (USAID, 2012, p.19). As part of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, "USAID provided financial support to meet the training, transportation, and security needs of female negotiators, and allocated funds to support the inclusion of women in high level decision making processes, including formal peace negotiations, donor conferences, and transitional political processes." (USAID, 2012, p.4). DFID also employs a large proportion of women (55% of all staff) (DFID, 2016, p.13). At Senior Civil Service roles, this stands at 43% (DFID, 2016, p.43). DFID has a strategy to increase numbers of underrepresented groups throughout the organisation and at senior levels in "making it structurally possible e.g. through creating more SCS part time and job share opportunities" (DFID, 2016, p.7). Similarly, SIDA's Plan for Gender Equality 2016–2018 also includes commitment to "Strengthened gender equality work at SIDA as an organisation and employer" (SIDA, 2017, p.1).

By contrast, in the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in 2015 over 57 per cent of staff were women, yet women made up fewer than 34 per cent of Senior Executive Service and only 27 per cent of heads of missions and posts (DFAT, 2015). The Department assessment indicates women applying for senior leadership roles at proportionally lower rates than men, despite performance data showing that women are performing as well as or better than men at all levels. The department concludes that this suggests 'the department's culture constrains women's choices and it is not applying the merit principle fully or making the most of its talent' (DFAT, 2015, p. 4). It can thus be seen that there is a reasonable presence of women in departments accountable for work on development assistance some of which entails attention to education and gender equality. However in some organisations the proportion of women declines at more senior levels of employment.

In multilateral bodies with a specific brief concerned with education and gender equality the picture is also mixed. The Director General of UNESCO is a woman but there are no publicly available data on gender balance within the organisation. However, the 'Priority Gender Equality Action Plan 2014-2021', highlights the importance of "Capacities and resources for equal participation and leadership in decision making by men and women in all UNESCO's domains of competence" (UNESCO, 2014, p.26). Indicators to monitor this include women's inclusion in a wide range of accountability and decision making bodies. UNICEF established women's representation in senior staffing posts and decision making bodies as one of "five benchmarks against which improvements in institutional capacity and systems to support gender equality results are being tracked" (UNICEF , 2015, p.17) Other benchmarks comprise (1) Effective knowledge sharing and communications for promoting gender equality; (2) recruiting staff and building capacity in gender across the organization; (3) Gender performance of country programme management plans; (4) Gender performance on evaluations of UNICEF programmes; and (5) Programme expenditures on gender results." (UNICEF, 2015, p.17). Improvements have been noted in the presence of women in senior posts. Thus in 2014, 45 per cent of all P-5 or higher positions

were held by women, as compared to 42 per cent in 2012 and 44 per cent in 2013, (UNICEF, 2015, p.17). But this is still slightly short of parity. We could find no data on World Bank staff ratios. The Bank's "Gender Strategy" focuses on partners and projects rather than staff and seniority: Its 2015 Gender strategy noted: "Thus far the Bank has leveraged its capacity to support women's roles in decision making at the local level unevenly across countries. CDD projects and Bank-supported consultations generally involve women participants and try to ensure that they have a significant role in governance of CDD projects" (World Bank, 2015, p.59). For the OECD office in Paris we could find no data on staff in the organisation as a whole, but counts through the six most senior levels (source: <http://www.oecd.org/about/whodoeswhat/>) show men in the following positions: Secretary general, 2 out of 3 deputy secretary generals, Executive director, 16 of 21 directors, and 7 of eight heads of agencies and special entities.

When we look at Staff in Foundation and international NGOs that have specific briefs concerned with areas of gender equality that bear on education we see a similarly mixed picture. For example, in the Gates Foundation on the basis of 2017 data: 10 of 13 of the executive leadership team are men, 12 of 15 in the global development team are men, 9 of 13 in global health team are men, 9 of 14 in the global policy and advocacy team are men, and there are 2 men and 2 women in the operations team. (Gates Foundation, 2017).

Within formalised accountability structures of governments there is often a minimal presence of women, and women's perspectives on these committees are often underrepresented. For example, select committees or legislative committees play a crucial role in holding governments to account in parliamentary democracies. Figures from the Select Committee Data Archive Project in the UK show that, women are outnumbered on Commons select committees despite several decades of consistent rises in the number of female MPs. The proportion of female *chairs* of such committees is typically lower than the proportion of women in parliament (Wilson, 2017).

Women comprise a large proportion of those employed as teachers worldwide, and in some regions amount to nearly three quarters of all at work in the education system. Teacher unions are a key organising structure, where teachers can hold their employers to account, and can also be held to account for professional conduct to develop gender equality. Education International has conducted quinquennial surveys among member organisations looking at women as a proportion of members of teacher unions. The 2014 Women's Conference report, noted the need to break the glass ceiling in terms of increasing the presence of women in leadership positions in education unions and putting gender issues as a key components of all campaigns (Education International, 2014).

In higher education full professors play a key leadership role, both in administering institutions and organisations, and in shaping the direction of scholarship. We can find no overview of the proportion of women globally employed at this level. However some indicative figures are that for the U K 19,975 academic staff were employed on a contract level described as a professor in 2015/16 . Of these 4,775 were women representing 24% (HESA, 2017). Only 54 black women serve as university professors (Solanke, 2017). Women comprise 18% of full university professors across Europe (Vernos, 2013), 26% working at this grade in India (Morley and Crossouard, 2014), and 27% in Australia (Universities Australia, 2017). In most African countries, including South Africa, where there have been affirmative action policies in place, women are a small proportion of full professors. (Mabaleko and Mlambo, 2017)

In schools, although women comprise a majority of teachers worldwide, 67% of teachers at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary; although just 44% of all academic staff in tertiary education) (OECD, 2017), women comprise a minority of school leaders in a number of countries: school or college principals or vice chancellors of universities. Women comprise 44.6% of head teachers in secondary schools in OECD countries, but there is considerable variation between countries. This proportion is low in Japan (6%), Korea (13.3%), Brazil, (7.45%), medium in Netherlands (30.8%), Denmark (32.4), and New Zealand (33.1), and high in some countries: Russia (77.8%), Latvia (77%), , Bulgaria, (71%). In England, where 73.3 per cent of all teachers are female, only 65.1 per cent of head teachers are female (Department for Education, 2013, p.3). In South Africa, while data is not available for the country as a whole, one study has shown that while women make up 71 per cent of the total educators in Gauteng province, in 2010 they comprised just 37% of school principals in the province (Lumby et al., 2010, p.8.). In the USA an analysis of ten years of data on women and men principals (to 2015) showed that their career paths were becoming more similar, but that the men still predominated in the most senior roles, and women of colour were proportionately less promoted (Robinson et al, 2017)

There is as yet no comprehensive overview of the proportion of women who occupy seats on local school governing committees. The Right to Education (RTE) Act of 2009 in India stipulated that 50% of seats on the school management committees of government schools should be held by women, but there is no similar stipulation for the fast-growing private school sector in India. In Bangladesh 30% of seats on school management committees are reserved for women. There are requirements for a proportional presence of women on SMCs in South Africa and Tanzania, but assessments of education quality in both countries link this with issues of location, class and poverty, and do not comment on whether women's presence has or has not been associated with particular outcomes (Bush and Glover, 2016), although Masue, & Askvik, (2017) show how membership of local school committees enhances access to information and empowerment for the women who occupy these positions. Dejaeghere and Wiger (2013) report on intensive work through an NGO project with SMCs in Bangladesh to raise and negotiate some gender equality issues, highlighting how accountability linked merely with presence of particular actors is not in itself sufficient. These findings are confirmed by Yuki Mizuno, et al. (2013) who report on attempts to establish mothers' and fathers' committees to support basic education programmes in Yemen, and draw out the intensive work associated with helping to co-ordinate the establishment of accountability structures and engagements around delivering quality education. Without such complementary support work the simple presence of women may help to confirm local hierarchies rather than change them. Laugharn noted in Mali that school committees, with women's representation, contributed to the exclusion of nomadic pastoralists from local decision making (Laugharn 2007). Similarly Ramachandran's (2004) research looking at the impacts of India's District Primary Education Programme on the schooling of girls and children from marginalised groups revealed how in some cases community management systems were simply upholding the interests of dominant groups. This was not however the case in Tamil Nadu under DPEP where participation by women's self-help groups and local dalit groups was linked to political activism and played an important role in supporting improvements for girls, a role also noted in the work of Mahla Samakya in Northern India, where this organisation acted to support community mobilisation for girls' schooling (Unterhalter and Dutt, 2001; Ghose, 2017).

The outcomes associated with the presence of women as actors on accountability structures is still awaiting detailed treatment. There are some examples that associate this with positive learning outcomes for girls. Unterhalter and Heslop (2012), assessing material from 102 schools the Transforming Education for Girls in

Nigeria and Tanzania (TEGINT) baseline and endline studies, showed how a greater presence of women on school management committees along with greater activity by school governance structures in relation to gender equality and social inclusion was associated with a larger proportion of girls who were confident to report incidents of gender-based violence. A study in India conducted by Beaman et al. (2012) revealed how the presence of women in leadership positions on village education committees had a positive impact on girls' schooling and learning outcomes as assessed by a reading test. However, there are as yet only a few studies of this relationship.

However, it is important to realise that women's leadership, as a means to gender equitable accountability for education, needs to go beyond the politics of presence in organisations that shape the education system. The idea of critical mass suggests that within institutions – whether these be governments, CSO's, the media or schools – sufficient numbers of women will automatically result in the substantive representation of women's interests and a deepening of engagement with gender equality in education. However, this relies on such women being both *motivated* and having *capacity* to do so in institutional contexts. Indeed the notion of critical mass may “serve to obfuscate, rather than to clarify, the complicated and contingent relationship between descriptive and substantive representation” (Childs & Krook, 2009, p. 145). Thus only arguing for the presence of women as accountability actors in educational organisations, may limit the scope of such processes. Rather than relying solely on women's *presence* within institutions and processes of accountability, it is necessary both “identify the critical actors– both male and female – who may seek [...] to represent women substantively” (Childs & Krook, 2009, p. 143), and to “consider all aspects of the legislative [or accountability] process to explore how structure and agency interact” (Childs & Krook, 2009, p. 144). It is clear from the data presented above that in accountability structures such as legislative bodies, committees that take decisions regarding government, and at senior levels of the civil service in many countries women remain a minority. However in some, but not all development organisations there is a greater presence of women as accountability actors. In teachers' organisations there is an uneven presence of women in leadership roles and in lower levels of organisations, while in school management committees and local level organisations there is a greater participation of women, sometimes because this is legally required, but our knowledge of this is uneven. However the range of education issues the women on local education committees are accountable for can be very narrow, and the resources to realise these processes of accountability can be very limited. The politics of presence, while important, also needs to be read through some more fine grained analysis of accountability processes and a host of associated gender issues. We thus turn in the next section to looking at gender as a critical framework of analysis and how processes of accountability do or do not work to support substantive gender equality in education linked to advancing women's rights.

4. Gender and accountability processes

Critical policy frameworks which consider what the concept of gender 'does' can reveal how accountability processes work not just at the level of formal structures, but in a range of ways through which assumptions about gender and other inequalities might be perpetuated or transformed. These can be associated with formal rules and procedures, informal practices, the ways in which power is exercised, agendas are set, forms of and information and language deployed, resources distributed, and indicators for monitoring and evaluation selected and reviewed. Gender mainstreaming has been an attempt to widen accountability processes for gender equality in education throughout organisations, but the experience with this has been mixed, and there is still only a small amount of data on this, and associated processes of gender planning and gender budgeting reported for education organisations.

The emergence of velvet triangles which delineated a coalition between feminist activists, gender scholars and key figures in public policy organisations for achieving gender equality goals (Holli 2008: 174), has not been much

studied in education, compared to other areas of social policy. However, the notion of a 'triangle of empowerment' (Lycklama et al. 1998) between the women's movement, feminist politicians, and feminist civil servants or femocrats (Nijeholt, Vargas & Wieringa, 1998: 4) focused on empowerment, defined as the ability of women to exercise power and authority in pursuit of their goals (Nijeholt, Vargas & Wieringa, 1998: 6). This has emerged as a central concept for thinking about accountability not just in terms of formal structures but in relation to advancing and deepening agendas about gender equality and women's rights (Lombardo, Meier and Verloo, 2009). Relationships within these velvet triangles can be cooperative, contested or conflicting, and there has been some slide toward co-option in some areas (Eyben and Turquet, 2013; Roberts, 2015). Halsaa developed the notion of a strategic partnership for the triangle of empowerment in Norway (Halsaa 1998), noting three categories of actors, the women's movement, women in political parties, and women in public administration. Woodward used the metaphor of a velvet triangle for the policy process concerned with gender in the European Union (EU) involving feminist bureaucrats (politicians and femocrats), organised voices in the women's movement, and experts in academia and consultancies (Woodward 2003) drawing on informal networks. These have also been noted in relation to UN process, but less remarked on in work on education, although Unterhalter and North (2017) show a congruence of ideas about gender in policy advocates working in international organisations, and highlight some of the differences evident with those working on grassroots delivery in relation to the gender and education components of the MDGs.

The processes for advancing gender equality through formal institutions are relatively easily identified because they involve clearly delineated actors who can be held accountable for gender equality in education such as head teachers, mid-level bureaucrats, school committees, police, courts, tribunals, committees, and sanctions (Chappell & Waylen, 2013, p. 605; Unterhalter and North, 2017). However, much of the research on how these institutions work in practice show that they can often fail to fulfil their gender equality in education responsibilities, either because the tasks are complicated and involve many complex processes over which the designated accountable actors do not have control, or because prevailing discourses of blame or deficit make it difficult for these actors to enact the gender equality policy they are accountable for. This is particularly evident in relation to school related gender based violence, but is also noted in relation to global and national gender equality policies enacted in local settings where girls may be considered of lesser value (Unterhalter, Yates, Makinda and North, 2012; Milligan, 2014; Dyer, 2014; Parkes, 2015; Unterhalter and North, 2017; Parkes et al, 2016)

What adds to the challenge of the tasks facing accountable actors, are that institutions are also shaped by often invisible informal rules that hard wire forms of gender inequality. These are - 'socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels' (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004, p. 727). These invisible informal rules, which may undermine formal gender equality and women's rights processes in education institutions, can also mean that it is harder to require responsible actors to give an account of why they may have engaged in gender inequitable conduct. If particular kinds of privilege or ways of seeing the world are normalised, it is harder, without explicit structures in place, to institute accountability processes that call these into question. Lovenduski (2005), deploys a critical framework of gender analysis to review women's experiences trying to gain representation in politics using quotas and equality mechanisms in an attempt to effect some change in the focus in policy making. She argues that "The institutional dominance of particular forms of masculinity has taken us from seeing gender as operating only at an individual level, to viewing it as regime complete with 'rules, procedures, discourses and practices'; a regime in which 'many men are comfortable and most women are not'(Lovenduski, 2005, p. 147). This analysis highlights how accountability processes in education themselves may be inscribed with ideas about gender that highlights

privilege for some groups and disadvantage for others. Without specific processes to check and review how privilege is operating this can be perpetuated. For instance, seemingly 'neutral' formal rules about the timing of meetings have gendered effects because of informal rules about women's caring responsibilities. (Chappell & Waylen, 2013, p. 602) A number of studies show how subtle *informal* institutional norms (within political parties and parliaments) prevent women from fully and powerfully participating in processes of accountability. Accounts of this have been noted in the Argentine Provinces (Barnes, 2014), Italy (Pansardi & Vercesi, 2017), Germany (Coffé & Schnellecke, 2013), and the United States (Carroll & Reingold, 2008). However positive examples of schemes that set out explicitly to understand, challenge and address how gender and forms of social exclusion or hierarchy have been used at work, including to challenge and change cultures of sexual harassment have been described (Rao, Sandler, et al, 2015).

Just as rules for accountability, which shape gendered practices within institutions may be formal or informal, power in relation to education policy and practice may be exercised in ways that are both visible and invisible and this has consequences for accountability. Rao and Kelleher (2005, p.64), writing about invisible or hidden power argue that "Power hides the fact that organisations are gendered at very deep levels." They suggest that often women are prevented from challenging institutions and holding them to account by four interrelated processes: political access, accountability systems, cultural systems and cognitive structures (Rao and Kelleher, 2005, p.65). If we apply these processes to education systems, political access raises questions as to whether or not there are systems and actors who can put women's perspectives and interests with regard to education access, participation and outcomes on the agenda of local, national, or regional decision making bodies. Our review in the previous section showed how uneven this presence of women is across a range of sites of actor accountability.

Taking the third and fourth of Rao and Kelleher's invisible power processes and reviewing the power associated with cultural systems means questioning whether the work/family divide perpetuated in many education organisations prevents women from being full participants in those organisations. As women continue to bear major responsibility for the care of children, the sick and the old, their responsibilities in these areas, and assumptions shaped by gender-based norms, limit the roles women can play in presenting their perspectives and demands. A number of studies of women at work in education organisations trying to raise issues of gender inequalities and how to change them document how their efforts are ridiculed or ignored because they are associated with aspects of care, or considered too emotional (Correll and Bernard, 2007 ; Connell, 2014; Morley, 2014).

Thus accountability, as a form of visible and invisible power, needs to be analysed in relation to how political, cultural and cognitive processes work in and through education organisations either to reproduce gender inequalities or to build more equitable processes. The discussion of velvet triangles above indicates some brief periods of collaboration and strategic success around key bodies, but these document short periods and organisations that are not primarily focussed on education. A history, in preparation by Ireen Dubel, charts the work of velvet triangles over forty years in relation to work on development co-operation and gender in the Netherlands, drawing out some of the key roles played by academics, and researchers associated with NGOs, their links with feminists in government, multilateral organisations and feminist movements on the ground (Dubel, forthcoming)

One component of how institutions work formally and informally to build accountability for gender equality is associated with leadership. A number of studies indicate accountability processes and their capacity to advance or obstruct gender equality in education are supported by approaches to leadership. Studies of leadership in the business sector highlight the importance and benefits of promoting gendered, racial and other forms of diversity within management and accountability structures. For example, research by the consultancy firm, Catalyst (Troiano, 2013) showed that well managed racial and gendered diversity in leadership positions positively affects financial performance, leveraging of talent, market reputation, innovation and group performance. Similarly, a study commissioned by McKinsey (Hunt, Layton & Prince, 2015) found that leadership diversity is correlated with higher returns on equity, and Deloitte (2013) found a combination of diversity and inclusion improved business performance. These findings are also reflected in a substantial body of academic literature (see, for example, Herring, 2009). The conditions for gender equitable leadership and accountability include not just the simple *presence* of women, but the presence of critical actors committed to gender equity in key positions with access to power, as well as institutional commitments to both the presence, inclusion and empowerment of diverse individuals, attending to power dynamics associated not just with gender, but also race, ethnicity, religion, class, sexuality, (dis)ability, and other identity categories and processes. The significance of leadership for gender equality in education institutions has been documented in relation to schools and higher education, and the complexities of biography and institutional location in terms of what differently situated leaders can accomplish draws out how leadership of education institutions may be necessary but not sufficient (Torrance et al, 2017; Morley, 2014).

Another key component of processes associated with accountability for gender equality is linked with the production and circulation of information. Women are often under represented among those producing information, and a number of studies show how everyday sexism is an important feature of mainstream media. The news media play a pivotal role in holding both individuals and organisations to account. However, women are often absent as subjects and producers of news media. The Global Media Monitoring Project (2015) finds that “women make up only 24% of the persons heard, read about or seen in newspaper, television and radio news” (p.8) and that “only 37% of stories in newspapers, television and radio newscasts are reported by women. This overall statistic has not changed in 10 years, despite fluctuations in the regional averages ranging from +7 points in Africa to -6 points in Asia over the decade” (p.9). The *quality* of representations of women in the media is a persistent area of concern. In 1995, the Beijing Platform for action stated:

The continued projection of negative and degrading images of women in media communications – electronic, print, visual and audio – must be changed. Print and electronic media in most countries do not provide a balanced picture of women’s diverse lives and contributions to society in a changing world. (...) The world-wide trend towards consumerism has created a climate in which advertisements and commercial messages often portray women primarily as consumers and target girls and women of all ages inappropriately.

Contemporary analyses continue to find that “as media subjects, [women] are often represented in contradictory but nonetheless conventionalised and sometimes stereotypical terms (Lacey & Perrons, 2015, p. 50), and furthermore, “age, class, ethnicity and gender identity mean that older women, working class women, women of colour and trans* women face additional challenges to becoming media producers or appearing across media and cultural production as fully rounded subjects” (Lacey & Perrons, 2015, p. 50). These general

characterisations of the media are likely to apply in the circulation of information on education, although this awaits specific treatment.

Information about schools and how the education system work is a key way that parents could hold schools and government to account for education quality, and that schools and teachers, could provide feedback to teachers. But there are considerable gaps in information flow. While, a number of empirical studies have shown that providing parents and schools with access about the social and economic returns to secondary school completion can have a positive impact on the decisions parents take about girls, and supporting them to stay in school (Banerjee et al 2013, Jensen, 2010), we do not know whether more information about gender equality policies and practices have similar effects, although some small scale studies with SMCs suggest these effects (Dejaeghere and Wiger, 2014). There are clearly issues that information does not flow through different levels of government or between teachers, schools and parents as to why gender equality in education is an important issue of accountability. While teacher unions like EI, promote these connections at conferences, such as the women's conference in 2014, a number of studies highlight the gaps between different levels. Research conducted as part of the Gender, Education and Global Poverty Reduction Initiatives (GEGPRI) project revealed how stakeholders tasked with delivering on education policy at national, provincial and local levels of government in Kenya and South Africa felt very far away from sites of policy development and discussion and not accountable for the nuance and complexity of ideas about gender equality in education. As a result they often interpreted aspirations of gender equality in very narrow ways, drawing on notions of gender parity and highly critical views of women and girls. The research revealed how in the absence of opportunities to participate in critical dialogue or discussion around the global policy and receive in depth information these civil servants, teachers, and school committees expressed blame for failure to make progress on gender equality to poor communities, girls and mothers (Unterhalter and North, 2017; Unterhalter et al, 2012). Parkes et al (2016) have shown through a rigorous review of literature on interventions around school related gender based violence that teachers or NGOs may enact short term forms of accountability to local school communities to address SRGBV, but building a wider web of accountability to government policy processes is challenging.

Indicators have become a key means through which accountability mechanisms operate at national and local levels and have been widely used in monitoring progress on Education for All (EFA), the MDGs. An expanded set of indicators have been proposed for the SDGs, and those associated with SDG 4 on education and SDG 5 on gender are particularly relevant for this paper. SDG5 on gender and women's empowerment goes beyond the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and highlighted the need for indicators to support additional targets; but many of the targets in SDG 5 still have indicators in development and many of the gender targets across the 17 SDGs, still do not have adequate indicators (UN Women, 2018). Thus building accountability for gender equality using the wider educative accountability processes of indicators remains a work in progress.

SDG 4 encompasses all phases of education, and the Education 2030 Framework for Action links gender equality to rights of education for all encompassing access to and completing education cycles, and equal empowerment 'in and through education'(UNESCO, 2015:8) signalling this as a key learning outcome. Most SDG4 targets regarding access, progression and learning outcomes will be measured using an indicator of gender parity (UN ECOSOC, 2016). However, as gender parity comprises a simple ratio of girls or women as a proportion of boys or men. It does not sufficiently capture the range of relationships and values associated with the notion of gender equality in education, and what learning outcomes relating to gender equality might entail. The indicator for SDG 4.7, which is concerned with learning in relation to human rights, sustainable development, peace and gender equality, is currently categorised as a Tier 3 indicator, which means an indicator appropriate to the form of accountability this encompasses is still in development.

The technique of measuring gender parity, widely used in the MDGs, and still a feature of the SDG indicator framework, although now refined by demographic associated to socio-economic status and location, tends to underplay a connection between education, women's rights and social justice, and thus provides inadequate information to evaluate progress against the substantive gender equality aspirations of Education 2030 (Unterhalter 2017). Measuring gender parity alone in this form appears an inadequate metric of accountability to help policy and strategy build towards the development of substantive equality, because it is not a clear enough indicator of the relationships within and beyond education that need to be changed to achieve this.

In contrast to most of the targets under SDG4, features of accountability associated with Target 4.7 and 4a provide an opportunity to critically examine how we measure and track gender equality in education, its enabling environment and associated learning processes,. This opens the possibility for developing enhanced insight into what learning outcomes and environments around gender equality entail. The wording for SDG Target 4.7 expresses concern to enhance gender equality worldwide linked with citizenship, human rights and sustainable development. The indicator proposed for this target is 'the extent to which (i) global citizenship education, and (ii) education for sustainable development including gender equality and human rights are mainstreamed in national education policies, curricula, teacher education, and student assessment' (UNECOSOC, 2016: 44). The indicator focuses on policies, rather than implementation and outcomes and is insufficient to consistently and effectively measure gender equality in education linked with practice on the ground. The context to do so is provided partly by the means of implementation for SDG 4.a, which calls upon governments to "Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive' and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all. An indicator framework still remains to be developed how these processes can be monitored and the accountability processes around these developed. Some beginnings have been made in work commissioned by UNGEI (Unterhalter, 2015) but further collaborations and engagements with accountability actors and processes needs to be explored (Unterhalter, 2017)

The means to do this require careful consideration. Susan Engle Merry documents how different discourses around understanding violence against women and different communities or practice had a bearing on the indicators developed and this had important outcomes for policy and practice (Merry, 2016) and the anthropological study of UN organisations raises important issues around accountability processed.

Parents - citizen accountability processes have been documented in expressing views around education, but no extensive academic work has been done reviewing local processes and changes around gender equality in education. World Vision World has 10-15 year experience working on Citizen Voice and Action (CV&A) through programmes which aim to contribute to children's education, health, and child protection. A global CV&A database has some data disaggregated by gender for focus groups of girl and boy students who, use scorecards on how satisfactory some aspect of primary education is (toilets, textbooks or teaching are).¹

After more than three decades of experiences of gender mainstreaming, the relationship between gender mainstreaming and accountability remains contested. Gender mainstreaming was advocated from the 1980s as strategy designed to prevent women's issues being neglected or sidesteamed within organisations, and to ensure that concerns with gender were incorporated into work across whole organisations. Following the Beijing conference in 1995 the Economic and Social Council of the UN outlined gender mainstreaming as

¹ E mail correspondence with Bill Walker, World Vision Australia, September 2017

the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (United Nations 1997:28, cited in United Nations, 2002)

However, while this definition of gender mainstreaming has been much cited, critical commentators have pointed out that simply integrating a gender perspective into policies, information or monitoring processes, while important, would not be enough to challenge covert sexism within institutional cultures. While, in recognition of the need to change institutional cultures, and the difficulty of doing this, subsequent definitions of gender mainstreaming have emphasised a concern with attitudes as well as more technical processes of planning and monitoring, debates regarding different perspectives on gender mainstreaming as representing a transformative or integrationist agenda for gender equality have continued (see, for example, Unterhalter and North, 2011). Many feminist commentators have highlighted ongoing challenges to gender mainstreaming, include challenges of capacity and measurement; the separation of women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming; the difficulties of challenging attitudes and behaviours; and lack of senior-management support and accountability: "after three decades of feminist activism in the field of development – both at the level of theory and practice – most development institutions have still to be constantly reminded of the need for gender analysis in their work, policymakers have to be lobbied to "include" the "g" word and even our own colleagues need convincing that integrating a gender analysis makes a qualitative difference" (Mukhopadhyay, 2004:95). This has meant that although gender mainstreaming has been seen as an important aspect of holding institutions to account for delivering on gender equality, ensuring that mainstreaming processes can be translated into meaningful advances in relation to gender equality and girls and women's rights has not always been easy (see Squires & Wickham-Jones, 2004; Verloo, 2005; Sen, 2000; Standing 2004; Mazey, 2002; Porter and Sweetman, 2005).

Within the education sector a number of experiences of gender mainstreaming have been documented, and these have been associated with partial success in changing institutional cultures in particular contexts. Miske et al (2010) for example examined attempts to apply gender mainstreaming at the field level in the context of work by the NGO CARE in Mali and Cambodia. Their analysis of the use of CARE USA's Common Indicator Framework (CIF), showed how the use of the CIF, "with its gender-specific indicators... was able to generate dialogue about gender relations and gender mainstreaming at the level of operations in the COs, in the schools and communities, sending information 'upstream' to the national ministries of education, the BGE unit at CARE's headquarters" (p. 456). Seel (2007) reports on System Wide Action Plans (SWAPs) as a form of gender mainstreaming, describing attempts at addressing social exclusion, including gender-based exclusion, across the education sector. More recently work by the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) to support education ministries to use a gender lens when developing education sector plans, drawing on *the Guidance for Developing Gender-Responsive Education Sector Plans* developed by (UNGEI) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) has been promising in expanding concerns with and understanding of gender equality in education among stakeholders at national level (Fyles, 2017; see also UNGEI, 2017).

Other studies have explored attempts to address gender through mainstreaming processes in particular local and national settings, emphasising the need to pay close attention to context, and pointing to the ways in which gender mainstreaming efforts may be blocked or contested. This has been explored, for example, in relation to

Gambia (see Manion, 2012), and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. Sifver’s study of attempts to implement Swedish gender equality politics and international gender mainstreaming policies in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, showed how these, while opening up new possibilities for engaging with ideas around gender, were locally negotiated and contested, and indeed might have paradoxically contributed to reproducing “patterns of gender inequality, for example with paying inadequate attention to ethnicity” (Sifver, 2010:492). Karlsson (2010) has documented how although efforts by officials to implement gender mainstreaming in a Provincial Education Department in South Africa had resulted in the establishment of a number of structures, projects and activities concerned with gender equality, these were largely small scale, and efforts were constrained by lack of resources and inadequate budgeting for activities and personnel. Like Dieltiens et al’s (2009) analysis of gender in the South African central government department and Unterhalter and North’s (2011) discussion of in gender in a multilateral organisation and an NGO, her analysis shows how gender mainstreaming processes, require considerable investment of resources in terms of money, time, skill, support and opportunities for critical reflection and communication if they are to result in the translation of policy on gender and education into practice that enacts gender equality.

5. Gender effects and outcomes of accountability mechanisms in education

The effects of the range of accountability actions, studied both in relation to the specific actors outlined above, and the processes, has not yet been much studied in terms of gender equality outcomes. Some work suggests the presence of women members on local school boards may be associated with improved learning outcomes for girls, but the studies of this are preliminary and we do not know which direction the causality line runs.

Catherin Vanner’s in depth ethnographic study (Vanner, 2017) of accountability mechanisms linked to high stakes testing in a hierarchical education system in Kenya, shows how this has perverse effects, undermining a pedagogy of care, and heightening the atmosphere of school related gender based violence. While a number of studies in Pakistan show better managed private schools, compared to state schools have better learning outcomes for girls (Fennel, 2012) it is not clear how much this improved management encompasses an ethos of gender equality in education.

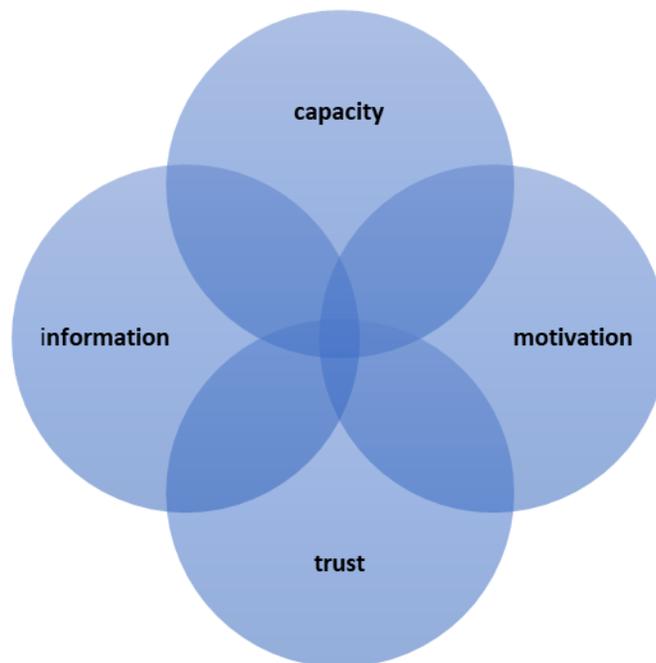
Thus the outcomes of accountability processes still need careful study.

6. Conclusion

This paper has discussed participation by particular groups of actors in accountability structures, considering what gender ‘is’. It has also looked at what using a gender framework of analysis does to raise questions about a range of accountability processes, and has highlighted the need for much more work on gender equality and the outcomes of accountability initiatives.

From the studies reviewed a number of salient points emerge. Firstly, for each facet of the environment for accountability detailed in the GEM report (UNESCO, 2017), there are several pre-requisites which should be in place in order to increase likelihood of gender equitable outcome, and avoid an outcome which either reinforces the status quo, or actually worsens gender inequities. For example, if *information* on gender (in)equities within education (used for purposes of accountability) is skewed to what is *visible*, or to the experiences of the most privileged women and girls, this will do nothing to change *invisible* gendered power relations, and further

marginalise the voices of the least privileged women and girls. Secondly, it is optimal for all four facets outlined in the report – capacity, motivation, trust and information - to be present to avoid ‘squeezing the balloon’, i.e. simply pushing the problem elsewhere. For example, while women’s voluntary sector organisations are well *informed* and highly *motivated*, they often lack *capacity* (due to funding) and *trust* from external actors in positions of power. We suggest building a supportive environment for accountability for gender equality in education entails increasing the dynamic of these processes towards the centre of the Venn diagram, where all facets overlap, and explicitly fostering concerns with equalities and women’s rights rather than playing one off against another:



The need for connecting all facets and understanding the complexity of contexts, building connected, rather than disconnected, fragmentary or uneven systems of accountability in education that have perverse effects on actors’ responsibilities to achieve gender equality within this sector.

7. Appendix A: Reflections on a framework for analysing gender, and forms of actor responsibility

This appendix accompanies our paper ‘Gender equality in education and accountability’ and is an attempt to delineate more concretely the responsibilities of different kinds of actors responding to the different facets we outlined in the first paper. We draw at a number of points from examples from our recent study following a cohort of beginning teachers in five Nigerian states from their last year of teacher education in 2014 and through experiences of work (Unterhalter, North, Ezegwu and Shercliff, 2017; Unterhalter, Ezegwu, Adedokun, Dodo, and Dangaladim, 2017).

Our background paper identified three meanings of the fluid concept of gender that generate different processes of accountability:

- a) What gender is tends to stress the importance of attending to equal presence of men and women in accountability processes
- b) What gender does tends to provide a critical framework to look at forms of power, hierarchy and exclusion that operate in accountability processes and practices
- c) What gender aims for tends to formulate a normative framework concerned with equalities and rights through which accountability processes can be evaluated.

In this think piece, we unpack these three forms further looking at four groups identified in the GEM report – government, schools, teachers and parents.

Thinking about what gender is: Taking this meaning of gender as concerned to ensure equal numbers of participants in accountability structures requires looking to

- a) **Governments** to:
 - ensure gender equitable allocation of money/resources for girls and boys, men and women in schools and higher education institutions and ensure equal numbers of men and women in all decision-making bodies concerned with education developing and evaluating policy and practice:
 - at **national level**: parliament, upper house, cabinet, select/portfolio committees, leadership of government ministries concerned with education (basic and higher education ministries, finance ministries, ministries concerned with skills development and workplace training, ministries concerned with health);
 - at **provincial or district level** where there are elected bodies, and where administrative leadership is located and inspection teams appointed for education delivery;
 - at **local level** in school based management committees, village education committees, local or ward authorities;
 - at **multilateral level** in the leadership and decision-making bodies of multilateral organisations concerned with education (UNESCO, World Bank, UNICEF, OECD etc.). These organisations have different governance structures, in some (UNESCO) all member states participate in decision-making, in some (UNICEF and World Bank) a smaller number of countries play a key role in directing activities. However, across the board, we suggest that the governance structure should pay attention to ensuring more equal representation of women in senior and mid-level decision-making than is the case at present.

In societies where other social divisions (race, ethnicity, caste) are particularly salient these government bodies, in paying attention to equal numbers of representatives of men and women, also need to consider gender and appropriate levels of representation of all socially significant groups in the society.

b) **Schools/ higher education institutions (HEI) to:**

- ensure equal participation of men and women in senior leadership teams to develop and review school policy, and engage with directives from education administration at different levels (district, provincial, national, international);
- review senior appointments (department heads) to ensure equal participation of men and women accountable for carrying out decisions and appointing staff;
- ensure equal/gender equitable distribution of resources e.g. sporting equipment, learning resources, to boys and girls.
- Ensuring all infrastructure meets the needs of girls and boys, providing separate facilities when appropriate, including provision of basic sanitation/toilets, and single sex-toilets, lighting and safe transport on journeys to school/he

c) **Teachers to:**

- ensure through various associations (unions, professional bodies) there is an equal representation of men and women in leadership of these bodies at various levels (national and local) so that policy on teacher professional engagement is developed in ways that are accountable to men and women;
- In teacher practice in classrooms, ensure adequate training and understanding to include girls and boys from different backgrounds in all lessons, and school activities (formal and non-formal curriculum).

d) **Parents to:**

- fulfil responsibilities for ensuring access to education for all children, not distinguishing or discriminating whether those children are girls or boys;
- work in parents associations to support parents to send children to school.
 - to work with school and teachers for more gender-sensitive school and learning environments, including supporting the development of adequate sanitation, safety in access and accommodation

Thinking about what gender does Taking this meaning to look at gender as a form of unequal power (visible and invisible, shaped by structures and agency) operating to shape intersecting inequalities and requiring accountability processes that go beyond formal presence in decision-making, in terms of questioning the ways in which accountability processes work, for whom, and how they can be transformed:

a) **governments** at national, provincial and local levels, and **multilateral organisations:**

- guarantee the right to education for all through formal (constitutional and legal) and forms of soft power (convening, assisting processes) , paying attention to responsibilities of governments in terms of setting strict and transparent regulations to enhance gender equality in education, taking account of how this intersects with other equalities and that must apply to all levels of education. All forms of education regulated by governments are to be covered by this, including the private sector.

- Work through various structures to put in place processes to take account of gender in curricula, textbooks, teachers' education and education assessments at all levels of education (EYE through to HE) and keep this process under periodic review and evaluation.
- critically review using various technical (gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting) and transformative processes (such as velvet triangles or associations with feminist movements and activists) how and whether education policy and practice is working to undo deep seated gender inequitable relationships, linked with other intersecting inequalities, associated with the distribution of resources, the recognition of different forms of knowledge and practice, undoing the norms and structures that result in gender based violence, and ensuring processes that enhance gender equitable participation in a range of levels aiming to understand and change processes of exclusion, forms of hierarchy and processes associated with power that deny rights;
- review these chains of accountability stretching from global, through national to local sites of delivery and ensures nodes of accountability (Education Sector plans, legislation, education budgets, white papers, parliamentary reviews), inspection processes engage with issues of hierarchy , power and violence that undermine the expansion of education for all.

b) Schools/HEIs:

- work with organisational plans (annual or five year planning rounds, such as school development plans) and quality reviews (inspection reports, validation reports, assessment of quality) to consider how gender and other intersecting inequalities and forms of gender based violence, might be manifest in schools/HEIs and might account for some of the patterns noted, and how strategies of change that consider multiple facets of intersecting inequalities can be considered, supported, and reviewed. This includes reviewing where money is spent;
- review training and support on issues concerned with gender equality in education provided to teachers/lecturers and administrators, and processes to review and deepen discussion of this, feeding into further iterations of organisational plans and budgeting.

c) Teachers:

- critically review practice through discussion in unions and other associations regarding how gender works as a form of power and hierarchy in classrooms, through curriculum, pedagogies and teaching practices, and how school related gender based violence can be acknowledged and reported and strategies developed and sustained to change this. Develop teachers' codes of conduct that take account of SRGBV, and keep under critical review regarding implementation at all levels.

d) Parents:

- consider through reading, reflecting on media, discussion in parents school associations, how gender inequality may be perpetuated at home and at school and in the society and what relationships parents can foster to try to change this, and how avenues available for parent engagement (representation on local and school committees, presence in networks) can be utilised to enhance awareness on these issues.

Thinking about what gender aims for this framework stresses that evaluation does not happen after an education intervention, but is an important part of framing how an intervention or policy is to be judged and linked with gender equality and enhancing women's rights:

This aspect of accountability is concerned with connecting discussions of equalities and rights, particularly women's rights, and reviewing outcomes in education considering whether they do or do not advance and protect equal rights, capabilities, and enhance social justice. **Governments** at national, provincial, local and multilateral levels:

- Monitor and evaluate policy and practice on regular cycles of review (annual, 5 year, 10 year SDG) in relation to concerns with education and equal rights (where gender is one key component intersected with other social divisions), equal capabilities and substantive opportunities connected with outcomes, enhancing women's rights, particularly associated with education and bodily integrity, participation, health and wellbeing;
- Develop multidimensional indicators for use at all levels and along accountability, chains that consider what gender is and what gender does and participatory processes of review to keep this under scrutiny.

a) **Schools/HEIs:**

- build into evaluation cycles (annual, medium and long term) concerns with education and equal rights (where gender is one key component intersected with other social divisions), equal capabilities and substantive opportunities connected with outcomes, enhancing women's rights, particularly associated with education and bodily integrity, participation, health and wellbeing;
- develop aims and processes for school inspections of school management, informal school activities (sport, culture and classroom evaluation of teaching practices to keep gender equality and the interactions between teachers and students of both sexes and between girls and boys students under review.
- consider appropriate gender indicators and develop policies to address areas requiring action including relevant training courses. Review participatory processes for reporting upwards and downwards on the information yielded by indicators

b) **Teachers:**

- in teacher organisations reviews information on gender indicators at school and national level, considers local and national level training required to keep members up to date about gender equality and women's rights issues, and feed into reviewing and refining indicators.

c) **Parents:**

- through membership of education associations responsible for commenting on gender and education indicators, engaging, as appropriate, with public discussion of gender equality and women's rights.

As our analysis in the paper 'Gender equality in education and accountability' showed, in order to enable all stakeholders to play their part in these accountability processes as set out above, ensuring that they – particularly teachers and parents – have access to adequate resources and information, and are able to participate spaces of discussion and debate around key aspects of gender equality is essential. This suggests the need to think about accountability in relation to other actors – in particular the media/the public sphere – and also to pay close attention to relationships between stakeholders, and the power dynamics that are entailed.

8. Reflections from work in Nigeria

Nigeria is often singled out for exercises of ‘blame the teacher’ when surveys, such as that carried out by ESSPI in Kwara state, and most recently (10 October 2017) in Kaduna show teachers’ low levels of competency in basic education. This inevitably results in media complaining about low levels of teacher training and performance. However, this is problematic because it isolates teacher accountability from the web of relationships we have tried to map, and show the importance of interconnection.

Our research in Nigeria showed how fragmented these processes of accountability are. While policy is in place to ensure minimum standards of gender equality in various components of the school curriculum, to enhance learner centred education, and to support work on gender in a number of donor funded programmes in teacher education, our survey of 4494 student teachers, who were in their last year of training in 2014, in universities and colleges showed very few had in depth understanding of what gender equality in education might mean, and a substantial group were hostile to women’s participation in public life and any form of social engagement. Once these student teachers had qualified, only a minority were able to get work. Amongst those who were in work, surveyed one year and 18 months after they completed their studies, they reported no CPD on gender, a point echoed by colleagues at the schools where they taught. Teachers who had the most equitable ideas about gender reported themselves most frustrated and unable to put these into practice. The study highlights ‘a serious problem in teacher education, so that it fails to connect with the deployment of teachers and some key issues teachers need to know about equality and inclusion. In a context where the quality of teacher education is often under scrutiny, the study showed how the current system of teacher education and deployment are not well connected to provide well-trained and motivated teachers’ (Unterhalter, North, Ezegwu and Shercliff, 2017).

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