ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
END OF AWARD REPORT

E · S · R · C
ECONOMIC
& SOCIAL
RESEARCH
COUNCIL

For awards ending on or after 1 November 2009

This End of Award Report should be completed and submitted using the **grant reference** as the email subject, to **reportsofficer@esrc.ac.uk** on or before the due date.

The final instalment of the grant will not be paid until an End of Award Report is completed in full and accepted by ESRC.

Grant holders whose End of Award Report is overdue or incomplete will not be eligible for further ESRC funding until the Report is accepted. ESRC reserves the right to recover a sum of the expenditure incurred on the grant if the End of Award Report is overdue. (Please see Section 5 of the ESRC Research Funding Guide for details.)

Please refer to the Guidance notes when completing this End of Award Report.

Grant Reference	RES-167-25-0078		
Grant Title	Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania: Developing an Equity Scorecard		
Grant Start Date	1/9/2006	**Total Amount Expended:**	**£**
Grant End Date	31/1/2010		100% Cost: £705,357.50 ESRC contribution: £571,319.95
Grant holding Institution	**University of Sussex**		
Grant Holder	**Professor Louise Morley**		
Grant Holder's Contact Details	**Address**		**Email**
	Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research (CHEER), School of Education and Social Work, University of Sussex, Essex House, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9QQ		**l.morley@sussex.ac.uk**
			Telephone **01273 876700**
Co-Investigators (as per project application):		**Institution**	
Professor Fiona Leach (formerly Dr)		**University of Sussex**	

1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Please provide below a project summary written in non-technical language. The summary may be used by ESRC to publicise your work and should explain the aims and findings of the project. *[Max 250 words]*

This study **(http://www.sussex.ac.uk/wphegt)** addressed international policy agendas for the Millennium Development Goals, poverty alleviation and revitalisation of higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa.

It aimed to illuminate the effectiveness of widening participation policies in higher education in relation to gender, socio-economic status (SES) and age. It investigated which groups are entering higher education in Ghana and Tanzania, and how different social groups fared in terms of retention, achievement, and experiences of higher education.

The project gathered qualitative data from interviews with 200 students, 200 academic staff and policymakers and quantitative data on access, retention and achievement in relation to four programmes of study in two universities (one public and one private) in each country. Quantitative data were presented in Equity Scorecards. The mixed methods approach aimed to strengthen the evidence base for policy monitoring.

Findings suggest:

- Most programmes enrolled low numbers of low SES students.
- Women were in the minority in science programmes - despite evidence of affirmative action.
- The numbers of mature students were very low except on certain programmes *e.g.* Education.
- Mature low SES students, mature women and low SES women were under-represented in all programmes. However, once entered, low SES students performed as well as, and sometimes better than, other groups.
- The group most at risk of dropout was mature students.
- In both countries, private universities admitted a higher proportion of women than public universities.
- Poor quality teaching, resources, and assessment were widely reported. However, many students reported the transformational impact that higher education had on their lives.

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

a) Objectives

Please state the aims and objectives of your project as outlined in your proposal to the ESRC. *[Max 200 words]*

- To explore the role that universities are playing in poverty reduction within the context of the Millennium Development Goals.

- To build theory about socio-cultural aspects of higher education in low-income countries, and provide new knowledge, insight and literature that could contribute to making higher education more socially inclusive.

- To provide a comprehensive statistical overview of patterns of participation and achievement in higher education in Ghana and Tanzania.

- To provide illuminatory qualitative data that will help explain patterns and trends in statistical data and provide more textured information about enablers and barriers to participation and achievement for under-represented groups in higher education.

- To devise Equity Scorecards to evaluate the effectiveness of existing policy interventions to promote inclusion in the case study institutions.

- To enhance research capacity in the partner countries via research training for in-country teams, including the sponsorship of two students on the Sussex distance mode International EdD programme.

b) Project Changes

Please describe any changes made to the original aims and objectives, and confirm that these were agreed with the ESRC. Please also detail any changes to the grant holder's institutional affiliation, project staffing or funding. *[Max 200 words]*

- A no cost extension was granted until 31 January 2010.

- Professor James Opare, the project leader in the University of Cape Coast, Ghana was replaced by Dr Linda Dzama Forde in 2008.

- The Sussex-based Research Fellow, Dr Rosemary Lugg, left the project in November 2008 and was replaced by Dr Kattie Lussier.

c) Methodology

Please describe the methodology that you employed in the project. Please also note any ethical issues that arose during the course of the work, the effects of this and any action taken. *[Max. 500 words]*

The project took the form of a mixed methods study of one public and one private case study university in Ghana and Tanzania, including:

- 200 student life history interviews - 119 students from public universities and 81 from private universities, registered on different programmes, including under-represented groups such as women, mature, low socio-economic status (SES) and disabled students. Students were asked about their experiences of primary, secondary and higher education, with questions about their motivations, transitions, support, decision-making and first impressions of higher education, its impact on them and their future plans.

- 200 key staff and policymakers - 172 semi-structured interviews with senior academics, lecturers and staff working closely with students in the four case study institutions and 28 interviews with national policymakers. Respondents were asked about policies, interventions, strategies and challenges for widening participation, and the part that universities had played in working towards the Millennium Development Goals.

- 100 Equity Scorecards (ESCs) compiled largely from raw data on admission/access, retention, completion and achievement, for four programmes of study in relation to three structures of inequality: gender, socio-economic status (SES) and age. The programmes included disciplines in which women are under-represented *e.g.* Engineering, and those with a high percentage of women *e.g.* Education. A key question was how gender intersected with other structures of inequality *e.g.* socio-economic status and age.

- The research questions included: investigating which social groups are currently and traditionally under-represented as students in the case study institutions and whether these correlate with wider national and international patterns of social exclusion; how the case study institutions are interpreting and responding to the Millennium Development Goals; and if there is a relationship between learners' prior experiences of education, their socio-economic backgrounds and their experiences and achievement in education. Questions were also posed about mechanisms for support for 'non-traditional' students to facilitate retention and achievement and how 'non-traditional' students might experience these interventions. Diverse stakeholders were asked about their perceptions of the main barriers to participation for under-represented groups and what strategies the case study institutions could develop to improve the recruitment, retention and achievement of students from non-traditional backgrounds.

- Interview data were analysed by thematic coding of transcripts, using NVIVO software. The raw quantitative data were analysed in STATA to produce the Equity Scorecards. Data were analysed comparatively. Gender was a category in the analysis as well as in the collection of data, and commonalities and

differences in what female and male students and staff discussed and prioritised were scrutinised in the interview data. Public and private universities, mature and non-mature students, students from economically 'deprived' and 'non-deprived' schools and the two African countries were compared. The interview data were also compared with the statistical data from the Equity Scorecards.

➕ The Equity Scorecards enabled data to be compared across programmes, for different social groups and for different institutions (public and private universities).

➕ Theories and concepts that informed the analysis included intersectionality, sociology of absences, social inclusion, social capital, the knowledge society, learner identities, structures of inequality and gender equity.

d) Project Findings

Please summarise the findings of the project, referring where appropriate to outputs recorded on *ESRC Society Today*. Any future research plans should also be identified. *[Max 500 words]*

Equity Scorecards

➕ Most programmes enrolled small numbers of low SES students. Some had none.
➕ Women were in the minority in science programmes studied *e.g.* Optometry, Engineering.
➕ Numbers of mature students were very low except on certain programmes *e.g.* Education.
➕ Mature low SES students, mature women, and low SES women were under-represented except on the B. Education (Ghanaian public university), B. Ed. Maths and B. Business Administration (Tanzanian private university).
➕ A higher number of mature students withdrew from programmes compared to the rest of their cohort. They also achieved lower degree classifications
➕ Fewer low SES students withdrew. They performed as well as, and sometimes better than, other groups.
➕ In both countries, private universities admitted higher proportions of women than public universities, with significant variations between programmes.
➕ In the Tanzanian programmes studied, the private university admitted more mature students than the public university. In Ghana, the pattern was the opposite.

Staff/ policymaker interviews:

➕ **Monitoring and evaluation** - uneven, unsystematic, focussing narrowly on gender and access.
➕ **Management information systems** – poorly developed and lacking details about student identities and progression.
➕ **Widening participation** (WP) - under-funded and not monitored.

- **Women's entry to science** - a WP goal in both countries.
- **Private higher education** (PHE) - seen both as a WP mechanism, and as a threat to quality and standards.
- **The Millennium Development Goals** - not explicitly related to higher education by academic staff, but poverty widely discussed.

Student Interviews

Early influences:
- **Families' social, cultural and material capital** - major determinants in constructing educational aspirations and opportunities.
- **Negative experiences of many state primary and secondary schools** - large classes and lack of teachers, teacher professionalism, facilities.
- **Adverse socio-cultural factors** - poverty, illness, gender inequality, polygamy, extended families, divorce, bereavement and violence.

HE experiences:
- **Positive and enabling experiences** –supportive staff, friendship/ networks, broadening thinking.
- **The symbolic power of being a student** - graduate status as social and material distinction.
- **Negative experiences** - large classes, poor pedagogy, assessment, favouritism and corruption, lack of facilities and resources, lecturers' professionalism, transparency in admissions procedures and student loan entitlements.
- **Sexual harassment** – some male tutors pressured female students for sex in return for grades.
- **Assessment** created the strongest positive and negative feelings.
- **Affirmative action programmes** - increased numbers of women (B.Sc. Engineering in the Tanzanian public university), but not low SES or mature students.

Barriers for low SES students - lack of:
- parental social/material/ cultural capital
- schools - especially in rural areas
- role models
- time *e.g.* labour needs of rural economies.

Enablers for low SES students:
- Government loans/bursaries from the state and international donor community.

Barriers for Mature Students:
- Interrupted/ turbulent educational histories
- Feeling 'other' *i.e.* the ideal student perceived to be young, without family responsibilities, with normative educational trajectories.

Enablers for Mature Students:
- Different modes of delivery *e.g.* part-time, evening and weekend programmes, particularly in the private universities
- HE perceived as improving life chances.

Disabled students - pride in their achievements against the odds, but problems of access to the built environment and learning resources, and negative attitudes, ignorance and prejudice.

e) Contributions to wider ESRC initiatives (eg Research Programmes or Networks)

If your project was part of a wider ESRC initiative, please describe your contributions to the initiative's objectives and activities and note any effect on your project resulting from participation. *[Max. 200 words]*

The project was part of the ESRC/DFID Poverty Alleviation Programme. It aimed to contribute to the international agenda for reducing poverty by:

- Producing original statistical data on access, retention and achievement of low socio-economic status, female and mature students in higher education in Ghana and Tanzania.

- Highlighting the socio-cultural and educational barriers and enablers that members of low SES communities face in relation to HE access *e.g.* poor quality basic education, social exclusion, and lack of capital.

- Researching student experiences once enrolled in higher education *e.g.* financial struggle, sexual harassment, poor quality pedagogy.

The project participated in the ESRC/DFID programme workshop on impact and influence in June 2008, and in the short case studies of ESRC/DFID research influence compiled by Katie Wright in July 2009. One effect of these events was to raise the significance of impact planning. The project has just been awarded ESRC Follow On Funding for three Knowledge Exchange and Impact Enhancement Seminars and to extend the project website.

The project also presented at ESRC TLRP seminars *e.g.* in March 2007 at the Institute of Education, University of London. This helped to locate the project as a source of expertise on widening participation in Africa.

---

3. EARLY AND ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

a) Summary of Impacts to date

Please summarise any impacts of the project to date, referring where appropriate to associated outputs recorded on *ESRC Society Today*. This should include both scientific impacts (relevant to the academic community) and economic and societal impacts (relevant to broader society). The impact can be relevant to any organisation, community or individual. *[Max. 400 words]*

Impact

- Awareness raising of effectiveness of current Widening Participation interventions among policymakers, staff and students.

- Institutional learning through data generation and Equity Scorecards. Involvement of decision-makers as advisors ensured recognition of WP implementation weaknesses and prompted institutional action.

- In-country capacity building in policy-related research, value of student voice for institutional development, ESCs as monitoring and impact assessment tools.

Project Dissemination Seminars

- Ghana (2008) - representation from Ministry of Education, case study universities, NGOs and students.

- Tanzania (2007, 2009) - Equity Scorecard Advisory Group, academic management and students.

- University of Sussex (2010) – representation from UNESCO, German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Norwegian National Gender Mainstreaming Committee, Canon Collins Trust, NUS and UK academic community.

Outputs

Keynote Presentations (2007-2010)

- Universities of Stockholm and Vaxjo (Sweden), Wisconsin-Madison (USA), Goettingen (Germany), Trondheim (Norway), National Chi Nan (Taiwan), Hiroshima and Tohoku (Japan), Minho (Portugal), Helsinki and Tampere (Finland) and Glasgow Caledonian (UK).

- European Science Foundation, Brussels.

- Society for Educational Studies Annual Conference, UK.

- ESRC Seminar Series 'Imagining the University of the Future', CHEER, University of Sussex.

- ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme Seminar, London.

Conference/Seminar Papers

- Society for Research into Higher Education (x3)

- UKFIET (x 2 including symposium)

- British Educational Research Association

- Consortium for Higher Education Researchers

- International Sociology of Education Association

- Gender and Education Association

- World Universities Forum

- International Equal Opportunities Conference

Working Papers (see **http://www.sussex.ac.uk/wphegt)**.
1: *Setting the Scene*

2: *Country Profiles For Ghana and Tanzania: Economic, Social and Political Contexts for WP in Higher Education*

3: *A Profile of Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania*

4: *Policies for WP in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania*

Publications (to date)

Morley, L. (2010) "Gender Mainstreaming in Ghana and Tanzania." *Compare,* 40(4).

Morley, L., Leach, F. & Lugg, R. (2009) Democratising Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania: Opportunity Structures and Social Inequalities *International Journal of Educational Development,* 29(1): 56-64.

Morley, L. & Lugg, R. (2009) Mapping Meritocracy: Intersecting Gender, Poverty and Higher Educational Opportunity Structures. *Higher Education Policy,* 22(1): 37-60.

Morley, L. & Lussier, K. (2009) Intersecting Poverty and Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania. *International Studies in Sociology of Education,* 19(2): 71–85.

Morley, L. & Lugg, R. (2008) Democratising Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania: Opportunity Structures and Social Processes. *Journal of the World Universities Forum,* 1(6): 51-60.

Morley, L. & Lugg, R. (2008) Gender Equity in African Higher Education. *International Studies in Education,* 9: 11-16.

b) Anticipated/Potential Future Impacts

Please outline any anticipated or potential impacts (scientific or economic and societal) that you believe your project might have in future. *[Max. 200 words]*

- Three Knowledge Exchange and Impact Enhancement Seminars (Ghana, Tanzania and UK). These will include verifying and exchanging knowledge developed in the project with policymakers, universities and community organisations, with a view to enhancing policy impact. Each seminar will be participative and interactive including one manager from one case study university (*e.g.* Pro Vice Chancellor), and one policymaker in higher education from each country presenting position papers to indicate what impact their involvement with the project has had to date, and to identify future strategic actions, together with an implementation plan, in relation to the findings.

- Tanzania: Dissemination during the Higher Education Forum, May 2010. The Research Report/recommendations will be discussed/ actioned with leaders of Higher Education institutions, Ministry and related organisations.

- Ghana: changes in organisational practices so far include new management information systems in the private case study university to record and monitor student retention and achievement by gender, school attended and age.

- Publications for submission to *Compare*, the *Cambridge Journal of Education, Studies in Higher Education.*

Keynote presentations:

- British Educational Research Association Conference (September 2010)

- Higher Education Close Up Conference (July 2010)

- Kingston University Higher Education Research Forum (May 2010)

- Manchester Metropolitan University Social Science Seminars (May 2010).

You will be asked to complete an ESRC Impact Report 12 months after the end date of your award. The Impact Report will ask for details of any impacts that have arisen since the completion of the End of Award Report.

4. DECLARATIONS

Please ensure that sections A, B and C below are completed and signed by the appropriate individuals. The End of Award Report will not be accepted unless all sections are signed.

Please note hard copies are NOT required; electronic signatures are accepted and should be used.

A: To be completed by Grant Holder

Please read the following statements. Tick ONE statement under ii) and iii), then sign with an electronic signature at the end of the section.

i) The Project

This Report is an accurate overview of the project, its findings and impacts. All co-investigators named in the proposal to ESRC or appointed subsequently have seen and approved the Report.	☒

ii) Submissions to *ESRC Society Today*

Output and impact information has been submitted to *ESRC Society Today*. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted as soon as they become available.	☒
OR	
This grant has not yet produced any outputs or impacts. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted to *ESRC Society Today* as soon as they become available.	☐
OR	
This grant is not listed on *ESRC Society Today*.	☐

iii) Submission of Datasets

Datasets arising from this grant have been offered for deposit with the Economic and Social Data Service.	☒
OR	
Datasets that were anticipated in the grant proposal have not been produced and the Economic and Social Data Service has been notified.	☐
OR	
No datasets were proposed or produced from this grant.	☐