

# Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania: Developing an Equity Scorecard



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# Why This Research is Important



# The Knowledge Economy

Higher education seen as a central site for:

- ✓ facilitating skills, knowledge and expertise essential to economic and social development in low-income countries
- ✓ generating research and analysis to improve effectiveness of government policy and services

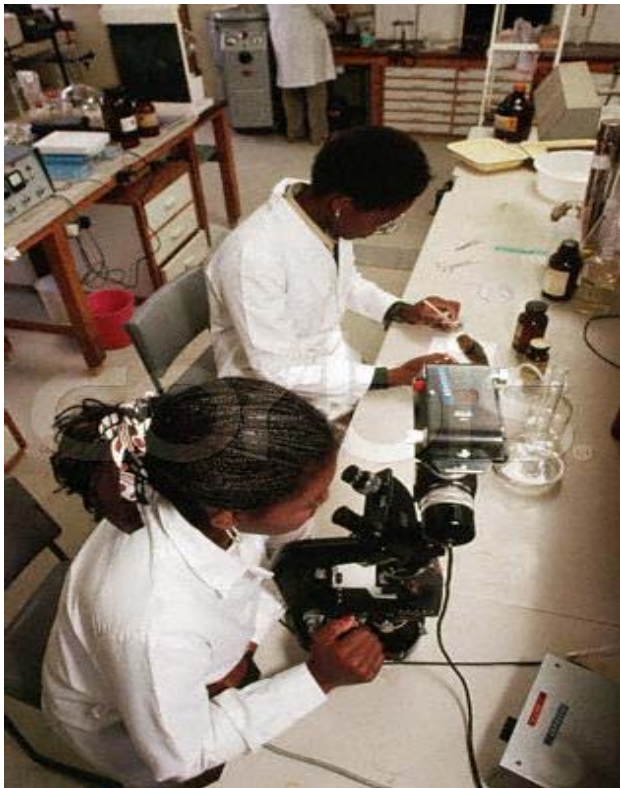
(Roberts, 2005; UNESCO, 1998; World Bank, 2000; 2002; Commission for Africa, 2005).

# A Political Economy of Participation in Higher Education

Lack of data on:

- Higher education, poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals
- How different structures of inequality intersect e.g. gender and socio-economic background
- Private higher education and widening participation
- Socio-cultural theory in the context of African higher education.

# Higher Education and Poverty Reduction



Higher education may affect poverty by:

- raising the incomes of those with education
- fostering high level skills, knowledge and competencies, to promote economic growth.

Poverty increasingly perceived as capability, as well as material deprivation (Sen, 1997).

# Mass Higher Education?



- Student enrolment worldwide:
  - ✓ 13 million in 1960
  - ✓ 82 million in 1995
  - ✓ 137.8 million in 2005

(UNESCO, 1998; UNESCO, 2007).

# Higher Education Capacity in Africa



- Africa has:
- 54 countries
- Over 700 million people
- 300 universities

(Teferra and Altbach, 2004).

# African Participation Rates in Higher Education



- 5% in Sub-Saharan Africa
- 5% in Ghana
- 1% in Tanzania
- 24% globally

(UNESCO, 2007)



# Challenges within the Higher Education Sector in Africa

- The rise of private higher education
- Management and governance
- Social inclusion v. expansion
- Policy implementation
- Over/under-representation by gender and social class (participation, service delivery and employment)
- Quality and relevance of the curriculum
- Brain drain
- Research capacity
- Languages and indigenous knowledges
- HIV/AIDS.

# Criticisms of Widening Participation

- Lowers the value of HE
- Dilutes standards
- Creates unrealistic expectations for learners
- Overloads systems that are under-resourced
- Stigmatises ‘non-traditional’ students
- Leads to ‘diploma disease’ i.e. educational inflation.

# Policies for Participation in Higher Education in Tanzania

- Post-independence Higher Education was part of national strategy for development and self-reliance
- University (College) of Dar es Salaam (1961/1970) – access to HE in Tz
- Open University of Tanzania (1992) - widening access to part-time students, working people, women with families, rural communities
- Education and Training Policy (1995) – increasing access for women, disabled students, gifted students; cost-sharing; private HEI

# Higher Education Policies

- National Higher Education Policy (1999)
  - increasing enrolment: private HEI, cost-sharing, distance education
  - widening participation: affirmative action, grants, scholarships, distance education
- Higher Education Students Loans Board Act (2004)
  - Structures and governance of loans to students
- Universities Act (2005)
  - Flexible governance of HEI

# Challenges to Widening Participation in Africa

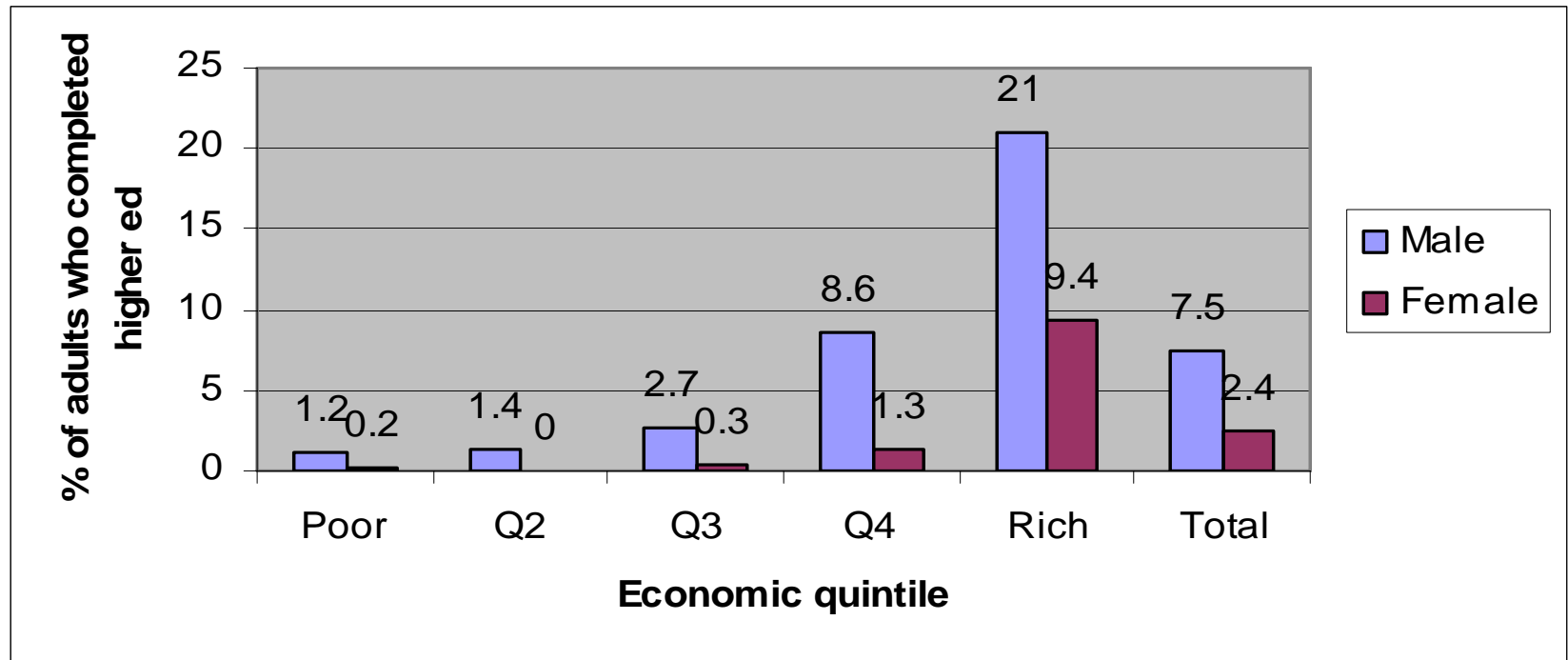
- Triangle of family, school and community
- Micro-level decision-making
- Socio-cultural barriers
- Educating women perceived as unproductive
- Poverty
- Low participation rates in schooling
- Under-investment in HE
- Violence, war and disease
- HE as a public and private good. Cost sharing. Who pays?
- Access to what?

**(Kwesiga, 2002; Morley *et al.* 2006)**

# Who is Participating?



# Who is Participating in Ghana?



Source: [www.devdata.worldbank](http://www.devdata.worldbank) (2007). Data source Ghana DHS Indicator 26, 2003

# Higher Education in Ghana

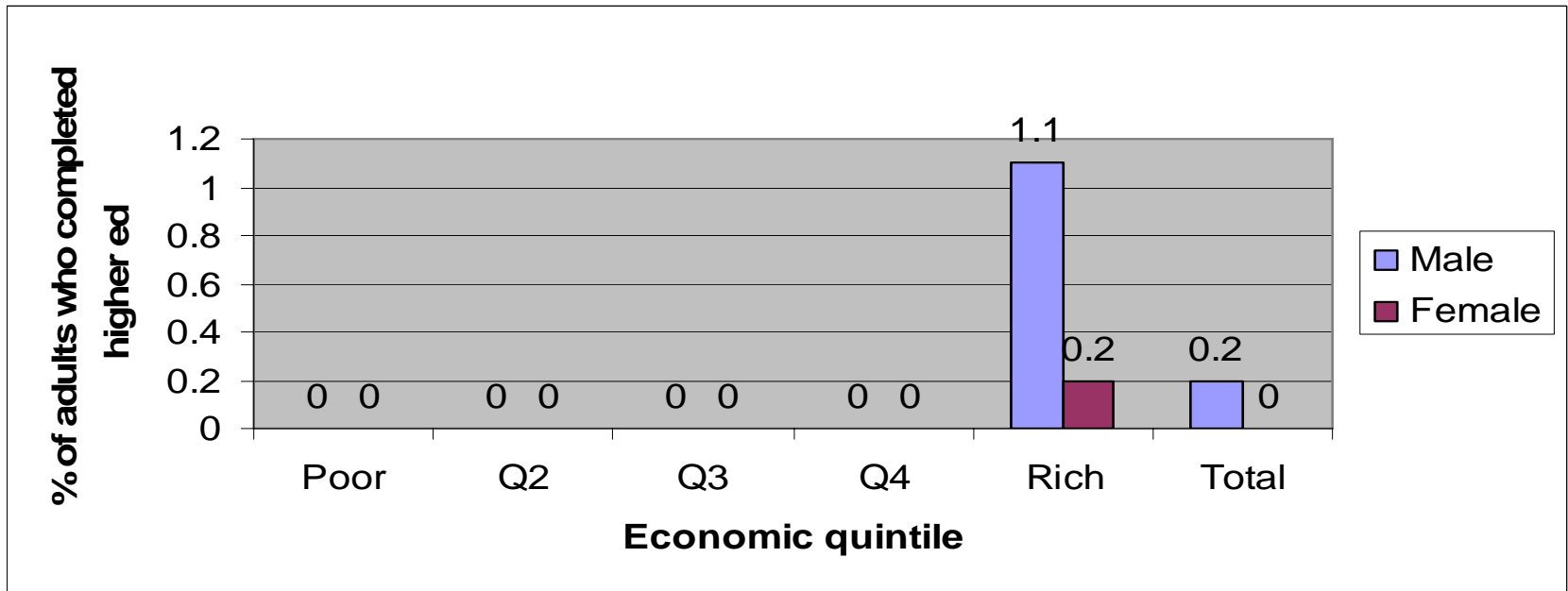
- In 2005, GER for tertiary education rose to 5% (UNESCO, 2007)
- 34.3% of students in public universities are women (2006/7) (NCTE, 2007a)
- 41% of students in private universities are women (2005/6) (NCTE, 2006)
- 10% of university students are enrolled in private institutions (2005/6) (NCTE, 2006)
- Demand for public HE: 43% of 'qualified' applicants to public universities are new entrants (2006/7) (NCTE, 2007b)
- Cf: 75% of qualified applicants to private universities are new entrants (2005/6) (NCTE, 2006)
- The majority of HE students continue to be men from wealthy backgrounds
- Women's participation is highest in Education, Social Sciences and Arts
- Women's participation is lowest in Science, Engineering and Agriculture

## **BUT**

- Where are mature students, and students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and students with disabilities found in the HE system?



# Who is Participating in Tanzania?



Source: [www.devdata.worldbank](http://www.devdata.worldbank), (2007). Data Source: Tanzania DHS Indicator 26, 1999.

# Higher Education in Tanzania

- In 2005, GER for tertiary education was 1% (UNESCO, 2007)
- 30% of HE students are women (MHEST, 2005)
- 10% of university students are at a private university (MHEST, 2005)
- 36% of undergraduates at private universities are women (MHEST, 2005)
- Women's participation is lowest in Commerce, Science and Engineering
- Women's participation is highest in Law, Education, Medicine
- The majority of students continue to be men from wealthy backgrounds.

BUT

- Where are mature students, and students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and students with disabilities?

# What the Project is Doing



# Methodology

- Examining the influence of social processes on differential participation in, progression through, and outcomes for under-represented social groups
- Quantitative methods:
  - ✓ international, national and institutional statistics
  - ✓ Equity Scorecard
- Qualitative methods:
  - ✓ analysis of policy documents
  - ✓ life history interviews with students
  - ✓ interviews with staff

# Research Sites



## Public Universities

- ✓ University of Cape Coast, Ghana
- ✓ University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

## Private Universities

- ✓ Central University College, Accra, Ghana
- ✓ Tumaini University, Tanzania

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# Quantifying Inequalities

# What is an Equity Scorecard?

- A **Scorecard** provides quantitative measures of critical moments in complex processes.
- An **Equity** Scorecard compares these measures for different groups.
- Datasets can be explored in multiple ways;
- e.g What proportion of all drop outs are women....?  
.....What proportion of women drop out....?

# What We Are Measuring

- Sociological variables e.g. gender, age, socio-economic status, disability

In Relation to:

- Educational indicators e.g. access, retention and achievement

In Relation to:

- Programmes of Study e.g. medicine, management
- Institutional Sites e.g. public and private HEIs.



# Scorecard 1: Admissions to two degree programmes at Univ B in Tanzania

Programme	% admissions women (2007/8)	Equity Index <small>% F Admissions / %F Enrolment (general)</small>	% admissions aged 30+ (2007/8)
LLB (Law)	<b>42.20</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>13.70</b>
B BA	<b>42.10</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>15.00</b>

*Data source: Admissions to 2 programmes (Dataset 1, 2007)*

Enrolment in first degree programmes at Univ B (2005/6)

%F=40.9% (MHEST, 2006:2)

## Scorecard 2 : Admissions to programmes at Uni A and Uni B, 2007/8

	Univ A		Univ B	
	%F	Equity Index	%F	Equity Index
B Com / B BA	35.4	1.11	42.1	1.03
LLB (Law)	26.0	0.82	42.2	1.03
BSc Engineering	22.0	0.69		
B Ed (Sci)	16.4	0.51		

*Datasource:* Admissions to 4 programmes (Dataset 1, 2007/8)

% F admissions 2007/8 Uni A: 31.9%

Uni B: u/g enrolments 40.9% (MHEST, 2006)

# Findings from the 2 Scorecards

- Rates of access for women in Commerce/Business Administration at both universities, and in Law at University B, are higher than both the national average for women in HE and the institutional average
- Rates of access for women in Law at University B are higher than at University A
- Of the 4 selected programmes at University A, only B Com takes in more women than the average across the university (31.9%)
- Rates of access for mature students are slightly higher in Business Administration than in Law at University B.

Women make up 33% of the undergraduate university population in Tanzania, and 36% of students at private universities (MHEST, 2005)

# Illuminating the Statistics



# Life History Interviews with Students

Soliciting data from 100 students per country on:

- ✓ enablers & barriers to participation;
- ✓ social and learner identities;
- ✓ how identities might influence educational choices;
- ✓ linkages between material, cultural, and social factors.

# Why Life History?

- Participation in HE can be influenced by long-term factors in students' lives
- Inequalities in participation in HE are evident throughout the lifecourse of participants and non-participants
- Opportunities in the early stages of education can play a key role in whether HE is an option
- Life history interviews can deepen understanding of how disadvantaged learners overcome barriers to participation, and how they negotiate their identity as learners in HE.

(Gorard et al. 2006; Reay et al. 2001; Archer and Hutchings 2000).

# Interview Findings from Ghana and Tanzania

- Gender (domestic duties, motherhood, non-traditional subjects for women)
- Agents of support (mothers and fathers, extended family, teachers, peers, colleagues)
- Influence of early years (schooling; urban/rural)
- Motivations for entering HE (career aspirations, escaping poverty)
- Decision-making process (strategic, delayed)
- Diverse experiences of HE (pedagogy, skills acquired, social networks, confidence, status).

# Interviews with Staff

- 100 policy-makers per country:
  - ✓ in Ministries with responsibility for higher education
  - ✓ in national organisations with an interest in higher education / equity / poverty reduction
  - ✓ in the case study sites.



# Working Towards...



- Constructing knowledge that can contribute to the democratisation of higher education.

# Website

[www.sussex.ac.uk/education/  
wideningparticipation](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation)

# Acknowledgements



- ESRC and DFID for funding this 3-year project.

## Some questions for your consideration

1. How useful do you think this research project is?
2. What do you see as some of the major challenges?
3. What key contextual factors should the Tanzanian research team take into account?
4. Who will benefit from the research findings?
5. How can the research findings be disseminated and used to inform policy and practice?
6. What contribution can *you* make to the project?

[www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation)

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