Gender Equity in Commonwealth Higher Education:

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by Louise Morley

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Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations

CEDAW	*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*
CGE	*Commission on Gender Equality (South Africa)*
CHE	*Council for Higher Education (South Africa)*
CODESRIA	*Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa*
DFID	*Department for International Development (UK)*
ECA	*Economic Commission for Africa*
GDI	*Gender-related Development Index*
GEEI	*Gender Equity in Education Index*
GEM	*Gender Empowerment Measure*
GER	*Gross Enrolment Ratio*
GETT	*Gender Equity Task Team (South Africa)*
HDI	*Human Development Index*
HE	*Higher Education*
HEI	*Higher Education Institution*
ICT	*Information Communication Technologies*
NER	*Net Enrolment Ratio*
NGO	*Non-governmental Organisation*
NEPAD	*New Partnership for Africa's Development*
NORAD	*Norwegian Development Agency*
OAU	*Organisation of African Unity*
PFA	*United Nations Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*
SIDA	*Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency*
UCT	*University of Cape Town*
UDSM	*University of Dar Es Salaam*
UGC	*University Grants Commission (Sri Lanka)*
UNDP	*United Nations Development Programme*
UNESCO	*United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation*
UNICEF	*United Nations Children's Fund*
UPE	*Universal Primary Education*

Executive Summary

Rationale

This study is an exploration of how gender equity is promoted and impeded in higher education institutions in South Africa, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda. It is the first study of its kind as policy and research attention have tended to focus on gender and basic education in low-income countries.

The focus has been on three areas of intervention for gendered change: access, curriculum transformation and staff development. The five countries were selected for their varying national policies on gender equity and their commitment to international policies to end discrimination against women. South Africa has generated a range of race and gender equity and transformation polices in higher education. Uganda and Tanzania have specific gender equity policies. Sri Lanka initiated social welfare policies in the post-independence period. Nigeria has a policy of expansion in higher education, with particular emphasis on developing science and technology.

The five case study institutions were selected for their organisational policies and practices for equality, gender mainstreaming, curriculum innovation, affirmative action and programmes to encourage women into higher education in general and into non-traditional subject areas in particular.

A driver for the research was the observation that gender and higher education are rarely researched qualitatively in countries outside the West. The studies that do exist tend to be unpublished, small-scale pieces of 'lone' research, including dissertations for masters' or doctoral studies. They remain largely unpublished. Hence, there have been limited opportunities to disseminate good practices and to develop more internationally oriented theories of gender equity in higher education.

Yet higher education is repeatedly positioned by the international community as a central site for facilitating the skills, knowledge and expertise that are essential to economic and social development in low-income countries (UNESCO, 1998; World Bank, 2005; Commission for Africa, 2005).

A starting point for the research was the production of an annotated bibliography of the unpublished or 'grey' literature on gender equity in higher education in low-income Commonwealth countries (Morley, Sorhaindo and Burke, 2005). This led to the mapping and discovery of some startling patterns across national boundaries. For example, scholars reported wide scale sexual harassment and gender violence; exclusion of women staff from promotion and professional development opportunities; the absence of women from management and professorial positions and from science and technology subjects; and difficulties for women in accessing higher education as students, as a consequence of poverty, socio-cultural practices and institutional barriers. They also found a wealth of positive interventions for change including gender mainstreaming, outreach schemes and affirmative action programmes.

The originality of this project is that it is an in-depth, qualitative study of higher education in low-income countries that focuses on formal and informal environments. While some gender

disaggregated statistical data and policy frameworks do exist, it was felt that the exploration of quotidian experiences could illuminate gendered processes and practices that contribute to the inequities recorded in the statistics. An aim has been to identify the factors that impede or promote gender equity and to identify examples of good practice that can be disseminated across national boundaries. It was felt that interventions to challenge gender inequalities deserve a wider international audience of policy-makers, practitioners and scholars in higher education.

Methodology

The project has sought to interrogate gender in higher education at three levels: macro (national and international policy), meso (organisational) and micro (individual experiences, interpersonal and social relations). Three main sources of data were collected: statistics and policies; semi-structured interview data and structured non-participant observations. The unearthing of literature, particularly 'grey'; that is unpublished literature on gender in higher education in low-income Commonwealth countries, was also a priority (Morley, Sorhaindo and Burke, 2005). This facilitated conceptual development and allowed patterns to be identified across a range of national policy contexts. The design of the study from its inception involved international collaboration of teams in the research sites and in the UK. Hence the project combined local, contextualised knowledge with international perspectives and scholarship on gender equity.

The study takes one university in each country as a case study. Case study organisations were selected to represent a range of interventions for gender equity including gender mainstreaming, affirmative action, gender sensitisation programmes, schemes to promote women's entry into science and technology, curriculum innovation and course development.

The methodological approach combined qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative aspect involved scrutiny of existing datasets, for example on women's enrolment as students and women's positions as staff. These data informed the research questions and the interview and observation schedules. Qualitative data were collected to attempt to tell the stories behind the inequities that were visible in the national and international statistics.

Outcomes of the research

The knowledge generated by this study should be of interest to higher educational organisations seeking to address gender inequalities, to national and international agencies and to the international community of scholars of gender and higher education. The processes used to develop the study also incorporated a commitment to research capacity-building in low-income countries. The team believes that the following outcomes have been achieved:

- Original insights into persistent inequalities in gendered access and the learning and working environment for female students and staff in five countries;

- Significant policy directions for improving access, the learning environment and employment conditions for women in higher education;

- Identification of areas for additional professional development e.g. gender mainstreaming, inclusive pedagogy, equity and diversity in staff recruitment and promotion, and enhancing women academics' research capacity;

- Examples of good practice for policies, pedagogy and organisational processes;

- In-country capacity-building, with an emphasis on qualitative methods and the use of ICT in data management and analysis;

- Strong international networks and partnerships for future collaborative research, dissemination and publications.

Dissemination was integrated into every stage of the project. It was iterative and collaborative, with a range of outputs including seminars, conference papers, publications, a website with working papers, conference papers and a project leaflet.

The project attracted considerable attention across the Commonwealth, Europe and China. In the five countries, dissemination seminars drew large numbers of participants from communities of practice, users and beneficiaries. Senior academic managers, members of NGOs and policy-makers followed the progress of the project with interest and support.

Summary of research findings from the five countries

General

All five countries report that gender has a significant impact on academic and professional identity formation. Institutional life in universities is a highly gendered experience. Gendered power relations symbolically and materially construct and regulate women's everyday experiences of higher education. The teams found patterns of gendered experiences across the five countries. Similar concerns about women's unequal status, as students and staff, are articulated in spite of different socio-economic and national policy contexts.

All five case studies reveal a highly gendered environment, which impedes women's progress as staff and has a detrimental effect on the learning environment for students. The gendering of the environment is reflected in senior staff positions, who studies which academic subjects, who receives more pedagogical attention as students, who has more opportunities for professional development and in crucial matters of personal safety on campus. Gendered differences are relayed and reinforced formally, for example in classrooms and boardrooms, and informally, via social practices.

The findings from the empirical data in the five countries, backed up by international literature, indicate that for many women, entry into higher education can be a means of mitigating gender oppression, enabling social mobility, financial independence, professional identity development and entry into the labour market. However, this is accompanied by contradictions and tensions

as women experience a range of discriminatory practices, gendered processes and exclusions within higher education itself. In all five countries, women students and staff report male privilege in pedagogical processes, assessment, promotion opportunities and management.

Discrimination can be by default rather than by design. Women are not always targeted for discrimination, but are sometimes overlooked or not encouraged, mentored or supported. Discrimination can also be a result of prejudice. The project identifies a number of discriminatory practices, such as excluding women from career development opportunities, prejudice against women – particularly mothers; gender-insensitive pedagogical processes; sexual harassment and gender violence left unchecked; prejudice about women's academic abilities and intellectual authority; poor equality policy implementation, and widespread male-domination of knowledge production, decision-making and research opportunities.

The meso-level of higher education institutions can be significant sites for the reproduction of gender inequalities. Equally, they have the potential to challenge them. The project identifies a range of good practices to promote gender equity, including effective national implementation strategies for gender equity, for example in Uganda and Tanzania, international networks, for example the Association of Commonwealth Universities' programme on women in management, organisational gender audits in Uganda, effective institutional responses to discrimination in South Africa, staff development programmes for women in South Africa and Uganda, Women's Studies courses in Sri Lanka and organisational research on equity and access (see Chapter 5). Feminist activities and groups inside and outside the university play a major part in driving change. The change is particularly effective when there are partnerships between gender organisations in wider civil society and feminist interventions within the university.

Affirmative action is opening up new opportunities for women. Yet South Africa, Uganda and Tanzania report that this is sometimes accompanied by stigmatisation and backlash.
All five countries are signatories to major international policy developments for promoting gender equity and gender is explicitly on the national policy agenda in three out of the five countries i.e. South Africa, Uganda and Tanzania. There are, however, varying degrees of success in implementation and the relation between macro (national and international), meso (organisational and departmental) and micro-level (individuals and groups) changes is still problematic. For example, informants in South Africa report how their strong national policy framework for transformation does not always translate into positive changes for individuals and groups in their daily lived experiences. Hence, there is a disjuncture between macro and micro processes. Informants in Nigeria report how the country is a signatory to several major international policies including CEDAW, but that this has not filtered through to national and organisational policies and practices. This means that there is also an inconsistency between macro and meso levels of activity relating to gender equity.

It is important to acknowledge diversity among women. Gender needs to be intersected with other structures of inequality e.g. race and ethnicity, religious diversity, socio-economic background, age, sexual orientation and disability. For example, when bursaries and scholarships are made available to women, as in the case of Tanzania and Uganda, consideration also needs to be given to socio-economic backgrounds. When gender issues are included in the curriculum,

normative assumptions should not be made about sexuality, able-bodiness etc. When race is a key policy objective, as in the case in South Africa, this needs to include consideration of gender.

Aspects essential to the promotion of gender equity in higher education are: awareness, advocacy, commitment, capacity, strategic planning, accountability, monitoring, evaluation, professional development and dissemination.

Access

Gender, together with socio-economic background, ethnicity and poverty, still constructs higher educational opportunities. Low enrolment and poor retention rates in basic education limit the pool of women qualified to enter higher education. This is widely reported in Nigeria, Uganda and Tanzania. Free basic education in Sri Lanka and Uganda has had a positive impact on girls' school enrolment. The numbers of women students are increasing in all the countries, but there are still questions about whether young women from poorer communities are gaining access.

Interventions, including access schemes, pre-entry courses, outreach programmes and community links, are helping to increase access to higher education.

All five countries report that women are slowly entering science and technology subjects as students and staff, but overall, there is still gender differentiation in subject choice. Subject choice is influenced by what the family, school and community consider to be gender appropriate. Barriers to women's entry into 'non-traditional' subject areas in the five counties include poor careers advice, negative attitudes from families, fear of maths, fear of visibility as a minority and perceptions of disciplines as gender appropriate and inappropriate. Young women's exposure to role models from 'non-traditional' subjects can challenge these barriers.

Curriculum transformation

The curriculum has been unevenly mainstreamed. This means that while the numbers of women entering different subject areas may have increased, course content in the major academic disciplines has not been revised to include attention to gender and to women in the form of language, resources, representation of women, references and teaching styles. Poor pedagogical practices reinforce gender inequalities, for example insensitivity to inclusion and diversity, over-reliance on transmission methods. Uganda and Tanzania report some success in gender mainstreaming, but also comment on how there is limited expertise and few opportunities for sharing good practices.

There is a hidden curriculum in which male students dominate classroom time and space. This is enabled by male teachers paying more attention to and having higher expectations of male students. Female students in all five countries report how their ability and achievements are under-estimated by male students and staff.

Women's Studies and Gender Studies courses are popular with women students in all five countries. They report how the content and pedagogy empower them and provide transferable study and analytical skills. Pedagogical practices that are inclusive, interactive and that balance teacher and student input facilitate women's participation.

Staff development

Women are slowly entering senior management and academic positions in the five countries, but the overall proportion of women in these positions is still low and women staff report limited opportunities to develop their research capacity. Management is perceived by many in the five countries as incompatible with women's lifestyles and domestic responsibilities. The gendered division of labour in the public and private domains impedes women's professional development. Women report how they have teaching rather than research responsibilities in the workplace, and have the bulk of domestic and childcare responsibilities in the home.

Women-only professional development programmes and gender sensitisation courses are found to be helpful and empowering by the participants. Networking and mentoring, seminars and conferences – local and international - help women's professional development and academic identity.

Summary of enablers and constraints to promoting gender equity

Gender equity is being promoted by:

- **new constituencies in mass higher education**

More people are being encouraged to enter higher education as part of the globalised knowledge economy and the need to increase the supply of highly skilled workers. While this is often the result of a commitment to human capital rather than social inclusion, more women are entering higher education;

- **internationalism**

This takes the form of professional and academic networks and enhanced mobility of students and staff across national boundaries. It provides opportunities for policy transfer and borrowing and communication of ideas and programmes for gender equity. It also takes the form of international policy initiatives and conferences to promote gender equity, for example the impact of the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, where gender mainstreaming was one of the agreed critical areas of concern, and the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education in 1998, in which women's enrolment and curriculum change were highlighted;

- **policy development and implementation**

This is taking place at international level via initiatives including the UNESCO World Declaration on Higher Education in 1998, and at national level, for example transformation policies in South Africa. These policies help to put gender on national and organisational agendas and allocate resources to implementation;

- **links with the community**

This takes a variety of forms including outreach programmes between universities and schools; networks between Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) concerned with gender and with gender scholars in higher education. The links between gender activities and policies in primary, secondary and higher education are essential to ensure progression, raise aspirations and prepare women for higher education.

Gender equity is being impeded by:

- **gender violence/harassment/abuse**

Gender violence is reported in all five countries including name-calling and informal initiation rituals known as ragging in Sri Lanka, sexual harassment in Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda. At the most serious end of the continuum is rape and this was reported in Nigeria and South Africa, with numerous comments in all five countries about how fear of rape, attack and harassment structures women's behaviour and reduces their confidence and mobility;

- **organisational culture and micro politics**

The culture of an organisation is encoded in language, symbols, artefacts, dress code, gender of staff and students, communication systems, relationships, informal practices and groupings. While there is often a formal commitment to promoting gender equity, informal practices, such as exclusions, humour, sarcasm, coalitions and non-transparent decision-making, can operate to exclude or undermine women. Many women in this study report how discrimination is often subtle and abstract, through, for example, women not receiving information about opportunities for professional development or international exchanges, and women not being invited to apply for promotion;

- **male domination**

This was reported in all five countries and took on a variety of forms. The domination of time and space in classrooms and boardrooms is widely noted in all countries except South Africa. It also relates to domination of decision-making, resource allocation, knowledge production and transmission, research and opportunities for international work and professional development;

- **structures and agency**

There is often a deficit model of women's preparedness for higher education as students and for seniority as staff in higher education. This means that explanations for women's under-representation are frequently framed in terms of women's lack of self-esteem, their unwillingness to put themselves forward, or their prioritising of their personal rather than professional lives. This view means that structures like childcare facilities, promotions criteria and selection procedures are overlooked;

- **lack of understanding of diversity**

This view seems to suggest that if women were entering and achieving in higher education, then no further attention is required. This is noticeable in Sri Lanka and Nigeria. There is an assumption that women will assimilate into existing modes of provision and that no review of the curriculum or pedagogy is necessary. Lack of attention to difference and diversity can also mean that when women are considered, they are treated as a homogeneous group, undifferentiated by socio-economic background, race, ethnicity and religion, age, sexual orientation or disability;

- **low numbers of women in senior academic and management positions**

This is reported in the five countries and is felt to have a number of consequences. For example, there may be fewer role models for women students and junior women staff, the association of knowledge with male authority and the ongoing belief that only men could be leaders. There may be concerns that women's interests are not represented at senior levels, that appointment and promotions procedures favour men and that women will be rejected if they put themselves forward. There is also the issue of status injury as women's intellectual and professional capital appear to be undervalued in the knowledge economy;

- **gender neutrality/blindness, rather than gender awareness**

Research teams in all countries note how academics and managers often claim not to discriminate against women or notice gender. In this sense, they purport to be gender 'blind' or neutral. However, this often means that women's specific needs and experiences are overlooked. So long as women assimilate and do not draw attention to their difference, there are no problems. However, this approach does not actively promote gender awareness or equity.

Recommendations and policy implications

The recommendations listed on the next page incorporate an understanding of the need to address stakeholders at macro, meso and micro levels. The emphasis is on a strategic and integrated approach to promoting gender equity.

GENERAL	
Organisational	• Organisations should undertake gender audits; • higher education organisations need to mainstream gender equity into their strategic planning, with resources allocated to promoting and sustaining gender equity; • success in working towards gender equity and diversity should be a performance indicator in management appraisal; • affirmative action programmes that include attention to student and staff matters should be developed and regularly reviewed to ascertain impact and effectiveness; • different structures/intersections of inequality need to be taken into account e.g. access schemes for women should include consideration of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds and disability; • learning environments need to be made safe for women via material measures e.g. lighting, campus security; by strict policy frameworks e.g. grievance procedures for sexual harassment; by pastoral services e.g. counselling and welfare and via the curriculum and pedagogy e.g. challenging discriminatory attitudes and behaviours; • gender mainstreaming should relate to governance as well as to curriculum. Decision-making for a need to include women members and consideration of gender issues; • equality policies need to be accompanied by action plans and grievance procedures, with sanctions against discriminatory behaviours; • crèche facilities need to be available on campus.
National	• There need to be action plans, steering mechanisms, accountability measures and evaluation systems for state policies; • ministries need to monitor gender equity policy formation and implementation; • international policies for equality need to be domesticated, with implementation mechanisms. Good practices should be shared across national boundaries; • all organisations (e.g. Ministries of Education, Universities and University Grants Commission) need to maintain gender-disaggregated data.
International	• There is a distinct added value in providing international opportunities to share good practices in promoting gender equity e.g. strategies to challenge gender violence and sexual harassment.

	ACCESS
Organisational	• Affirmative action programmes should be developed and sustained, accompanied by evaluation mechanisms and impact measures; • preparedness for higher education is essential. Pre-sessional courses should be available – particularly for women from socially disadvantaged groups; • career Guidance Units need to be established in all universities. Where these have already been set up (e.g. Sri Lanka) they should be guided to focus on the following: career counselling, publicising job opportunities for the various disciplines, including job postings and seminars/presentations by public and private organisations and NGOs, workshops on interview skills, CV development and alumni networks. The Centres could also co-ordinate outreach programmes to high schools on career counselling; • gender sensitisation programmes should be conducted at orientations for undergraduates. They should address the desired academic environment conducive to gender equity, including concepts of inclusion, respect for diversity and sexual harassment codes and the need for gender balanced participation in all university activities including student unions.
National	• Poverty continues to be a major barrier to participation. Availability of scholarships, bursaries, pre-sessional courses needs to be more widely disseminated; • outreach programmes between universities and schools should be encouraged, particularly in relation to 'non-traditional' subjects; • links between communities and higher education should continue to be developed in order to raise aspirations and provide information about programmes of study e.g. parents' groups, NGOs; • there is a need for integrated gender equity policies across primary, secondary and higher education education.
International	• Gender equity needs to be considered in qualitative as well as quantitative terms by policy-makers and practitioners with issues of retention and achievement considered in relation to access statistics. Qualitative data on women's lived experiences could help retention and completion statistics.

	CURRICULUM
Organisational	• Gender disaggregated statistics on women's enrolment in different disciplinary areas should be maintained, accompanied by action plans to increase women's participation in areas where they are under-represented; • student evaluation of courses, teaching and learning quality and the learning environment should be introduced, with implementation mechanisms and audit loops; • there is a need to build capacity in gender analysis especially on how to review the university curriculum to make it more inclusive and representative of women's interests; • gender should be mainstreamed into all academic programmes. This means ensuring that gender is a consideration and category of analysis in the course content, resources and pedagogy; • Women's and Gender Studies courses should be supported and further developed; • good pedagogy is inclusive pedagogy. Staff development on gender sensitive pedagogy should be promoted; • impact measures need to be developed and applied to gender mainstreaming programmes, e.g. review of booklists, resources and content.
National	• There is a value-added dimension to universities working together in national locations to disseminate good practices; • universities should conduct workshops on why/how gender should be introduced to the curriculum and how it can be incorporated with local and international academics currently engaged in or interested in curriculum transformation initiatives.
International	• Gender mainstreaming in higher education is taking place in a range of regions e.g. the European Union. It is also taking place in a wide range of organisations outside higher education. Yet few opportunities exist for nations, regions and sectors to share expertise; • international expertise on gender mainstreaming in higher education needs to be developed and shared via conferences, seminars and networks.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT	
Organisational	• Gender disaggregated statistics should be kept on recruitment, retention, professional development and promotion of staff; • gender equity policies and affirmative action schemes need to be reinforced by staff development programmes that are available and even mandatory for all staff; • gender indicators should be applied to the allocation of funding for national and international conferences; • gender awareness/sensitisation programmes need to be accompanied by impact measures; • mentoring schemes should be formalised; • gender should be included in appraisal schemes for managers; • gender should be embedded in staff development programmes; • where policies do not already exist, equality of opportunity criteria, principles and practices should be applied to recruitment, selection and promotion procedures; • gender equitable representation on decision-making committees should be instigated; • gender-related research skills (e.g. including gender analysis, gender-based needs assessments, application of gender theoretical concepts) should be developed.
National	• There should be earmarked funding for women to attend staff development programmes.
International	• Courses on women in higher education management should be developed and promoted e.g. the Women in Management in Higher Education programme initiated by the Association of Commonwealth Universities to motivate women to develop their research and management skills and aspire to be managers and leaders; • there is an urgent need for capacity-building of women's research skills and competencies. International programmes and training schemes could help to share and develop competencies.

Chapter 1: Background

1.1   Introduction

This project sought to interrogate and document the action that universities in five Commonwealth countries have taken with regard to gender equity.

The intellectual beginning of this project was the observation that while significant interventions to promote gender equity appeared to be taking place in several low-income countries, dissemination and documentation - particularly across national boundaries - were fairly uneven. Furthermore, the majority of published literature on gender and higher education tended to originate from high-income countries. This includes work from the UK: Bagilhole (2002), Eggins (1997), Howie and Tauchert (2002), Leonard (2001), Morley (1999, 2003) and Deem and Ozga (2000); from Australia: Blackmore and Sachs (2001), Brooks and MacKinnon (2001), Burton (1991), Currie, Thiele and Harris (2002), Probert et al. (1998), from Canada: Acker (1996), Wyn et. al. (2000), from New Zealand: Brooks (1997); from South Africa: De la Rey (2001) and from Singapore, Hong Kong and Thailand: Luke (2001).

An initial stage of this research project involved a search of available published and unpublished 'grey' literature on gender in Commonwealth universities. The results of this search were published as an annotated bibliography (Morley, Sorhaindo and Burke, 2005). An aim was to set the grey literature alongside the published literature to give as full a picture as possible of issues, debates and concerns that have arisen over the past ten years. Many themes emerged from an analysis of the various texts taken together. These include: the gender gap in enrolment and retention in higher education; the gendering of academic disciplines; the widespread existence of gender violence and sexual harassment; the under-representation of women in senior academic and management posts; and the absence of women from science and technology. It appeared that at least three central strands were emerging relating to access, curriculum transformation and staff development. These formed the basis of the study.

A further driver for this project was the observation that while there is a considerable policy force field developing internationally on gender and basic education (e.g. Unterhalter, 2003), there tends to be less emphasis on gender and higher education. The experiences, perspectives and aspirations of women students and staff remained largely unexplored and untheorised.

Yet higher education is repeatedly positioned by the international community as a central site for facilitating the skills, knowledge and expertise that are essential to economic and social development in low-income countries (UNESCO, 1998; World Bank, 2005; Commission for Africa, 2005).

1.2   Aims and research questions

The exploration of literature and consultation with research partners, policymakers and stakeholders in the Commonwealth academic community generated the following hypothesis:

> *Formal policies and interventions for gender equity in HEIs are facilitated or impeded by*
> *organisational structures, informal practices and gendered power relations. Hence, challenging*

gender inequality requires multi-faceted strategies. The initiation and sustainability of interventions for gender equity in Commonwealth HEIs is dependent on partnerships between policy-makers, HEIs and civil society.

This hypothesis shaped the following research questions:

Which social, organisational and policy processes have led to the selected gender equity initiatives being introduced, sustained and/or impeded in the selected HEIs?

- What is the current national picture of the relationship between gender and access, retention and achievement in secondary education, undergraduate higher education and women's employment?

- What evidence is there in the formal organisational structure of selected HEIs of gender inequality? (curriculum, pedagogy, pastoral support, access, management, gendered division of labour, appointments, promotions etc.)

- What national, international and organisational policies have influenced the introduction of initiatives for gender equality?

How are these initiatives viewed inside and outside HEIs?

- In what ways do students and staff involved in gender initiatives view the experience of HE as gendered? What are their explanations, attitudes and responses to gendered power relations within the organisation? What are their experiences of the gender initiative?

- How have different stakeholders perceived and experienced specific interventions for change?

How sustainable are these initiatives and why?

- What aspects of the HE policy context, academic and management practices and organisational culture facilitate or impede gender equity?

- How do partnerships with civil society contribute to the sustainability of initiatives?

1.3   Structure of the research

The research project, designed in response to the above questions, set out the following objectives:

- to map the interventions for gender equity in the partner countries, and to select specific interventions for more in-depth case study;
- to collect qualitative and quantitative data on the impact and effectiveness of these interventions for change;

- to study the institutional culture and policy context that supports these interventions, both in terms of formal and informal structures;
- to gather national data to allow cross-national comparisons for dissemination and policy recommendations;
- to highlight and disseminate examples of good practice and recommend appropriate institutional strategies to address existing inequities;
- to contribute to sustainable capacity-building for gender research.

In each country, three interventions for change were investigated – one from each of the following categories:

Access - This included women entering higher education in general or in particular non-traditional subject areas e.g. science, engineering, surveying. Specific interventions to support women's access were also included, for example, affirmative action programmes, scholarships, bursaries and pre-entry schemes.

Staff development - This area investigated women's opportunities for professional development, e.g. women into management programmes and mentorship, as well as staff development programmes related to gender equity, e.g. gender sensitisation training. Questions were also posed about the extent to which gender was included or mainstreamed in staff development programmes per se.

Curriculum transformation - This looked at whether interventions for gender equity were influencing curriculum change and development.

The specific interventions researched are outlined in Chapter 5. The research required expertise from each of the countries involved and a central co-ordination team to manage the project. Figure 1 illustrates the structure of the project.

Figure 1: Gender Equity in Commonwealth Higher Education Project Structure
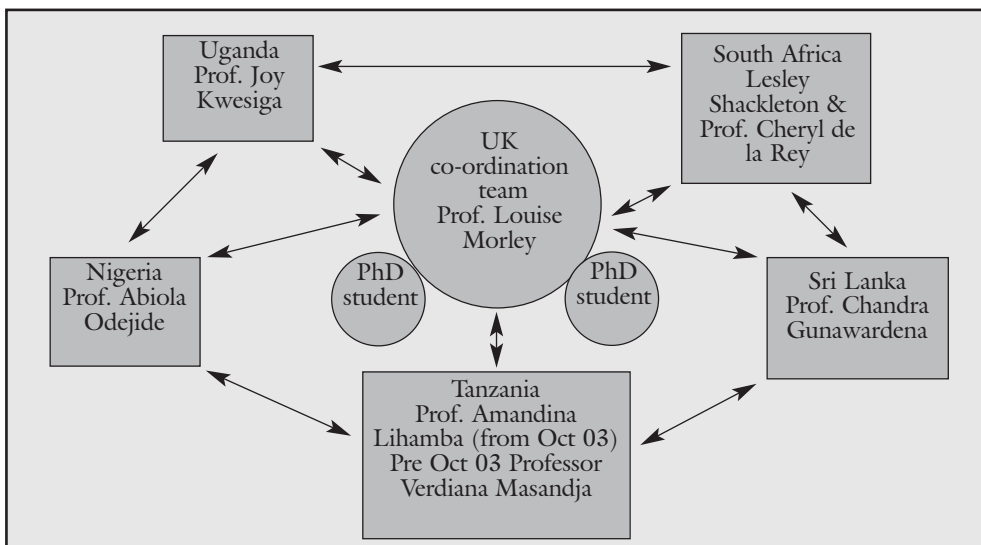
Chapter 2: Theoretical and Policy Frameworks

2.1   Gender, education and economic development

The economic value of higher education is a subject of considerable debate - particularly in low-income countries (Task Force on Higher Education and Society, 2000). Higher education is repeatedly positioned by the international community as a central site for facilitating the skills, knowledge and expertise that are essential to economic and social development in low-income countries (UNESCO, 1998; World Bank, 2002, 2005; Commission for Africa, 2005). Higher education institutions are pivotal in the globalised knowledge economy, the initial and continuing training of professionals, national wealth creation, international competitiveness and innovation in science and technology.

Additionally, the economics of gender equity are well-documented. Gender equity is often an essential strategy of poverty reduction goals (Shabaya and Konadu-Agyemang, 2004). Macro-level research stresses the links between girls' and women's education and economic development. Nations with higher levels of female enrolment in education in general have higher overall levels of economic productivity (Klasen, 2002). World Bank research (2001) shows that countries with smaller gaps between women and men in areas such as education, employment, and property rights not only have lower child malnutrition and mortality, but also more transparent business and government and faster economic growth, which in turn helps to narrow the gender gap. Studies demonstrate that babies of educated women tend to be healthier and have a higher survival rate (UNICEF, 2000). The education of women is seen a conduit for intergenerational benefits, an important predictor of children's, especially girl's educational attainment and a basis for long-term gender equality and social change (World Bank, 1999). It is also important to stress that arguments for increasing women's access to education should not position women solely in relation to families or societies. Women should have a right to be educated for themselves.

Higher education is both a public and a private good. Education is not solely about the development of human capital for wealth creation. Sociology as well as economics needs to inform debates about gender and higher education. There are various arguments justifying widening participation across the higher education sector. These include social justice arguments about how structural barriers such as poverty (Callender and Jackson, 2004), social exclusion (Levitas, 1999) and lack of educational opportunities combine to reinforce patterns of disadvantage (Reay et al., 2001). There are also arguments about wider social benefits of learning (Schuller et al, 2004), human capital and the economic value of knowledge, that is the role that skill acquisition and professional development play in a globalised knowledge economy (Peters, 2005). The returns to education – in the sense of the increment in income that accrues to each year of education – are much higher for those with higher levels of education. Higher education also plays an important role in access to certain types of employment.

The well-documented benefits of higher education raise issues about how opportunities are distributed. Globally, there are concerns about who gains access to higher education and whether some socio-economic groups are persistently marginalised (World Bank, 2002). Poverty means that the delayed gratification of educational investment is not always an option in lower income countries. Micro - level decision-making in lower income countries seems to imply that educating women is economically unproductive. In many low-income societies, the lower value

placed on education for girls and women, based on perceived outcomes and the roles of women in society, underscores the differential participation of men and women in higher education (Kwesiga, 2002). In order for new knowledge societies not to recreate and reinforce systematic social inequalities, some consideration of how higher education is gendered is important.

2.2   Theorising gender equity in higher education

Identifying key sites of gender differentiated experiences of the academy was a key purpose of the research. Gender structures relations of production and reproduction and is also linked to knowledge construction and dissemination. Gender refers to the differences between men and women that are socially constructed in the form of norms, customs and practices (Kabeer, 2003). Gender equity refers to equality of treatment, opportunities and outcomes for both men and women. It implies the ability for women to exercise agency without the limiting constraints of socially constructed perceptions and expectations of their roles and responsibilities. Achievement of gender equity requires that structural impediments to women's equitable treatment and equivalence of outcomes are removed.

A common misconception is to blame and explain women's under-representation in the higher education sector in terms of agency – individual action or lack of it – rather than structures, for example, recruitment and promotion criteria and processes, academic timetabling of staff development initiatives and a culture of long hours. Attributing women's gendered differential participation to agency overlooks the degree to which women are able to develop their capacity for agency in contexts where power differentials influence their lives. In the context of this research, gender inequality is a form of social disadvantage that impinges on individuals' ability to exercise agency and is perpetuated by institutionalised structures in society.

Divergent frameworks of gender analysis have evolved, offering different gender equity policy prescriptions and approaches. Gender analysis aims to interrupt commonsense assumptions about the gendering of ability, knowledge, competency and aspirations. Key concepts have included social justice and social inclusion (Levitas, 1999; Nussbaum, 1999); recognition and redistribution (Fraser, 1997) and feminist organisation theory (Davies and Holloway, 1995; Morley, 1999). It has also been important to expand an understanding of feminist methodology to include post-colonialism and to question how structures of race, gender and social class interact (Mikell, 1997; Mohanty, 1997; Narayan, 1998).Three frameworks have been influential in theorising gender and development: Women in Development (WID); Gender and Development (GAD); and Postmodernism and Development (PAD).

The Women in Development (WID) approach has been a framework for gender analysis underpinning international bodies and governments' policy prescriptions for gender equity. The WID movement emerged in the 1970s, based on a liberal theoretical approach (Boserup, 1989). The absence of women in development plans and policies was seen as a major problem. Women's access to education and to paid work were cornerstones of this movement. Education was largely positioned as basic education and /or literacy campaigns, and was frequently linked to women's reproductive roles. Jackson and Pearson (1998) refer to education as having 'silver bullet' qualities that can reduce women's fertility, restrain population growth, reduce poverty and

raise whole families' aspirations and life chances. In this analysis, investment in women's education only has a payoff if the benefits can be extended to male partners and families. Approaches evolving from the WID framework of analysis have emphasised issues of 'bringing in' women to development. Gender tends to be associated with women and girls. In the context of education, WID approaches have translated into arguments and initiatives that stress access and expansion of education opportunities for women premised on efficiency and economic growth rationales.

The Gender and Development (GAD) framework has its roots in socialist feminism. GAD perceives gender as a complex social relation, emphasises the power structures of inequality and pays particular attention to transforming unequal gender relations and the empowerment of individuals through the removal of the structural barriers to gender inequality. A key aspect of GAD is understanding the concept of gender in the context of social relations analysis. GAD views unequal social relations between men and women and their 'naturalisation' as the major problem. Operationalisng gender in policy analysis has been a critical element in GAD discourse. A key element in GAD analysis is the distinction of practical gender needs and strategic gender interests. Unlike the WID approach it seeks to challenge multiple forms of women's disempowerment and subordination (including gendered structures and institutions). The GAD analytical framework has contributed to a better understanding of gendered processes in classrooms and the gendered nature of curricula.

Postmodernism and Development (PAD) analytical frameworks question prevalent conceptualisations of gender, emphasising the fluid processes of gender identity and representation (Marchand and Parpart, 1995). In addition to post-structuralist influences, strands of PAD have also included post-colonial thinking. An important strand of the power/knowledge debates has highlighted the role education plays in diminishing the role of local and indigenous knowledges. While such approaches have not been as influential as WID and GAD in international and government policies directed towards higher education, the analytical constructions of PAD have formed part of feminist strategies for changing the academy.

2.3   Emerging gender issues in higher education

The project's research draws on relevant theoretical literature pertaining to gender equity and higher education issues. A literature review undertaken in the early stages of the project identified key areas of concern and interest in this field. It became evident that much of the research in this field in relation to the case countries and low-income Commonwealth countries remained unpublished. The issues gleaned from the available grey (unpublished) literature and broader relevant publications are presented in this section.

Student enrolment worldwide in higher education is increasing (UNESCO, 1998). Internationally, higher education policy has focussed on widening participation with much attention paid to access. Access has often been constructed in quantitative terms, with a particular focus on targets to change the number of members of under-represented groups either in higher education institutions as a whole or horizontally in particular disciplines. Social

relations inside and outside organisations shape gender inequalities. There has been less research and theoretical discussion of the qualitative aspects of access and employment and women's lived experiences as students and staff in higher education institutions. However, much of the literature that explores these issues has consisted of grey literature and studies of higher education institutions indicate that daily life in universities is structured by unequal gender relations (Morley, 1999; Morley, Sorhaindo and Burke, 2005). From the analysis of littertaure, it appeared that three central strands of gender equity were emerging: access, curriculum transformation and staff development.

Key areas of concern on a fairly international basis have included: the under-representation of women in senior positions and roles in higher education institutions; the absence of women in particular disciplines and organisational roles; gendered micropolitical experiences within these institutions; and the knowledge/ power conjunction reflected in the curriculum and research. Much feminist theorising across the Commonwealth has focussed on how the university curriculum and individual disciplines are gendered, with calls for interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity and new maps of learning that include references to women's lives and scholarship (Kennedy et al, 1993; Magarey, 1983; Mama, 1996). Feminism, postmodernism and post-colonialism have all raised questions about disqualified knowledges (Stanley, 1997; Spivak, 1999). Early feminist interventions and rationalities for curriculum and indeed wider organisational change have resulted in what is known today as gender mainstreaming (Kabeer, 2003; UNESCO, 2002a) as a strategy for gender equity.

The inclusion of gender in the university curriculum can be achieved both via mainstreaming into the academic disciplines and by the provision of specific interdisciplinary programmes of study such as Women's Studies. While Women's Studies has been in decline in the UK, it has continued to expand in many low-income countries. The rationale and challenges of developing curricula on women and the sexual politics of the higher education curriculum have been widely debated by feminist educators in the West (Aaron and Walby 1991; Bird, 2000; Braidotti, 1992; Coate, 2000; Howe, 2000; Magarey, 1983; Maynard and Purvis,1996; Richardson and Robinson, 1993). Literature on Women's Studies in Africa began to emerge in the 1990s (Abdulwahid, 2000; Boswell, 2002; Essof, 2002; Mama, 1996). A central theme permeating theory on Women's and Gender Studies is how women's interests, experiences and contributions to knowledge have traditionally been disqualified from mainstream academic disciplines. The focus has been on content, pedagogy or process (Shrewsbury, 1987). The impact of these courses is believed to be fairly broad. For example, a cross-European analysis of Women's Studies highlights the significant impacts of such programmes on women's employability, adaptability and entrepreneurship and the promotion of equal opportunities (EC, 2004).

In addition to the overt, declared curriculum, there is also a hidden curriculum in higher education (Margolis, 2001). During the 1970s, the hidden curriculum became one of the powerful concepts in the new (critical) sociology of education. Increasingly, the hidden curriculum is perceived as a vital part of more general curriculum transformation. The overt and the hidden curricula are not mutually exclusive but form a complex mechanism of production and reproduction (Apple, 1980). The hidden curriculum takes many forms in higher education (Margolis, 2001). Studies have reported how discrimination against women can involve not

taking them seriously and doubting their ability and motivation (Thomas, 1990; Seymour and Hewitt, 1997). Discrimination due to perceived incompetence is based on descriptive gender stereotypes (Rudman and Glick, 2001). Difference is frequently expressed in terms of deficit and located within particular bodies rather than in the 'invisible values and assumptions structuring curriculum and pedagogy' (Abu El-Haj, 2003:411). Sandler et al's study in the USA found 'some thirty ways in which faculty members often treated women students differently in the classroom'(1996:1). This resulted in what they termed a 'chilly climate' which impeded women's full participation in the learning process. Issues of voice, silence and participation have long been a concern of feminist theorists (Gatenby and Humphries, 1999). Under-representation of women is both qualitative and quantitative. Even when women are physically present as staff and as students in higher education, they are often excluded from decision-making, discussion and debate (Lewis, 1994). Dealing with quotidian examples of sexism and discrimination can have a detrimental effect on women's self-confidence and career aspirations (Morley, 1999; Seymour and Hewitt, 1997).

The hidden curriculum is irrational and contradictory. Negative attitudes to women's academic abilities do not correlate with their actual achievements. There are many reports that academic work is rapidly becoming feminised in so far as the dispositions required for scholarship are now heavily perceived as more conducive with socially constructed female behaviour, for example discipline, diligence, perseverance, commitment to self-improvement. The feminisation of learning is becoming an international concern, with increasing anxieties about boys' and men's academic failure (Epstein et al, 1998). The study of masculinities is a strand of gender analysis that has stemmed from such concerns.

As already suggested, the place from which power is exercised is often a hidden place. Gendered power is everywhere and nowhere. The culture of an organisation is gendered and encoded in a range of formal and informal signs, practices and networks. Artefacts, language and everyday norms convey expectations of gender appropriate behaviour and gendered power. Gender discrimination can take place formally through structures including limited childcare facilities, or lack of opportunities for professional development, but also informally through name-calling, gendered networks and exclusions. A theoretical perspective that has been of immense use to this study has been that of micropolitics (Morley, 1999). Micropolitics is a recurrent theme in many universities. Micropolitics focuses on the ways in which power is relayed in everyday practices. It discloses the subterranean conflicts, competitions and minutiae of social relations. It describes how power is relayed through seemingly trivial incidents and transactions. The conceptual framework of micropolitics can help to reveal the increasingly subtle and sophisticated ways in which dominance is achieved in academic organisations. A micropolitical perspective allows one to see how power is exercised and experienced in organisations, rather than simply possessed (Morley, 1999; 2003).

The exclusion of women from senior academic and management roles is a recurrent theme in this research and in wider studies of women in higher education (Blackmore and Sachs, 2001; Husu, 2000). Femaleness is also often perceived as irreconcilable with intellectual and managerial authority (Shah, 2001). This has sometimes been theorised in relation to women's reproductive roles. Academic life is often perceived as incompatible with motherhood and wider domestic responsibilities. The sense that women academics are caught between two greedy

institutions - the extended family and the university (Currie et al., 2002) is a recurring theme in much research on gender and higher education. Raddon (2002:387) theorises that there is a perceived tension between 'what is constructed as the independent, aggressive nature of academic work and the dependent, caring nature of mothering'. There are contradictory prescriptions for 'caring woman' and 'productive academics' (Acker and Feuerverger, 1997: 137). There appears to be a basic contradiction between discourses of the 'successful academic' and the 'good mother' (Raddon, 2002). The successful academic is constructed as someone who should be totally dedicated and undistracted (David et al, 1996; Goode, 2000). Many academic women internalise these contrasting discourses that have the potential to constrain their achievements. If they dare to speak of the role conflict, this simply confirms prejudices about the unsuitability of women to organisational life (Gatenby and Humphries, 1999). This is compounded by lack of structural support.

The gendered division of labour between the private and public domains is also reproduced in organisational life. Informants in this study report that women tend to be given responsibility for teaching and student support and have fewer opportunities than their male counterparts to engage in research and management. Specific tasks are gendered and signify and reproduce power relations that appear to impact on women's career development.

The exclusion from opportunities for staff development by default or design has been an issue of concern for gender theorists (Bhalaluesesa, 1998; Imenda, 1995; Moultrie and de la Rey, 2004). One strategy that is being used to develop women staff is mentoring. Mentoring as a form of staff development is gaining international recognition. Mentoring is conceptualised as providing support and guidance, with mentors seen as critical friends - often in environments that are experienced as alienating or mystifying. Mentors are also regarded as sponsors, protectors, research coaches and role models (August and Waltman, 2004). While programmes for women have been developed to remedy the under-representation of women in senior posts (Cullen and Luna, 1993; Eliason et al, 2000; Jacobi, 1991; Neumark and Gardecki, 1998), these are few. Mentoring is increasingly perceived as essential to learning organisations.

2.4   Gender violence, harassment and abuse

Feminist studies are beginning to explore how sexual harassment impacts on personal and professional well-being and learning environments in Commonwealth universities. Omale's (2002) study of Kenya and South Africa identified sexual harassment as a key factor in blocking women's participation in higher education. She linked this to the hierarchical power relations within universities where women lack institutional power to challenge male abuse and harassment. Also researching in South Africa, Simelane (2001) confirms the frequency with which incidences of sexual harassment occur on campus. She documents reasons why students believe it occurs yet remains unreported, such as fear of embarrassment, fear of retaliation, and lack of assertiveness. She names the most likely perpetrators, and describes the preventative measures taken by students. Lack of action in response to gender violence on campus is a universally reported concern. Bacchi (1998) believes that institutions do not take action because they separate the institution from the problem of sexual harassment. The impact of gender violence on the learning and working environment is profound.

Bagilhole and Woodward's UK study (1995) states how it is important to recognise the crucial part played by sexual harassment in excluding women from full participation and success in the academic profession. A challenge is how to ascertain the scale of the problem and how to deal with specific cases. Mohamed's (1998) study provided a situational analysis of violence in higher education institutions in South Africa and guidelines for policy development.

A theme running through much of the literature is fear - both of the violence itself and of reporting violence and harassment (Eyre, 2000; Thomas and Kitzinger, 1997). In Zimbabwe, Zindi's (1998) study discovered that every student surveyed claimed to know lecturers who 'use their influence to exploit female students sexually' (p. 46) and 93 per cent of respondents reported that they 'would not report sexual harassment to any authority' (p. 47) because they did not believe they would be protected from further victimisation. In Pakistan, Durrani's (2000) study of women managers in higher education found that women ignored, kept silent and felt guilty about their experiences of sexual harassment. The consequences of their experiences limited their training and promotional opportunities. The taboo surrounding speaking out about gender violence also impacted on some research samples. For example, Bajpai (1999) notes how many potential respondents refused to take part in her study on sexual harassment in Mumbai due to the sensitivity of the subject matter and fear of possible repercussions. One of the consequences of the silence is that it is difficult to get a sense of the scale of the problem. However, Mirsky (2003) claims that sexual, physical and psychological violence causes as much of a burden of ill health and death among women aged 15-44 as cancer - and more than malaria and traffic accidents. She maintains that sexual violence in the educational sector is an unaddressed issue. While this study did not set out to investigate gender violence, the issue emerged in both the literature and the empirical data. The widespread existence of various forms of gender violence is undermining rational policy interventions for gender equity.

2.5   International policies

In the early phases of this project, documentary analysis illustrated the policy context under which this research would take place. Researchers analysed national legislation, international declarations, organisational constitutions and affirmative action policies though the lens of gender equality. Attention was paid to the three phases of the policy cycle: policy creation and policy formulation; policy implementation; and policy accountability, and to the three focal points of this study: access, curriculum transformation and staff development (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Structure for Documentary Analysis
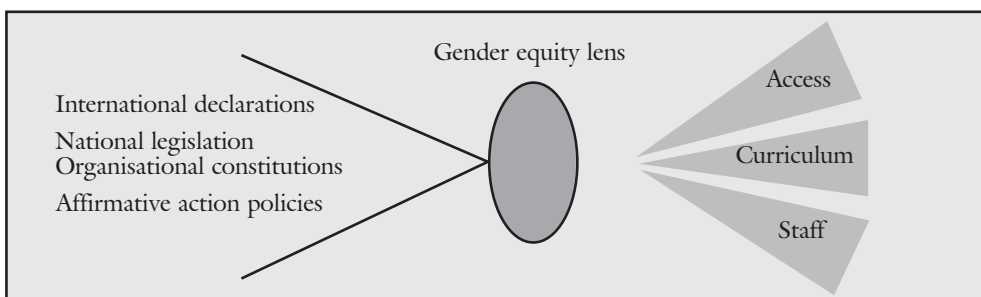
2.5.1 UNESCO World Declaration on Higher Education

Gender equity in education is increasingly viewed as an indicator of development and political and economic maturity (World Bank, 2005). International events have encoded gender equity in policy priorities. An example was the first World Conference on Higher Education hosted by UNESCO in Paris in 1998. Representatives of 182 countries (including the five countries in this project) endorsed the *World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty First Century: Vision and Action* with its commitment to in depth reform of higher education throughout the world. Article Four of the Declaration is specifically concerned with gender (UNESCO, 1998).

The document on *Higher Education and Women: Issues and Perspectives* (UNESCO, 1998) prepared for the World Conference on Higher Education specifically focused on the issues related to women in higher education. The document identifies three central issues affecting the accession of women into leadership positions:

• Societal attitudes to women that discourage their participation in decision-making;
• Their lower enrolments in higher education to date; and
• The absence of a gender dimension in the higher education curriculum.

This was a particularly important policy development as it brought together 3 strands of analysis: gender, higher education and development.

2.5.2 Beijing 1995

The UN World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 was a landmark in the recognition of women's rights. It generated a Platform for Action (PFA), which was not legally binding but acted as a standard and reference point for policies on women.

Critical areas of concern identified included poverty, equal access to education and training, health care, violence against women, the effects of armed or other conflicts on women, inequality in economic structures and policies, power sharing and decision making, mechanisms to promote women's advancement, human rights, role of media, the environment and the girl-child.

In the area of education, Beijing promoted equal access to education and training, including a commitment to universal access to and completion of primary education, the eradication of illiteracy and the equal sharing of family responsibilities by girls and boys.

The five countries in this study each made a public commitment to implement its recommendations.

2.5.3   Beijing +5

This was a comprehensive review of progress in implementing the Platform for Action, entitled 'Women 2000: Gender equality, development and peace for the 21st century'. Globalisation and its impact on women was an important theme. Affirming the priorities set in Beijing 1995, the 2000 conference called for the mainstreaming of gender into anti-poverty strategies, protection for women and girls in situations of conflict, anti-trafficking measures, a gender perspective in HIV/AIDS work and action to increase women's participation in decision- making.

2.5.4   Beijing+10

This was the 10- year review that took place in March 2005 and is due to report in September 2005.

2.5.5   The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

An influential international policy was the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1979). This declared 'discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity and amounts to an obstacle to women's participation on equal terms with men in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries and hampers the growth of prosperity of society and the family' (p.3). The five countries are all signatories to CEDAW.

2.5.6   OP-CEDAW

On March 11, 1999, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women adopted an Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The Optional Protocol is a complaint mechanism to consider petitions and conduct inquiries into violations of the CEDAW Convention when domestic remedies have been exhausted. As of January 2005, of the five countries, only Nigeria and Sri Lanka had acceded to the Protocol.

2.5.7   1997 Gender and Development Declaration and its 1998 addendum on the prevention and elimination of violence against women and children

The SADC (Southern African Development Community), which includes Tanzania and South Africa, is using this non-binding document as a framework for mainstreaming gender activities and strengthening efforts of member states (including South Africa) to achieve gender equity. It commits member states to ensure equal representation of women and men in national decision-making processes, and to achieve a 30 per cent target of women in political and decision-making structures by 2005. The African Union Gender Declaration (2004) went further – calling for target to increase to 50 per cent. SADC countries have put in place affirmative action programmes enabling girls to enter tertiary education with lower points than boys and there is a 50/50 enrolment policy at primary levels.

2.6   The implementation gap

A theme that is frequently reported in this study is how there is an implementation gap between international policies for gender equality and national and organisational initiatives. Most countries are signatories to CEDAW, the Beijing Platform of Action, the Millennium Development Goals, and Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development which intend to promote gender equality, equity and empowerment. Global commitments have been translated into practice at national levels through operational and legal frameworks including national gender policies, national action plans on women, national machineries for mainstreaming gender, gender sensitive constitutions and gender statutes. However, concerns have been expressed by gender advocates that policy commitments to gender evaporate during implementation (Rao and Kelleher, 2005; Goetz, 1997; Kabeer and Subrahmanian, 1996; Razavi, 1997). Disappointment with the impact of transformation policy in South Africa has been expressed by several authors (Martineau, 1997; Mabokela, 2000; Ndungane,1999).

There have been some policy successes, for example, in increasing the number of women participating as students in higher education. However, initiatives to secure equality in higher education remain fragile. A commonly expressed concern in this study is that gender is not seen as a priority in the context of what is regarded as more pressing in the changing global political economy of higher education, for example quality assurance, internationalisation, employability and wealth creation.

Chapter 3: Country Details - Demographics, Higher Education and Gender Equality Commitments

3.1 Demographic details for the 5 countries

> Today, disparities between men and women remain pervasive around the world - in resources and economic opportunities, in basic human rights, and in political voice – despite significant gains in some areas and some countries. These disparities are strongly linked to poverty. Ignoring them comes at great cost to people's well-being and to countries' abilities to grow sustainably and to govern effectively (World Bank, 2005: 7).

As this quotation indicates, the links between women's educational opportunities and poverty levels pervade international policy documentation. The five countries vary in population and poverty levels. Measures of poverty include income distribution, and the human development index (HDI) - a composite indicator of socio-economic development which comprises life expectancy, per capita income and level of education, which is measured on a scale of 0 to 1. An HDI below 0.5 indicates a low level of development.

Nigeria

The Nigerian population is large and diverse. At 124 million, Nigeria has the largest population of the countries in the study and includes over 250 different ethnic groups (UNDP, 2003a). Nigeria's HDI value is 0.466 and it ranks 151 (of 177 countries) (UNDP, 2004a). Over the years between 1987 and 2000, an average of 34.1 per cent of the population was living below the poverty level (UNDP, 2003b). There is a strong north/south divide, with Christians mainly in the south and more Moslems in the less-developed north. The main languages are English, Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo and Fulani.

South Africa

Approximately 45 million people from at least 20 ethnic groups live in South Africa. Some 25.2 million of these live in urban areas. Amongst the population in 2000, 77.6 per cent identified themselves as African; 10.3 per cent as white; 8.7 per cent as coloured; and 2.5 per cent as Indian/Asian. Eighty per cent of the population are Christian, 15 per cent have no religious affiliation and the remaining 5 per cent are Moslem, Hindu, Jewish or of other faiths. There are eleven official languages including Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Zulu and Xhosa (Editors Inc., 2004).

In per capita terms, South Africa is an upper-middle-income country, but just under 50 per cent of people live in poverty and the distribution of income and wealth is among the most unequal in the world (Office of the Deputy President, 1998). While the poorest 40 per cent of the population receive 11 per cent of South Africa's income, the richest 10 per cent receive over 40 per cent. In 2002, South Africa had an HDI of 0.666, which places it 119th of the 177 countries (UNDP, 2004b). The statistical data reveal that racial inequalities and provincial disparities play a major part, and between 1995 and 2000 the poorest 50 per cent of South Africans became even poorer, with non-urban, black households, and in particular those headed by women, remaining the poorest groups (Statistics South Africa, 2002).

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's population was measured at 19.06 million in 2003 (UNDP, 2003a). Of the many ethnic and religious groups, the majority of Sri Lankans are Sinhalese (81.9 per cent) and the most practiced religion is Buddhism (77.3 per cent) (Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka, 2003). The percentage of the population residing in urban areas is 14.6, in rural areas 80.0 and the estate population is 5.3 (Dept. of Census and Statistics, 2003). Sri Lanka has the lowest percentage of the population living below the poverty level, only about 25 per cent of the population (UNDP, 2003b). Its HDI is 0.740, ranking 96 (of 177 countries) (UNDP, 2004c). The main languages are Sinhala, Tamil and English.

Tanzania

At 36.9 million, Tanzania has the third largest population of the five countries studied here (UNDP, 2004d). The Tanzanian population is also diverse. Between the mainland and Zanzibar, Tanzania is made up of varying proportions of Bantu and Nilotic ethnic groups, a mixture of Arab and Asiatic groups, and a mix of Christian, Moslem and indigenous religious groups. Tanzania's HDI value is 0.407, which places it 162nd (of 177 countries). The main languages are Swahili, English and Arabic.

Uganda

Uganda's population of 25.4 million is ethnically diverse. The largest ethnic group in Uganda are the Baganda. In Uganda, 12 percent of the population lives in urban environments with the rest of the population living in rural areas (Republic of Uganda, 2003; World Bank, 2004c). Uganda has an HDI of 0.493 and ranks 146th (of 177 countries) (UNDP, 2004e). 44 per cent of Uganda's population is living below the national poverty line (UNDP, 2004f). The main religions are Christianity and Islam. Although Luganda is widely spoken, English is the official language.

Figure 3: Per Capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 2004
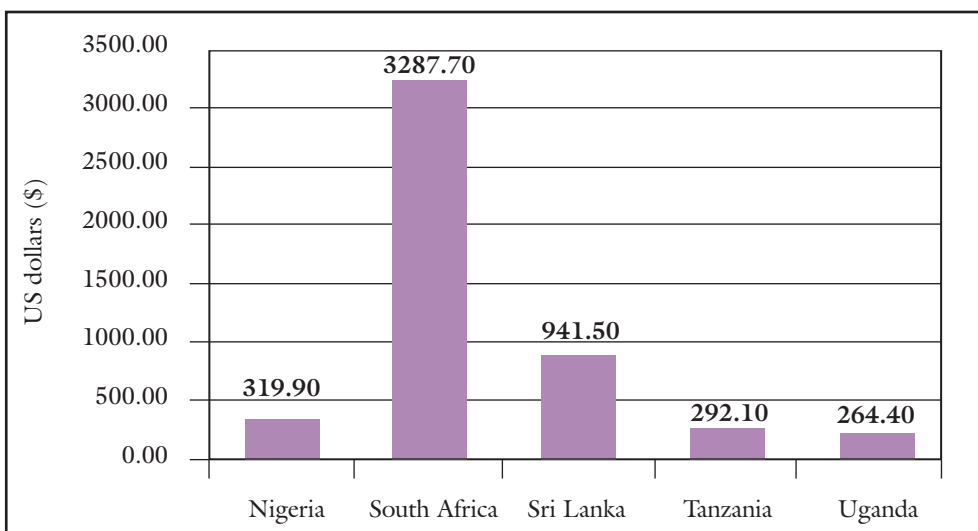
Source: International Monetary Fund (IMF) website: http://www.imf.org/external/index.htm

3.2   Gender measures

Composite measures have been developed in order to measure gender inequality. The Gender-related Development Index (GDI) measures average achievement in the three basic dimensions captured in the HDI – a long and healthy life, knowledge and standard of living – and is adjusted to account for gender inequalities (UNDP, 2004e). Sri Lanka scores highest of the five countries on the GDI and ranks 73rd (of 144 countries). Tanzania, with the lowest score of the five countries, ranks 131st. A further composite index, the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), has been developed to measure women's activity in economic and political life, and represents a stronger indicator of gender inequity, but has not been included here as it has not been calculated for most countries in Africa (Unterhalter et al, 2004).

Figure 4: Gender-related Development Index, 2004
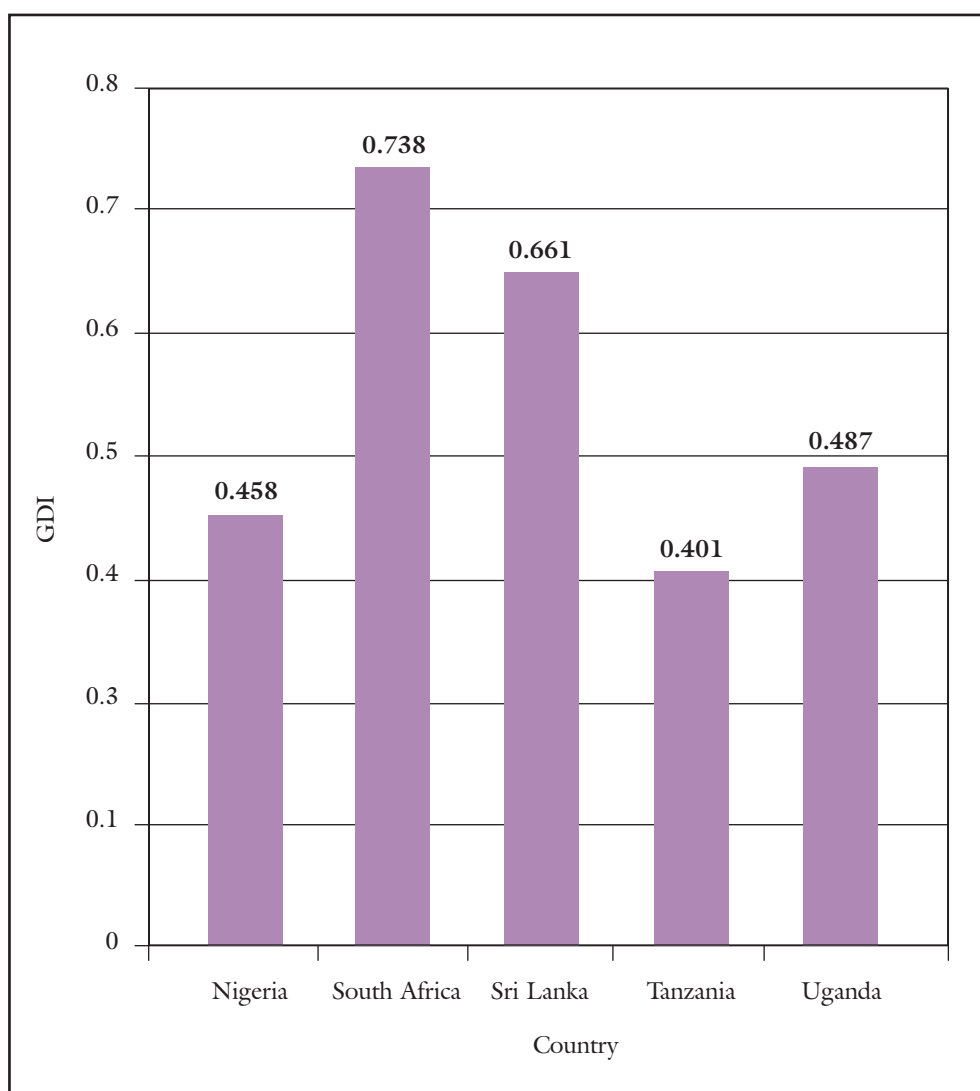
Source: Human Development Report 2004: country reports (UNDP, 2004a, b, c, d, e)

The Africa Gender and Development Index (AGDI), a relatively new measure of gender equality and women's empowerment in African countries, captures data on women's status for the African countries studied for the project (except for Nigeria which was not included in the AGDI pilot stage). The AGDI comprises two composite indices. The first component, the gender status index (GSI), measures social power 'capabilities', economic power 'opportunities' and 'political power' (agency). The second component, the African women's progress scoreboard (AWPS), measures government policy performance regarding women's advancement.

The Gender Status Index (GSI) for Tanzania shows a 10 percent increase in relative equality between men and women for the social power 'capabilities' block during the period 1995 to 2000, an increase that the Tanzania Gender Networking Group attribute to 'improvements in relative gender equality in education and relative equality convergence between women and men in new HIV infections' (TGNP, 2005:4).

A measure that has long been used to map gender inequalities is the il/literacy rate. In Nigeria, the illiteracy rate varies according to region and environmental setting, with 33 per cent of the general population and about 41 per cent of women unable to read and write. Though about 14 per cent of South Africa's population is illiterate, the country has the narrowest gap between the overall rate of illiteracy and that of women in particular. Sri Lanka has the smallest illiterate population among the countries in this study. A mere 8 per cent of its population cannot read and write, and among females, only 10 per cent. In Tanzania, at independence, the majority of the population could not read and write and the few literates in the country were overwhelmingly men. Now, 40 years later, the overall illiteracy rate has dropped to 25 per cent and among females to 31 per cent. Uganda has the widest gap between the overall illiterate population and illiterate females. 31 per cent of Ugandans cannot read or write, but among females there is a 10 per cent higher rate of illiteracy.

Figure 5: Adult Female Literacy, Ages 15+, 2000-2004
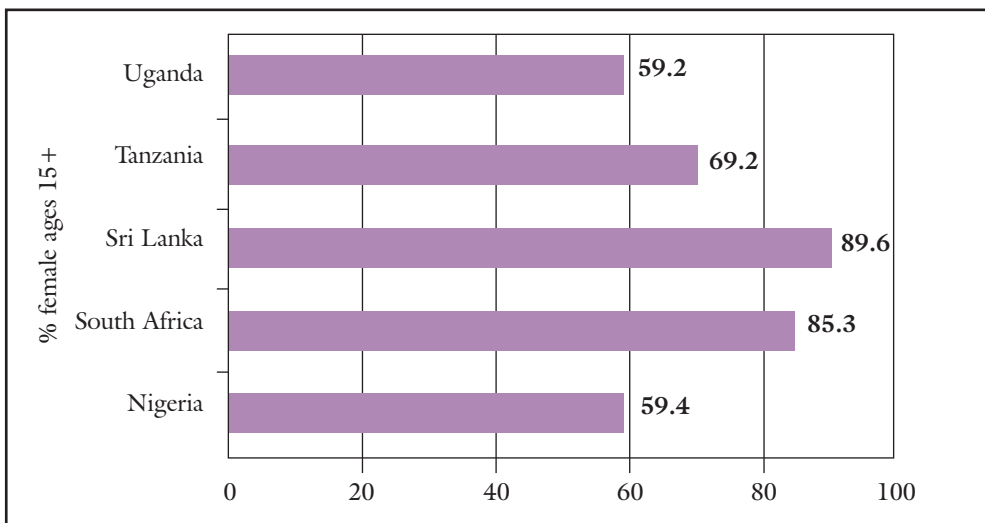
Source: UNESCO, 2004.

3.3   HIV/AIDS

Another factor to consider is the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. Accurate statistics for HIV/ AIDS are notoriously difficult to source. However, it appears that the HIV/ AIDS pandemic has affected all the African countries in the study to varying degrees (Table 1). Apart from the human suffering caused by the pandemic, the public services and human resources in low-income countries are under severe strain.

Table 1: HIV Prevalence Rate among Adults age 15+ in Five Commonwealth Countries, 2002

	HIV prevalence rate among adults (per cent)
Nigeria	5.8
South Africa	20.1
Sri Lanka	0.04
Tanzania	7.8
Uganda	5.0

Source: WHO (2002)

The higher gender-differentiated risks of contracting HIV/AIDS for girls and women in African countries are well known and often explained in terms of women's limited social and economic power. A study of African universities suggests that higher education institutions are high risk places for the transmission of HIV (Katjavivi and Otaala, 2003) . The study reveals that the subordinate status of female students and their inability to negotiate safe sex contributes to higher risks of HIV contraction. Furthermore lack of empowerment of women contributes to 'consensual rape', where females consent is predicated upon avoidance of violence, repayment for favours or financial gain. While anecdotal evidence suggests that levels of education can have a bearing on reduced HIV/AIDS prevalence rates, there is still a need for further empirical research on the impact of higher education attainment on prevalence levels.

3.4   School enrolment

Access to education, at all levels, is perceived by the international community as critical to wider processes of achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. Education for All has become a policy priority as a consequence of the 1990 Jomtien conference, and the follow up meeting in Dakar in 2000 (UNESCO, 2004).

In 2000, eight Millennium Development Goals were adopted by 189 heads of state as a means of measuring development progress in all countries up to 2015. The second Millennium Goal (MDG 2) seeks to achieve universal primary education for all, and the third (MDG 3) is concerned with the right of women and girls to enjoy equal educational opportunities with boys and men. Barriers to girls' enrolment include poverty, conflict, cultural practices, availability of schools, curriculum and the consequences of HIV/AIDS (Kirk and Garrow, 2004).

While measures are an important stage in achieving targets, they are problematic as they exclude qualitative considerations. They tend to communicate the number of children on a school register, rather than attendance, progression, completion and achievement. Furthermore, these forms of measurement give no indication of gendered power relations in schools (Dunne and Leach, 2005).

The Commission for Africa, which reported in March 2005, set out to define the challenges facing Africa. One of their areas of need is entitled 'Leaving No-one Out: Investing in People'. This focuses on health and education, in particular the provision of free basic education for all children. The Commission stresses that secondary, higher, vocational, adult education and teacher training should receive appropriate emphasis within the overall education system and the recommendation is that donors and African governments should meet their commitments to Education for All, ensuring that every child goes to school and that donors should provide an extra US$7-8 billion, as African governments develop comprehensive plans to deliver quality education.

Gender features in this section of the Africa Commission's plan, with a clear acknowledgement of gender inequities and a proposal that plans should be linked to poverty reduction, prioritising basic education, and should ensure a strong focus on girls throughout. They recommend that African governments must outline plans for getting girls as well as boys into school, and donors should meet these additional costs (Commission for Africa, 2005).

The economics of education are particularly relevant to low-income countries and education is increasingly linked to development. Psacharapoulos and Patrinos (2002) argue that countries could raise per capita economic growth by about 0.3 per cent percentage points a year simply by attaining gender parity in school enrolments.

Figure 6: Primary School Enrolment Ratio (Net), 1998-2002
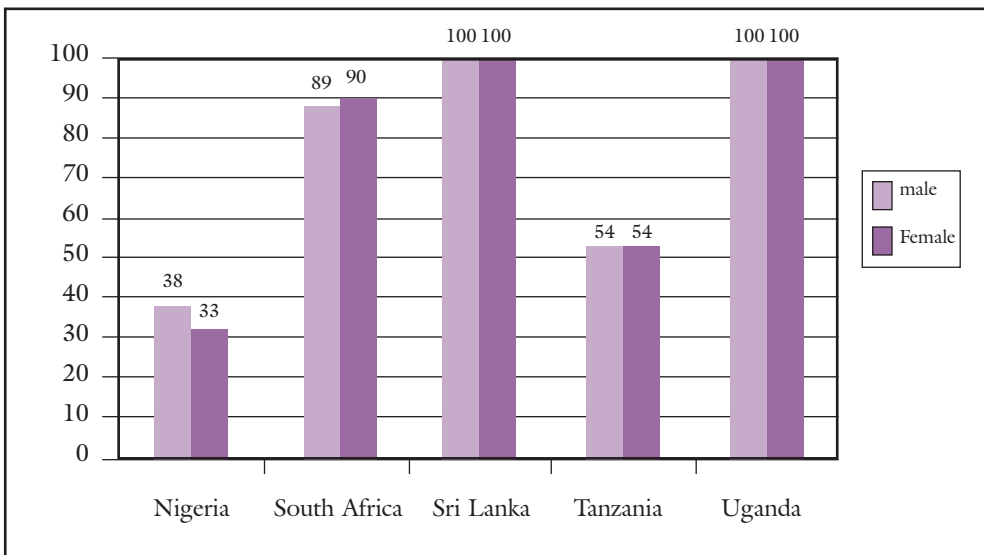
Source: UNICEF State of the World's Children 2005 Report
* indicates data that refer to periods other than those specified or to only part of a country

Figure 7: Net Primary School Attendance (%), 1996-2003
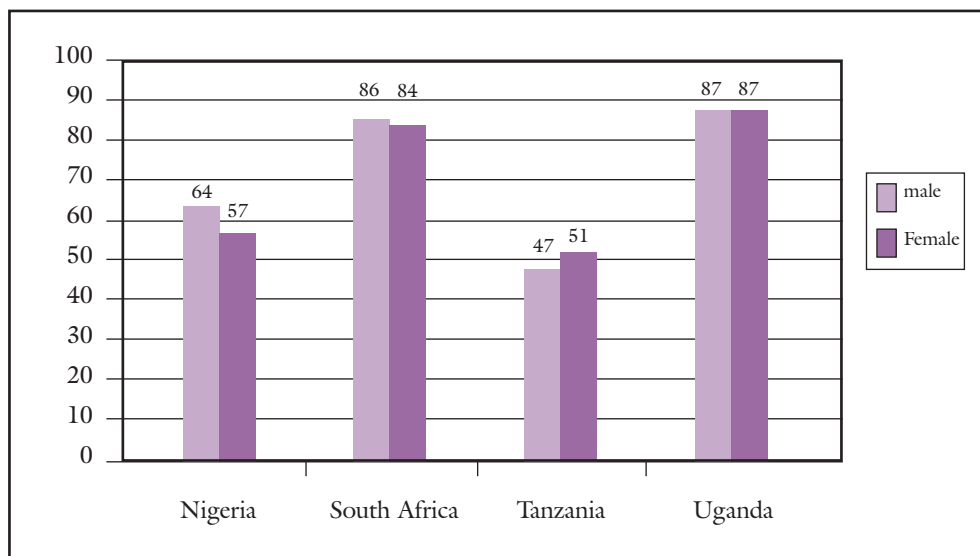
Source: UNICEF State of the World's Children 2005 Report
Note: figures not available for Sri Lanka

Figure 8: Secondary School Enrolment Ratio (Gross), 1998-2002
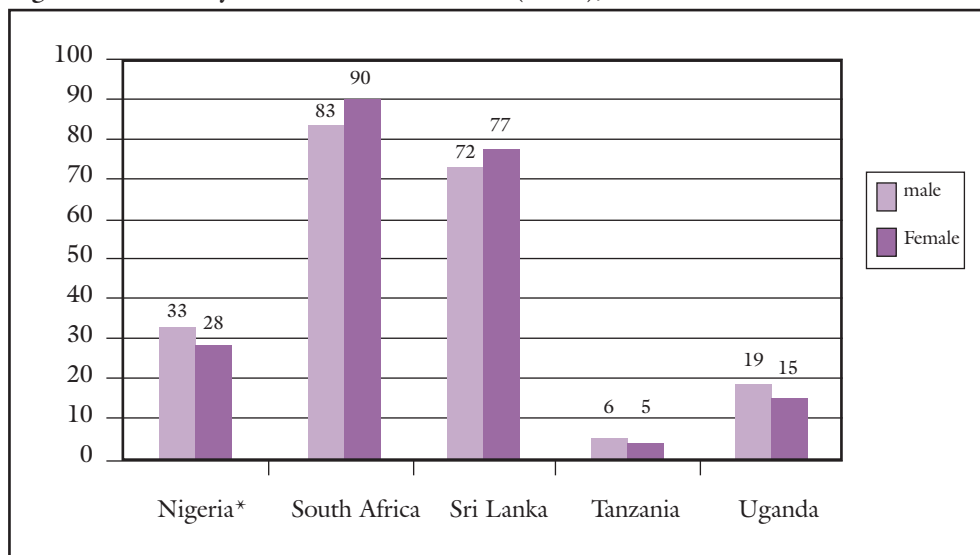
Source: UNICEF State of the World's Children 2005 Report
* indicates data that refer to periods other than those specified or to only part of a country

In all the countries studied here, girls' participation at primary and secondary school level is approaching gender parity, with close to equal numbers of girls and boys enrolled in school. However, it is important to consider how this figure relates to the proportion of girls out of school, or who drop out of school. As the above tables indicate, there is a discrepancy between enrolment and attendance. Enrolment figures overstate the numbers of children who actually attend school. For example, in South Africa while 90 per cent of girls enroll for primary

school, only 84 per cent attend school and, in 2001, 357,800 girls were reported to be out of school (UNESCO, 2004). In Tanzania, 1,583,900 girls were reported to be out of school in 2001 (UNESCO, 2004).

Although the situation is clearly improving, many children of both sexes are not participating in primary education, particularly in Nigeria and Tanzania, and many other countries still report widespread gender inequalities, with only fifty-five per cent of girls across sub-Saharan Africa enrolled in primary schools (UNESCO, 2004).

There are glaring disparities between the five countries in access to secondary education, where the majority of children of secondary age in Tanzania, Uganda and Nigeria are not enrolled in secondary school. In relation to gender equality and student enrolment across the five Commonwealth countries in this study, differences do not map onto a matrix that relates to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita. Based on data from 2004, Sri Lanka has a considerably lower GDP than South Africa (US$941.50 and US$3287.70 respectively), and yet has an equivalent range of gender equality in student access (World Bank, 2004b).

The Education for All initiative has resulted in more systematic collection of gender disaggregated data. Gross enrolment ratios (GER) are the number of children enrolled in school as a proportion of the children of a specific age cohort (e.g. 5-11) who should be enrolled in school. Net enrolment ratios (NER) are the number of children of the appropriate age group enrolled in school as a proportion of the official age group required to be in school. Gender parity is equal numbers of boys and girls in school (Unterhalter, Challender and Rajogopalan, 2005).

The challenge is to aggregate the various statistics in order to get a more precise overview of gender and school enrolment. The Beyond Access Project (Unterhalter, Challender and Rajogopalan, 2005) has developed a 'scorecard' for measuring gender equality in school education, named the Gender Equality in Education Index (GEEI). This takes into account:

- girls' net attendance at primary school;
- girls' survival rate over 5 years in primary schooling;
- girls' secondary Net Enrolment Ration (NER);
- a country's gender development index (GDI).

Table 2: GEEI Scores for the Five Countries

Country	GEEI Per cent c 1993	** Rank in Commonwealth Africa ** Rank in Asia	GEEI Per cent c 2003	** Rank in Commonwealth Africa ** Rank in Asia	Percentage Increase/decrease
South Africa	64	5*	66	4*	3
Tanzania	33	11*	39	9*	15
Nigeria	26	13*	20	14*	-23
Uganda	24	14*	54	6*	125
Sri Lanka	68	17**	94	4**	38

These figures indicate that Sri Lanka has by far the highest overall score out of the five countries for gender equality in school education, making spectacular gains in GEEI in a decade of low economic growth. While South Africa has the largest economy on the continent,

it is not the country with the highest scorecard - Mauritius is, with Botswana, Zimbabwe and Swaziland in the next ranked places.

3.5 Higher education in the five countries

Commonwealth universities have been characterised by three major phases: colonial rule during which many, including Dar es Salaam, Makerere and Ibadan were colleges of the University of London; post-independence reconstruction, during which several achieved their own charters; and more recently, the globalised massification of the knowledge economy (Morley, 2004).

Commonwealth universities have been shaped largely by colonialism and post-colonial patterns of power, and organised on Western models. Today, there is still considerable policy transfer (Ball, 1998). Higher education globally is facing a number of challenges relating to globalisation, new forms of knowledge, new systems of management and new constituencies.

Some of the debates in African higher education reflect these wider concerns, for example increasing demands for access, the role higher education plays in development, funding, the rise of private higher education, management and governance, language issues, brain drain and the role of research (Teferra and Altbach, 2004), and whether African universities include indigenous knowledges in their development of knowledge economies (Brock-Utne, 1999).

All five countries have concerns relating to poverty in their higher education policies, sometimes couched in terms of equity and access, but often these seem to be in tension with issues of funding and quality in contexts where resources are limited and these latter issues seem to be dominating recent reforms.

3.5.1 Widening participation

Student enrolment worldwide increased from 13 million worldwide in 1960 to 82 million in 1995 (UNESCO, 1998). Current estimates are that approximately 3,489,000 students are enrolled in African higher education (Task Force on Higher Education and Society, 2000). The World Bank estimates (2002) that by 2015 there will be 97 million students enrolled in higher education and that half of these will be in the 'developing' world.

Manuh (2002) describes how investment in higher education was downgraded in Africa in favour of basic education in the period immediately following Structural Readjustment Programmes in the early 1980s, whereas the development of learning economies has led to a recent massification of higher education throughout Africa.

Expansion has been a key word in recent developments in higher education. This has been achieved by increased state investment and also by the rise of private education and offshore and satellite expansion, increasing the number of students and providers. The gender gap in enrolment rates at public universities appears to be wider than for private higher education institutions. Private universities perform better in terms of the proportion of female enrolment

in Kenya, for example, and surpass men's enrolment rates in Japan (Oketch, 2004; Buny, 2004; Nagasawa, 2005).

The enormous expansion of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) throughout the 1990s began to change both the world economy and the place of higher education institutions in that economy. Distance education has also allowed more women to participate in higher education (UNESCO 2002b). Distance learning can benefit women with family commitments and in rural communities who may have time and mobility constraints that limit their participation in traditional university environments. While open university enrolment rates of female students are still low in some of the case study countries, for example, in Tanzania, international analyses of distance learning suggests that open universities have comparatively higher proportions of female students enrolling than is the case for traditional universities (Bates, 2005; Kylama, 2005).

The increasing demand for access represents a significant capacity challenge. Africa is a continent with 54 countries and over 700 million people, but with approximately 300 universities. Those who have access to higher education represent less than 3 per cent of the eligible age group (Teferra and Altbach, 2004).

3.5.2   Brain drain

All countries in the study have faced the challenge of brain drain. For example, many academics from Nigeria have migrated to countries including the USA, the UK and Saudi Arabia (Jibril, 2003). Many academics from South Africa are moving to Australia, Canada, the USA and the UK (CHE, 2004; Teferra and Altbach, 2004). Cloete et al (2004:68) refers to the loss of academics in South Africa through emigration and taking up positions in government in the mid-1990s, and projects the loss to emigration of 3,600 graduates between 2000 and 2010 (p. 72). Musisi (2003) reports how Uganda took radical action to halt the brain drain of the 1990s by improving employment conditions and salaries of academic staff. We note that many of the publications on African higher education that we read were written by African scholars based in western universities (e.g. Okolie, 2003). Equally, some key texts on post-colonial feminism are also written by African and Asian writers living and working in the USA (e.g. Oyewumi, 1997).

The gendering of brain drain is complex as the concept often gets subsumed under the wider classification of migration. More than 60 per cent of international migrants from Sri Lanka are women (IOM, 2004 cited by Jolly et al, 2003), but it is not clear how many of these are graduates, nor whether they are in graduate professions once they have migrated. While high female migration is widely documented in some Asian countries (Huan and Yeoh, 2003; Wickramasekara, 2002) and more recently in South Africa (Dovlo, 2005), other analyses point to women's reluctance to emigrate to other countries in search of better employment and higher income opportunities (Dodson, 2002).

The problem of brain drain has been recorded in recent policy documentation. The Commission for Africa set out to define the challenges facing Africa and to provide

recommendations to support the changes needed to reduce poverty (Commission for Africa, 2005). The report addresses key areas of need:

1. Getting the systems right: Governance and capacity-building;
2. The need for peace and security;
3. Leaving no-one out: investing in people;
4. Going for growth and poverty reduction;
5. More trade and fairer trade.

Numbers 1 and 3 are the sections which discuss Higher Education, which is viewed as central to development.

In the first area of need 'Getting the systems right: Governance and capacity-building' the Commission outlines how investing in higher education, particularly science and technology, will improve capacity and governance. The belief is that higher education can provide skilled staff and generate research and analysis to improve effectiveness of government policy and services.

Concerns are raised about the shortage of professional, scientific and technically proficient staff: "This shortage starts with higher education, which ought to be the breeding ground for the skilled individuals the continent needs" (4.2.1:22). Concerns include brain drain: "It has been estimated that there are more African scientists and engineers working in the United States than in the whole of Africa" (4.2.1:21) and that many African higher education institutions are "in a state of crisis", lacking resources – physical infrastructure and staffing – while demand is increasing.

The Africa Commission includes a recommendation that the international community should commit in 2005 to provide US$500 million per annum for 10 years to revitalise Africa's higher education institutions, and to commit to provide US$3 billion to develop centres of excellence in science and technology, including African institutes of technology.

3.5.3   Research capacity

Literature that brings together gender, higher education and development is limited. Salo (2003) notes how when African scholars are included in international debates on higher education, they are usually men who overlook feminist contributions. This is a gender issue, but it is also a capacity challenge. The issue of research and publication capacity is of paramount importance to universities in low-income countries in the context of the developing global knowledge economy. However, research and publishing activities are still fairly underdeveloped in Africa, with little allocated funding available for research in university budgets (Teferra and Altbach, 2004).

The importance of research in relation to development was noted in the Lagos Plan of Action (OAU, 1980). Under the auspices of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), a conference of Heads of State and Government meeting in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1980, adopted the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa 1980-2000. The Lagos Plan was a blueprint for African countries to

transform their economies. Its objectives included: (1) the alleviation of poverty and improvement in the living standards of people; (2) increased production through expanded, diversified and sustainable productive capacities and (3) self-reliance, both national and collective. To meet the objectives, the plan promotes the need for developing scientific and technical skills, and research. More recently, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) 2001 is a strategic framework adopted by the African Union for the socio-economic development of Africa, which, like the Lagos Plan, has the long term objective of eradicating poverty in Africa, placing countries, both individually and collectively, on a plan to sustainable development.

Yet the percentage of GNP spent on research in low-income countries is low. In 1992, in Africa, it was estimated to be 0.1 per cent of the GNP, compared to about 2 per cent in high-income countries (Saint, 1992). In 1996-2002, it was 0.6 per cent in developing countries, compared with 2.6 per cent for OECD countries, and a world average of 2.5 per cent (UNDP, 2004g).

Academics and researchers have limited opportunities to develop their research capacity, especially in relation to qualitative approaches. Independent inquiry and academic freedom can also play a role in the democratisation process (Benneh, 2002). Underinvestment in research has broader implications as it means that universities in the western industrialised societies remain the major producers and distributors of knowledge.

3.5.4   Profiles of higher education in the case study countries

Nigeria

In Nigeria, the first university was established in 1948. Now the country has sixty universities, twenty-six owned by the federal government, nineteen by states and fifteen by private organisations. There has been a significant increase in private institutions since the 1990s. Private institutions are mostly religious and one is military.

Nigeria has the second highest enrolment rate in Africa (after Egypt which has over 1.5 million students). Over a twenty-year period, 1975 to 1995, student enrolment expanded rapidly, doubling every 4 to 5 years in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s (Jibril, 2003). Although the rate of expansion slowed down somewhat in the 1990s, recent estimates are that 900,000 students are enrolled in Nigerian universities (Jibril, 2003). The gross enrolment rate for ages 18-25 in higher education is about 5 per cent (Jibril, 2003), with 35 per cent being women.

Higher education expansion has been achieved without a significant state investment. In terms of state funding, the amount allotted for education as a percentage of the total budget is still far short of the UNESCO and World Bank recommendation of 26 per cent.

A distinctive feature of Nigerian policy over a long period has been that university education is provided tuition free, though other forms of cost sharing and cost recovery have enabled the proportion of university budgets derived from fee income to grow from 3.6 per cent in 1991 to 8.7 per cent in 1999 (World Bank, 2002).

The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) reports that there has been much contestation over the state's attempts to reform public higher education through cost recovery/sharing and curriculum adjustment to serve the needs of a changed labour market (CODESRIA, 2005). The prolonged economic crisis and the expansion of student numbers in spite of the decay of the infrastructure and lack of investment, have had a detrimental effect on the public higher education system (CODESRIA, 2005).

Nigerian higher education faces an imbalance in the representation of females, both as academic staff and as students. While accurate figures are difficult to find, Jibril (2003) report that women constitute only 35 per cent of the total number of students enrolled in universities, and are underrepresented in engineering and technology courses and somewhat overrepresented in arts and education courses. Only 12.4 per cent of the academic staff is women.

South Africa

South Africa is the African country with the third highest enrolment and has approximately half a million higher education students (Subotsky, 2003). In 2001, the gross enrolment rate was 15 per cent (UNESCO, 2004). The restructuring that came into effect in January 2005 has rationalised provision to 6 'universities of technology', 11 'traditional universities', and 6 comprehensive institutions (offering both university and university of technology qualifications). There are also currently 91 registered private higher education institutions.

Since 1990 there has been intense activity in developing and implementing policy on higher education. Cloete et al (2004) identify three periods of policy activity. From 1990-1994, predominant concerns were with values, visions and goals, while 1995-1998 involved elaborating and sharpening the framework of higher education transformation. The White Paper fed into the Higher Education Act of 1997, which provides the legislative framework for South African higher education. Its goal was to transform a higher education system characterised by quality, equity, responsiveness and effective and efficient provision, governance and management, in the context of broader political and social transition (Cloete et al, 2004). The Council on Higher Education (CHE), established in 1998, serves as the statutory and independent advisory body to the Minister of Education and has executive responsibility for quality assurance within higher education and training. Bodies like the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) and the Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) advise on issues of gender equity.

The third period of policy activity is from 1998 to the present, during which time there has been a focus on creating a national, integrated and co-ordinated yet differentiated higher education system, and a focus on quality and governance (Cloete et al, 2004). The National Plan for Higher Education (2001) set participation targets – to increase participation from 15 to 20 per cent in the medium term - and initiated mergers of some institutions.

Equity and access have been central policy priorities throughout, within a determinant planning and funding framework, and increasingly a quality framework (CHE, 2004). There have been criticisms of an over-emphasis on economic responsiveness at the expense of the broader social role of education (Cloete et al, 2004; Motala and Pampallis, 2002).

Participation has not increased at the levels anticipated – between 1994 and 2002, enrolments increased by 13 per cent (Department of Education, 2003a). There have, however, been considerable demographic changes in the student composition, with the proportions of black and female students increasing dramatically. Cloete et al (2004) argue that, despite these changes, access is still restricted to a small elite and access of black and female students to science, engineering and post-graduate programmes has not improved significantly. Retention rates are poor, with 16 per cent of students who registered at universities completing their degrees or diplomas (Cloete et al, 2004).

Alternative admissions testing programmes, financial aid, support facilities and remedial programmes have been created to increase access (World Bank, 2002), but financial difficulties are a key reason for the high drop-out rates (Cloete et al, 2004).

In the area of higher education staffing, despite a policy to ensure greater equity and access for previously marginalised groups, the rate of change has been slow: "the higher education workforce continues to be overly representative of white men in the middle- or late middle-age group" (CHE, 2004: 91). The Council for Higher Education outlines the major challenges for higher education as 1. to develop efficiency, 2. to develop postgraduate outputs, 3. to address staff equity.

Sri Lanka

In the space of 6 decades, the number of universities in Sri Lanka has increased to 13, mainly as a result of a demand to provide an opportunity for higher education for the increasing number of secondary school graduates who became eligible for a university education and also as a result of the demand for the establishment of a university in every province.

Private universities in Sri Lanka are typically registered as companies and therefore difficult to count. Also, some are affiliated with foreign universities.

While school enrolments in Sri Lanka are the highest in South Asia, the participation rate in university education, in contrast, is 3.1 per cent of the age group (UGC, 2005), compared with an average of 8 per cent in South Asia, with enrolment rates stagnating since 1990 because of lack of government funding (World Bank, 2002: 50).

Gender equity has been a strength in the education system with a history of free education at all levels, and women have secured more than 50 per cent of enrolments except in engineering and related fields (Gunawardena, 2003). But unemployment and underemployment are very high among university-educated women, who tend to be employed in lower positions and face difficulties in gaining management positions (Gunawardena, 2003). Gunawardena argues that labour market trends such as free market economic policies, globalization and advances in information technology have tended to overshadow the concern for equity (Gunawardena, 2003).

In the late 1990s the need for reform was considered by Task Forces on General Education, University Education Reform and Technical Education and Vocational Training. There has been an emphasis on producing a high quality employable work force, evident for example in the

Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education project (IRQUE) 2003 supported by the World Bank. The UGC and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education have been implementing reforms to improve governance of higher education institutions, including the linkages between higher education and labour market requirements (UGC, 2005).

Tanzania

Of the 28 tertiary level institutions in Tanzania, 8 are universities, most having between 1 and 3 constituent colleges, both private and public. Private higher education came into being during the 1990s with the liberalisation of the economy. In 2004, there were 10 private universities and colleges with various levels of accreditation.

Only a tiny proportion of people in Tanzania participate in higher education – the gross enrolment rate for 2000-1 was 0.7 per cent, with a very large gender imbalance – for males the rate was 1.2 per cent, for females 0.2 per cent (UNESCO, 2004). With a population of thirty-two million, the enrolment in Tanzanian higher education was under 21,000 in 2000 (Mkude and Cooksey, 2003).

Several factors have contributed to the low proportion of women in Tanzania's university system. In relation to the socio-cultural environment, for example, traditions still influence a gender-biased preference in parental support for higher education in many cultures. This is usually associated with the persistence of negative perceptions attached to females attaining/pursuing higher education as 'proud' or 'loose' and often 'not suitable for marriage or to make a good wife'. In addition, females are usually more pressurised to conform to socio-cultural expectations when they reach a certain age – that is to start a family. Therefore some of them tend to either postpone or forego higher education altogether.

Structural constraints are another barrier for women's take up of higher education. There is a big difference in A-level (form VI) spaces for boys and girls. Of the 89 A-level schools in the country, only 21 schools are for girls and 38 for boys; the rest are co-education schools, most of which have a very low enrolment of girls. Spaces for Science A-level specialisations for girls are also significantly lower than those for boys. For the Academic Years 2003 and 2004 the total number of boys admitted to Science specialisations was 3379 and 3710 respectively compared to the 1450 and 1622 respective number of girls admitted to these schools[1]. Since the basic admission criterion to the University is academic performance/merit, more boys are able to apply and obtain admission. Enrolment in the Science and Engineering specialisations testifies to this situation.

In addition, Tanzania has a significantly low capacity in spaces for higher education generally. This has a direct implication in terms of how many women can be admitted. The number of eligible applicants to UDSM for the academic year 2005/06 "were 17,790 applicants but only 4,815 were admitted which is only 27% of the total number of applicants" (VC Graduation Speech on 35th Graduation Ceremony). Therefore in cases where there are more eligible applicants than the existing capacity, and considering that the number of men among the eligible applicants is higher than the women's, admission to the HEI will definitely reflect the difference. The Undergraduate student enrolment for the years 2003/04 and 2004/05 were 3,626 (women)

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[1] Reports of the Directorate of Secondary Education, MEC, 2004..

and 8494 (men) and 4698 (women) and 9391 (men) respectively (UDSM Facts and Figures, 2005). Without the Affirmative Action initiatives, especially the preferential cut-off points, the difference would be even greater.

The National Higher Education Policy (1999) aims to address problems of enrolment and access through expanding public facilities and encouraging private universities, cost sharing and affirmative action to expand female participation, and promotion of science and technology (Mkude et al, 2003). To increase female enrolment, intensive six-week remedial courses in science and maths have been offered to women who do not pass the matriculation examination (World Bank, 2002).

Mkude et al (2003) discuss the history of tight state control in the 1970s and economic difficulties in the 1980s, followed by a period of reform during the 1990s. Higher education was free prior to 1990, but cost sharing was introduced during the 1990s with a plan to charge for tuition and books in the future.

At tertiary level, planning and service delivery are vested with the institutions themselves through their Governing Councils. Nevertheless, co-ordination and quality control is the responsibility of the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC), and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education.

Uganda

The numbers of both public and private universities are currently expanding rapidly. Although Makerere University remains the leading, oldest, most established and largest state university in Uganda, there are now 3 other similar institutions in the country, in addition to 26 private universities. There are also plans to expand the number of institutions (Musisi & Muwanga, 2003).

Higher education reform in Uganda has been driven by the 1992 Education Policy White Paper and the Education Strategic Investment Plan, and national policies of liberalisation, privatisation and decentralisation. By 1990, the state was bankrupt, and the government's ability to fund higher education was severely limited. The high-priority focus on primary education from 1992 decreased the budget available for higher education, which had been completely reliant on government funding (Musisi & Muwanga, 2003). Following the government's adoption of liberalised fiscal policies to revive the economy, universities developed greater autonomy and responsibility for fund raising. The majority of students at Makerere University now pay fees (Musisi & Muwanga, 2003).

The Tertiary Education Act 2001 aims to streamline the establishment, administration and standards of universities and higher education institutions, which are now both publicly and privately funded.

The Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP 2003-2015) aims to achieve "equitable access to education at all levels", with the emphasis being on primary level. Gross higher education enrolment rates have increased rapidly in recent years, from 2 per cent in 1998 to 3.2 per cent in 2001 (UNESCO, 2004).

Uganda has used affirmative action to increase female enrolments. Women university candidates have been given bonus points on their examination scores so that more of them pass the cut off point and between 1990 and in 1999 female participation increased from 27 to 34 per cent (World Bank, 2002).

There are also high levels of socio-economic inequity. Secondary education is dominated by private schools so the majority of those going to university are the children of parents able to pay for university education (Musisi & Muwanga, 2003).

3.5.5 Women as students

This research describes the increased participation of women in higher education as students. Yet, as the tables show, in most countries fewer than 5 per cent of the population have access to higher education, and in Tanzania, Uganda and Nigeria women's access is significantly less than men.

Figure 9: Women Enrolled in Higher Education, 2001
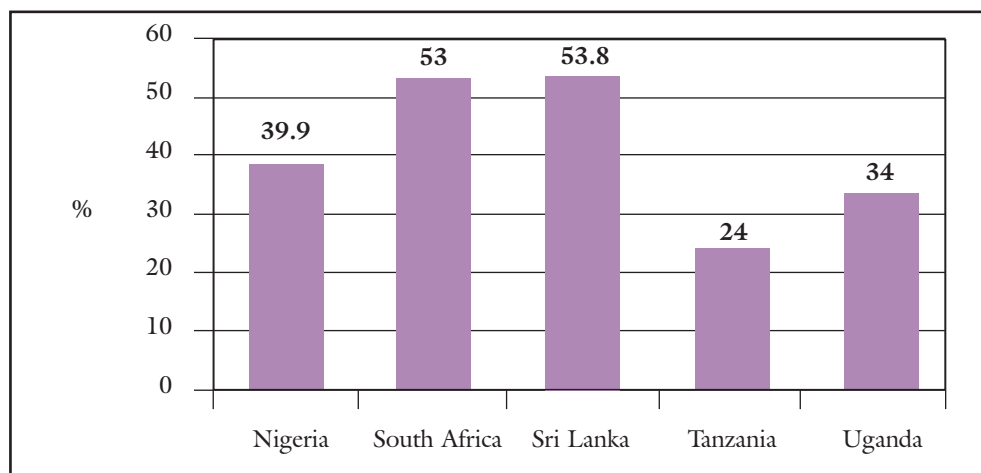
Sources: Nigeria – National Universities Commission. Annual Report, 2002
South Africa - Department of Education, personal communication, 2003b
Sri Lanka - University Grants Commission, University Statistical Handbooks, 2001/02
Tanzania and Uganda – UNESCO Global Education Digest, 2003

Table 3: Gross Enrolment in Tertiary Education (%), 2001

	Total	Male	Female
Nigeria	5	-	-
South Africa	15	14	15.9
Sri Lanka	3.1	-	-
Tanzania	0.7	1.2	0.2
Uganda	3.2	4.3	2.2

Sources: South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda – UNESCO, 2004
Sri Lanka – University Grants Commission, (figures are for 2004)
Nigeria – Jibril, 2003

South Africa has the highest enrolment rate of the five countries and women make up 53 per cent of students in higher education. But access still remains a complex issue that is influenced by a number of factors, including social class, poverty, race and preparedness for higher education. Women students also still tend to cluster in certain disciplinary fields e.g. Health Sciences, Humanities.

In Sri Lanka, the proportion of university students who were women increased steadily from 1942 (the year of establishment of the University of Ceylon) until 1973 when the percentage rose to 40.6. In 2001, the percentage of women in total student enrolment was 53.8.

In Uganda, while there has been a recent rapid increase in university enrolments, there is a clear gender disparity, with women only constituting 34 per cent of the university population.

Current student enrolment at Makerere University in Uganda is over 35,000 with women comprising 42 per cent. Accounts from stakeholders at Makerere attribute this increase in part to a strategic intervention to increase women's participation. In 1990, the University Senate instituted an affirmative action programme to increase female student numbers. This is popularly known as the 1.5 Points Scheme. This provides for an additional 1.5 points bonus to female student applicants. This has progressively raised the percentage of female students from an average of 20 per cent to about 35 per cent in 1998 to 42 per cent currently.

In Nigeria, access of females to university education has increased from a ratio of 1 to 40 in the 1950s to 1 to 4 in 2001, there is still wide disparity in traditionally male dominated disciplines such as Technology. There are more female than male students in Education and the Humanities and considerably fewer in the Sciences.

The proportion of women enrolled in higher education in Tanzania is growing. Based on data from the University of Dar es Salaam, in the academic year 2000/01, 27 per cent of all students enrolled on undergraduate courses were women. This was nearly double the number enrolled seven years earlier during the 1993/94 academic year (Mkude et al, 2003). Across the country as a whole, there remain glaring gender disparities, with women only 24 per cent of the total number of students enrolled at tertiary institutions and only 0.2 per cent of Tanzanian women enrolling at universities.

In each of the five countries, there has been an increase in the number of women students in recent years. This has contributed to a view held by certain policy-makers that qualitative change automatically follows quantitative change. For example, in Sri Lanka, gender equity is not seen as a policy priority as numbers of women students are high. Gender is used simply as a descriptive category, with little attention paid to women's experiences of higher education.

3.5.6   Women as staff

The issue of vertical segregation and persistent under-representation of women as academics and managers was evident in all five countries.

The staff strength at the University of Ibadan, the oldest of Nigerian universities, shows that at the three levels of academic, other senior staff and junior staff, there is a consistent mix of roughly 75 per cent males to 25 per cent females. Nigeria has no women vice-chancellors.

The National Plan for Higher Education drawn up by the Department of Education in South Africa (2001) explicitly comments on the under-representation of black and female staff in higher education. In South Africa, women comprise 37 per cent of all academics and just 9 per cent of senior management. In 2003, women staff in the University of Cape Town were: 20 per cent of deputy vice chancellors, twenty two per cent of deans, and 13 per cent of professors and associate professors. The University of Cape Town has 3 female deputy vice chancellors. South Africa has 2 women vice chancellors out of 23.

At 20 per cent, Sri Lanka has a relatively high rate of female professors. However, only 1 out of 30 vice chancellors in the country is female. The case study university has a strong tradition of having women deans. At times, 5 out of 7 have been women. In 2004, women staff in the University of Colombo were: 22 per cent of professors, 25 per cent of associate professors, 51 per cent of senior lecturers and 53.6 per cent of lecturers. The total percentage was 41.2, compared to 41.8 in 1994.

Tanzania reported a reduction in the number of female academic staff at the University of Dar es Salaam with numbers decreasing by 1.5 per cent from 12.5 per cent in 1997/98 to 11 per cent in 1999/2000. This situation was a result of cumulative factors, the major one being the mid-1980s freeze in employment within Government and related institutions, and therefore making replacements (for vacant posts) extremely difficult. Nationally, of the countries in this study, Tanzania had the lowest number of overall female staff (14.2 per cent), with no female staff in positions as executive heads. Tanzania still has no women vice-chancellors.

Similarly, in Uganda, a national survey found that 17.8 per cent of all university staff were women, however, none were senior executives (Singh, 2002). A female vice chancellor has recently been appointed in one of the newly established private universities. Since Singh's report was published, the affirmative action programme at Makerere designates that 1 of the 2 deputy vice-chancellor posts must be occupied by a woman. Currently there is 1 female deputy vice chancellor. In 2003, women staff in Makerere were: 9 per cent of associate professors, 29 per cent of senior lecturers and 30 per cent of lecturers.

In all five countries, there is a marked pyramid effect, with fewer women than men occupying senior academic and management posts. The percentage of women increases as one gets lower down the occupational hierarchy.

3.6 National actions by the five countries in relation to CEDAW and Beijing Platform for Action

Progress in implementing CEDAW plans is evaluated by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Country reports have been produced on Nigeria (2004), South Africa (1998), Sri Lanka (2002), Tanzania (1998) and Uganda (2002).

Nigeria

The Committee (CEDAW, 2004) praised the new political will to promote women's human rights and to encourage the active participation of women in public and private life, by the new democratic government after years of military rule. The 1999 Constitution promotes and protects women's rights and the Federal Government adopted a National Policy on Women 2000, as a framework for implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention. The target is 30 per cent representation of women in government, but currently women hold 22/360 seats in Parliament i.e. 6.1 per cent (WEDO, 2005). The Child Rights Act was passed in 2003 and there are new policies on education, reproductive health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS which support women's empowerment. But full domestication of the Convention has not been achieved, and discriminatory laws persist (CEDAW, 2004).

The Committee expressed concern about the declining quality of education, low enrolment rates and poor educational achievement of girls and women, including high levels of illiteracy, especially in rural areas. They urged full implementation of Universal Basic Literacy, 1999, and of the educational objectives of the National Policy on Women (CEDAW, 2004).

South Africa

The first five years of the Beijing PFA coincided with the first five years of democratic governance in South Africa, and was characterised largely by a policy and legislative focus. Delivery became more of a focus after the second elections in 1999. Key bodies created by the Constitution were:

Office on the Status of Women (OSW) – coordinating the work of the gender desks in government departments at local and national level in order to ensure that a gender perspective is integrated into all departmental work;

Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) – an independent body reporting to Parliament, monitoring and recommending on the implementation of CEDAW. The aim of the Commission, as set out in section 187 of the Constitution is to promote gender equality and to advise and make recommendations to Parliament or any other legislature with regard to any laws or proposed legislation which affects gender equality and the status of women.

The CEDAW Committee praised the amount of legislation, policy, programmes and awareness raising undertaken by the South African government to redress the effects of apartheid on women and to achieve gender equity (CEDAW, 1998a). They commented that legal measures had been put in place, but not always implemented, and that the national machinery for gender equity did not have adequate financial and human resources. Concerns also included the high levels of violence against women, high rates of unemployment of women and uneven health services. Women are well represented in government and decision making bodies and, in the 2004 elections, women parliamentarians increased from 30 per cent to 32 cent (WEDO, 2005).

Within the Education Department, the Ministry of Education established the Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) in 1996, with the remit of providing advice on gender equity in the

Education system (South Africa, 1996). Its mission is to mainstream gender in all education functions, to build capacity to implement gender equity policy and programmes and to reduce the incidence of gender-based violence and harassment in the education system as a whole. It formulated a Gender Equity Policy Statement and Platform for Action. The Reference Group on Gender Equity of the Department of Education has been reviewing progress, aiming to support the work of the Ministerial Committee of Gender Equity, in building equity in and through education.

Sri Lanka

The Committee praised the efforts made to implement the provisions of the CEDAW Convention despite a protracted period of civil strife and economic hardship (CEDAW, 2002b). Progress has been made in the fields of education and health, and in creating an effective national machinery to promote the advancement of women – the National Plan of Action for Women. Although the Head of Government is a woman, generally women have very low representation in politics and public life. In the elections of April 2004, less than 5 per cent of those elected to Parliament were women (CEDAW, 2002b). The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Social Welfare aims to promote gender equity. Unemployment among women is high and double that of men, though the Constitution guarantees equal opportunity employment.

Progress has been made with the educational achievements and improved literacy rate of women, as well as the curriculum reforms and teacher training programmes to eliminate gender role stereotypes. Female adult literacy rates are at 89.6 per cent compared to male adult literacy at 94.7 per cent. The female youth literacy rate (15-24 years) is 96.9 per cent (UNESCO, 2004). Women are still underrepresented in engineering and technology related courses in tertiary education.

Tanzania

The Law Reform Commission was given a mandate to identify laws contrary to the Constitution with regard to gender discrimination, but these are still under review. There is a target to provide human rights education to at least 30 per cent of women by 2000, but this has not been institutionalised to date (WEDO, 2005). A parliamentary quota system has successfully increased women's participation in government, with the proportion of women in parliament increasing in the 2000 elections from 16.3 per cent to 21.2 per cent. Female local government councillors also increased from 25 to 33.3 per cent (WEDO, 2005).

There has been a Government commitment to provide compulsory primary education for all children since the 1970s, but increased poverty and the state's inability to fund social services at previous levels have made it difficult to achieve education for all. Enrolment rates in primary schools deteriorated in the late 20th century and the secondary enrolment rates are among the lowest in the world. There is a strong focal point within the Ministry of Education that deals with girls' education, and there are some civil society organisations that focus on women's and girls' education (CEDAW, 1998b; WEDO, 2005).

A Gender Equity Fund has been established within the Education Fund so as to provide resources for addressing the gender imbalance in access to education, particularly in science education. The Basic Education Master Plan (1997) and various other educational programmes promote activities and set targets to enhance girls' enrolment and retention and improve their performance. Two Ministries share responsibility for education - the mission of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education is 'to facilitate the provision of quality gender equity in technical and Higher Education', the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for Universal Primary Education (UPE), eradication of illiteracy and tertiary education and training (http://www.tanzania.go.tz/education.html, accessed April 2005).

Uganda

Uganda is viewed as a model for women's representation in the East African region, with the number of women in Parliament (now at 30 per cent) and other decision-making bodies. It has put into place a 30 per cent affirmative action policy and developed a National Plan of Action for Women. The Ministry of Gender and Community Development governs women's affairs, and has formulated gender-sensitive policies and plans, but has limited funds and human resources (CEDAW, 2002a). Awareness about affirmative action is high, but methods of implementation are reported as poor (WEDO, 2005).

The Constitution provides grounds for the elimination of all gender-related factors constraining girls' participation in schooling and has been instrumental in improving enrolment of girls, especially at primary level. The Education Strategic Investment Plan (1997-2003) spells out strategies to ensure equity of access to education at all levels. Basic education has been the major focus, with a programme to provide free primary education for all. Efforts have been made to accelerate the enrolment of women and the disadvantaged. The National Gender and Education Policy addresses the issue of school dropouts. The National Youth Policy 2001 promotes principles of equity and equal access to social, economic and employment opportunities (WEDO, 2005).

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1   Research design

This research project was designed collaboratively and comparatively. It adopted a case study approach. This involved a collection of methods that were standardised across the 5 countries and involved 3 sources of data collection: analysis of documents and existing statistical data, semi-structured interviews and structured non-participant observation. As such, the cases provide contextualised accounts of settings, actions and viewpoints.

The project combined consideration of quantitative data with the collection of original qualitative data. Initially statistical data were consulted in each of the 5 countries. The qualitative data were sought to illuminate and provide some explanatory power for the statistics e.g. why there are so few women students in science subjects and why there are so few senior women academics and managers in higher education.

The second stage of data collection involved interviews with students, academic staff, managers and policy-makers in the five countries. The sample size for the interviews was 209 (see Table 7). Informants were selected for their involvement in policy-making and implementation, and/or their experiences of teaching or learning in gender-related subject areas.

The project attempted to capture the intersections between policy, public social knowledge and private lived experiences of gender in higher education (Ribbens and Edwards, 1997). We were keen to solicit responses from a variety of stakeholders about how gender equity was being progressed or impeded in their institutions.

The schedules used to collect data through in-depth semi-structured interviews were based on a standardised document provided by the Project Director and modified to suit the local populations in each of the five countries (see Appendix II). Interviews were recorded and transcribed – with some translations into English in the cases of Tanzania and Sri Lanka.

The third stage of data collection involved structured observations of gender relations in classrooms, meetings and training sessions. Observers were trained to record interaction between teachers and students, meeting chairs and participants and trainers and trainees.

The system of analysing data in-country and across the five countries enabled the identification of both local and more patterned international themes to emerge. The interview transcripts and observation data were analysed in-country by the research teams. Quotes from the interviews are presented verbatim in the research findings section. As English is often a second or third langauge for many informants, there might be some grammatical errors. However, we did not feel comfortable about editing the voices.

In London, the same material was coded using Nvivo software. Coding categories were evolved and conceptually developed by the Project Director using literature from a wide range of international sources and databases. The first stage was close analytical engagement with the data from each country and from each of the 3 areas of research - access, curriculum transformation and staff development. The second stage was to analyse across the 5 countries. Codes, themes, patterns and discontinuities were recorded and clustered.

The case studies are formal collections of evidence presented as interpretive positions. At times, the findings can be generalisable, at other times the cases can offer local explanatory power. As so little has been published on women's experiences of higher education outside the West, these accounts offer powerful conceptual mechanisms by focusing attention on the specifics of previously marginalised narratives.

The project was conceptually embedded in feminist theory in terms of its design, data analysis and process. Throughout the project gender has been conceptualised as a social construction. Universities have also been perceived as ideologically constructed and gendered sites.

In terms of ethics, the team has been reflexively aware of the power relations involved in the research process. For example, there are always dilemmas involved in translating women's private and professional experiences into sociology (Smith, 1987). This has been compounded, in four out of five cases, by colleagues researching their own organisations, across hierarchies and racial and social class boundaries.

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the relevant authorities in each university. The participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their input. Yet researchers have negotiated role strain (e.g. academics interviewing students, senior academics interviewing more junior colleagues and vice versa), grappled with issues of insider knowledge, interest representation, tacit understandings, boundaries and confidentiality. Teams have reflected on questions of audience, prior assumptions, situated knowledge and the challenge of undertaking comparative research that has involved decontextualising and recontextualising research data across national boundaries.

The research teams in all countries wish to emphasise that the collaborative nature of the project represents an example of good practice in itself. Collaboration and capacity- building were achieved via international meetings in four locations: London in May 2003, Cape Town in November 2003, Dar es Salaam in July 2004 and Colombo in January 2005. These included training inputs and extensive discussion on the methodological and intellectual challenges involved in the study.

Approaches to data collection, management and analysis were shared and there was an on-going discussion about emergent issues across the five countries. The research teams from the countries hosting the international meetings also attended the meetings and were able to gain the benefits of working in an international network. The Project Director also visited each of the five countries and spent time with the in-country teams focusing on their needs, concerns and wealth of local experience. Training materials, literature and research instruments were circulated for discussion, information and critical feedback. The combination of training workshops, team meetings, communication and feedback contributed to the quality of the data and the overall success of the project.

4.2   Challenges for the project

One of the major challenges of this research was locating comparative data and information for the partner countries. Even within the databases of large international organisations, the dates available for many education and gender statistics varied. When local organisations provided the data, they often employed different measurements or definitions, limiting comparability. A further challenge was to strike a balance between standardising data collection instruments across the five countries while simultaneously being aware of local variations and contexts.

The issue of language and transcription also arose. For example, several informants in Tanzania were interviewed in Swahili. This meant that transcripts had to be translated and carefully verified to ensure lack of distortion. A further challenge was to ensure sustained involvement from policy-makers in-country. While each team formed a steering group, the busy schedules of national policy-makers often caused a problem in arranging meetings and dissemination seminars.

Deadlines were a problem throughout the project. In addition to different structures of academic years across the five countries, there were also strikes and university closures that impeded data collection. Communication problems sometimes occurred because of difficulties in some organisations with electronic systems.

One other issue was how terms such as staff development and gender mainstreaming are defined across institutional and national boundaries. Furthermore, qualitative research is still a fairly new concept in many national locations. As such, it is not always understood and is sometimes negatively differentiated from quantitative research. Lead researchers reported many comments from colleagues about the smallness of the sample size, fears of anecdotal style and about constructs such as validity. The international research team attempted to ensure validity by constantly reviewing that we were observing and identifying what we claimed to be researching. Interpretations of data were also carefully checked at national and international levels. By using a variety of methods and a range of literature, we have attempted to demonstrate how our interpretations of the data were reached.

4.3   Case study institutions

The five case study institutions were the University of Ibadan, Nigeria; University of Colombo, Sri Lanka; University of Cape Town, South Africa; University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and Makerere University, Uganda.

The teams used specific criteria to select universities. These included the presence of faculties with quantitative gender inequities, e.g. the under-representation of women in the Faculty of Technology at Ibadan, the existence of programmes or initiatives addressing gender equity e.g. Women's Studies programmes, or affirmative action programmes. The case study universities have some similarities. For example, they could all be perceived as elite organisations. All five of the case study universities are among the oldest within their countries.

In many respects, the case study institutions are not necessarily representative of universities within their respective countries. This is particularly the situation with the University of Cape Town (UCT). To a greater extent than many of the other universities in South Africa, UCT has access to international resources and is well connected with other universities around the world. For this and other reasons, UCT is not considered typical of universities in South Africa.

Case study universities in Tanzania, Nigeria and Uganda originated as former colleges of the University of London during the 1940s and 1950s and were designed to train the local male population to manage the 'colonies'. These universities subsequently became autonomous when the countries achieved independence in the 1960s (Nigeria in 1960, Tanzania in 1961 and Uganda in 1962).

Makerere is the oldest and largest university in Uganda, with 35,000 students in the academic year 2003/04. Makerere began as a Technical College in 1922 and achieved full university status in 1970. Makerere University is a state-funded university that admits both government sponsored and privately sponsored students. Makerere has faculties of Agriculture, Arts, Forestry and Nature Conservation, Law, Medicine, Science, Social Sciences, Technology, and Veterinary Medicine.

The University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) is one of four universities in Tanzania whose main financial support comes from the government. Established in 1961 as a college of the University of London, it has grown considerably and now has faculties of Law, Arts and Sciences, Commerce and Management, Education, Civil Engineering and the Built Environment, Mechanical and Chemical Engineering, Electrical and Computer Systems Engineering, Science, Aquatic Science and Technology. 12,265 students (8,543 males and 3,722 females) enrolled at UDSM for the academic year of 2003/2004 (UDSM VC's speech on the occasion of the 34th graduation ceremony of UDSM, 27/11/2004).

The University of Ibadan, the first in Nigeria, was established as a college of the University of London in 1948. It is located in the largest city in sub-Saharan Africa. It became autonomous in 1963 when it started to offer its own degrees. It is a conventional state-funded university offering degrees in a variety of disciplines in the Arts, Sciences, Technology, Medicine, Pharmacy, Agriculture, Law, Veterinary Medicine, Education, Dentistry and the Social Sciences. Its current enrolment figure is 20,574. The Faculties are: Arts, Science, Dentistry, Social Sciences, Veterinary Medicine, Agriculture and Forestry, Clinical Sciences, Basic Medical Sciences, Public Health, Education, Technology, Law, Institute of African Studies, Institute of Education and Pharmacy.

The University of Cape Town (UCT), the oldest of the five case study institutions, was established as the South African College in 1829 and became a university circa 1910 before it relocated to its current site and was renamed. The university is English-speaking and state-funded. It has been heavily engaged in post-apartheid transformation and is actively seeking to provide opportunities for a wider constituency of students and staff. In the 2003 academic year, 20,686 students were enrolled at UCT. It has faculties of Commerce, Engineering and the Built Environment, Health Sciences, Humanities, Law and Science.

The University of Colombo evolved from the previous University of Ceylon to become an independent institution in 1968. The University of Ceylon Act No. 1 of 1972 established a single University – the University of Sri Lanka - with 5 campuses, one of which was the Colombo Campus. In 1978, once again, the University of Colombo became an independent national, state-funded university. It is a top university in the Sri Lankan system of higher education enrolling 9713 students in the 2002/03 academic year. It has faculties of Arts, Education, Graduate Studies, Law, Management and Finance, Medicine and Science.

All of the case study universities have a history of instituting gender initiatives.

4.4   Gender in the case study universities

A noticeable pattern is that the number of women undergraduate students seems to be increasing in all the case study institutions. Yet the percentage of women staff, particularly in the senior posts, has been slow to increase. The tables below give an overview of the gendered composition of students and staff at the five case study universities.

Table 4: Summary of the Proportion of Female Students at the Five Case Study Universities

University	Year	Total per cent	Undergraduate per cent	Post-graduate per cent
University of Ibadan	2002/3	39.0	42	33
University of Cape Town	2004	50.4	51.2	45.4
University of Colombo	2002/3	60.3	61.1	42.2*
University of Dar es Salaam	2003/4	31.0	31.3	12.7
Makerere University	2002/3	42.0	42.6	36.0

*Latest data from 1995/96

Table 5: Summary of the Proportion of Female Academic Staff at the Five Case Study Universities

University	Year	Professor	Assocc. Professor	Snr. Lecturer	Lecturer	Asst. Lecturer
University of Ibadan	2002/3	13**	-	25	28	40
University of Cape Town	2005	12	25	40	51	30
University of Colombo	2003/04	45.8	25.0	39.8*	53.6	-
University of Dar es Salaam	2004	5.2	14.8	11.9	10.6	17.7
Makerere University	2003	6.1	20.0	15.95	23.4	22.9

*Combined Snr Lecturer I and II.
** Combined Professor and Associate Professor
Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2003) Global Education Digest 2003:
Comparing Education Statistics Across the World. Montreal, UNESCO.

The data from these case study universities resemble general international trends in universities showing a low proportion of women as staff, with a wider gender gap at senior academic positions. Research conducted by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (Lund, 1998; Singh, 2002) indicates that women are seriously under-represented in all sections of employment in higher education.

It is interesting to note that Sri Lanka performs better in terms of the proportion of females who are professors in contrast to management and executive roles. Sri Lanka has seen women achieving better in examinations from secondary level onwards. Women's interest in university education and joining a career at university can be considered as a continuation of the feminisation of the teaching profession. Teaching is an 'approved' career for women in the country. It is also regarded as a convenient career which can help combine work roles and home roles, as in academia, attendance in the university is not mandatory as flexi-hours operate. Teaching also is considered as a career in which women can use their caring and interpersonal skills effectively.

On the other hand, management is perceived as more demanding, more aggressive and authoritarian and more fitting for males. A popular myth is that women occupying managerial positions act more like men than women. This may deter women for seeking managerial positions. This perception can work in selection bodies which tend to prefer males to females.

Figure 10: Percentage of Women Professors and Executive Heads in Selected Commonwealth Countries, 2002
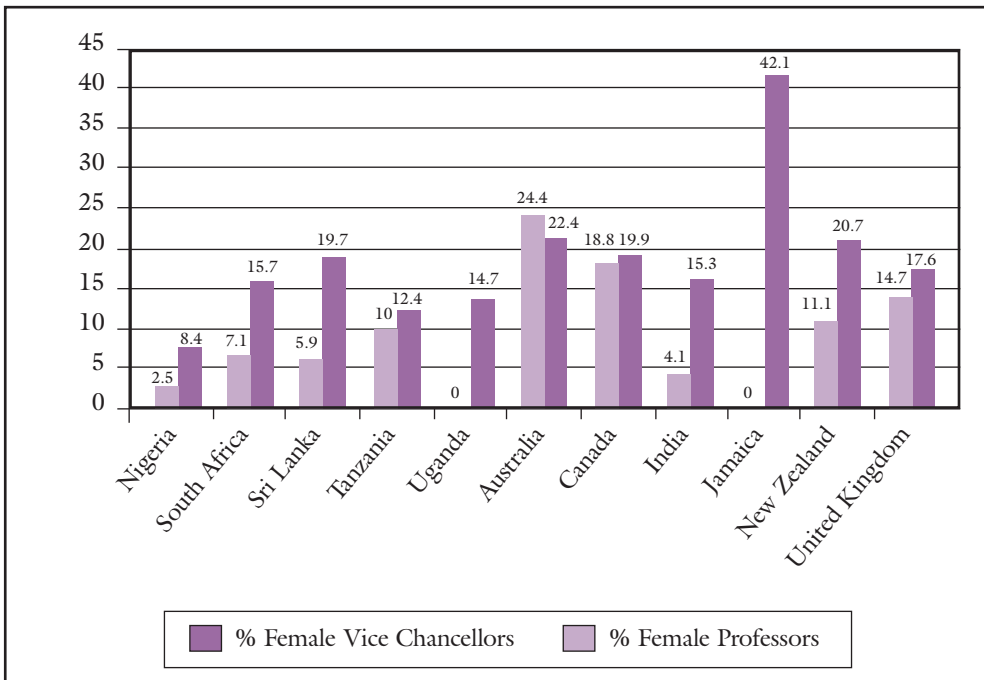
Figures are similar in European countries, even in those with decades of equality policies including the Nordic countries and gender inequalities in higher education remain a cause of concern across the European Union (Fogelberg et al.,1999).

Figure 11: Distribution of Professors at Universities in Selected European Countries by Sex, (2000/2001)

Source: European Commission Directorate - General for Research (2003) Women and Science Statistics and Indicators.
She Figures 2003. Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

4.5   Interventions for gender equity

Each in-country research team identified three specific and distinct interventions to study which would provide information about access, staff development and curriculum transformation at their case study universities. These are outlined below:

Table 6: Focus of Research in the Case Study Universities

	Access	Staff Development	Curriculum Transformation
Nigeria	To investigate enabling and obstructing factors for female students entering the Faculty of Technology.	To investigate recruitment, staff training and promotion practices and to seek the views of female staff about the level of gender sensitive institutional culture.	To interrogate curriculum that takes account of gender issues in departments in the Faculty of Agriculture.
South Africa	To investigate women's access to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment at UCT.	To identify developmental initiatives promoting gender equity at the university, to assess the impact of these on women staff, and to explore the attitudes of women staff towards gender equity training.	To examine initiatives to mainstream gender into the curriculum with special focus on students' perceptions of these efforts.
Sri Lanka	To investigate the gender implications of district quotas and Mahapola Scholarships (these are awarded to students from low-income backgrounds)	To review the status of gender in the courses of the Staff Development Centre of the University of Colombo and investigate the experiences of women who participated in these courses.	To review students' perspectives of the MA in Women's Studies programme and the outcome of specific interventions to mainstream gender into the university curricula.
Tanzania	To investigate the experiences and outcomes of affirmative action programmes for women e.g. pre-entry programmes and scholarships at University of Dar es Salaam.	To review the impact of gender sensitisation programmes at University of Dar es Salaam on the institutional culture.	To investigate on-going initiatives to mainstream gender at University of Dar es Salaam.
Uganda	To review Makerere's affirmative action programme including the 1.5 Points Scheme, Female Scholarship Initiative (FSI).	To interrogate career development opportunities for women at Makerere University.	To consider the institutional policy framework and interventions for gender mainstreaming in the curriculum and seek views from students and staff on the effectiveness of mainstreaming.

4.6   Access to higher education

Internationally, higher education policy has included attention to widening participation (UNESCO, 1998). In some national locations, this has involved specific interventions to attract under-represented groups e.g. black students in South Africa, women students in Uganda and Tanzania, low-income students from rural regions in Sri Lanka and working class students in the UK. Access policies are driven by both a commitment to social inclusion and to the development of human capital, economic development and international competitiveness.

Access can be constructed purely in quantitative terms, with a target to change the number of members of under-represented groups either in the institution as a whole or horizontally in the disciplines. This is particularly the case with women's access to science and technology. However, this research project was also concerned with the qualitative aspects of access and sought to gain data about women's lived experiences as students and staff in higher educational institutions.

Two of the case study institutions were especially interested in the under-representation of women in science, technology and engineering. The project research team in Nigeria explored the potential barriers and enablers to enrolment into the Faculty of Technology at the University of Ibadan, as traditionally few female students are enrolled. For example, in the 2000/2001 session, only 11.2 per cent of the 1809 students enrolled were female.

The South African research team chose to study the experiences of women in the Faculty with the lowest proportion of female students enrolled, the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (25 per cent in 2002).

Some Commonwealth, and indeed European countries, operate quota systems as a method of widening participation from broader student constituencies The Sri Lankan research team investigated two initiatives that aid entry into the University of Colombo: District Quotas and Mahapola Scholarships. The schemes are not specifically targeted at women, but rather at students from low-income backgrounds - particularly in areas with low participation rates in higher education. However, the research team evaluated their impact on gender equity.

The two East African countries have a wide variety of gender equity initiatives, including formal affirmative action programmes and programmes for gender mainstreaming and gender sensitisation. In Tanzania, two affirmative action programmes and a female scholarship programme supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York were investigated for their effectiveness in improving access for women to the University of Dar es Salaam. The investigation included an assessment of an innovative 6-week pre-entry affirmative action programme that helps to prepare female students with marginal entry requirements for undergraduate study in the Faculty of Science.

The Senate of Makerere University instituted the 1.5 points affirmative action programme to increase the number of women enrolled at their university. The initiative grants an additional 1.5 bonus points to the cumulative A level scores of female students applying to the University to increase their likelihood of entry. The Carnegie - sponsored Female Scholarship Initiative

(FSI) sponsored the direct entrance of selected female students into study at Makerere University, funding the overflow of students trying to enter on the 1.5 programme. The Department of Women and Gender Studies has a history of promoting gender equity initiatives throughout the University. Recently, supported by private funds, the Department has admitted a number of under- and post-graduate students studying topics in Gender and Women's Studies. In Uganda, the team reviewed these schemes to assess their impact on female access to the University.

4.7   Curriculum transformation

It has long been acknowledged that the curriculum is a major relay of dominant power relations in any society (Bernstein, 1975). What gets taught and what gets excluded are directly linked to hegemonies and power relations. Traditional knowledge fields have structured the higher education curriculum. The Women's Studies and Gender Studies movements have attempted to illustrate how gender is frequently a disqualified discourse in mainstream academic disciplines and how there is a conjunction between gender, power and knowledge (Richardson and Robinson, 1993).

There has been much feminist theorising across the Commonwealth on how the university curriculum and individual disciplines are gendered, with calls for interdisciplinarity, transdiciplinarity and new maps of learning that include references to women's lives and scholarship (Kennedy et al, 1993; Magarey, 1983; Mama, 1996). Feminism, postmodernism and post-colonialism have all raised questions about disqualified knowledges (Stanley, 1997; Spivak, 1999). Early feminist interventions and rationalities for curriculum and indeed wider organisational change have resulted in what is known today as gender mainstreaming (Kabeer, 2003; UNESCO, 2002a).

Following the United Nations Beijing Conference on Women in 1995, the importance of 'mainstreaming', or integrating gender equality, has been highlighted in several regions, including the Commonwealth and the European Union. Mainstreaming is defined as the systematic integration of equal opportunities for women and men into the organisation and its culture and into all programmes, policies and practices; into ways of seeing and doing (Rees, 1998). The US Agency for International Development (USAID, 1994) identified seven elements for the institutionalisation of gender issues. Three important aspects are awareness, commitment and capacity.

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy that claims to make women's and men's experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. It assesses the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, and programmes in any area and at all levels. Tools for gender mainstreaming include gender-disaggregated statistics, equality indicators, engendered budgets, gender-impact assessments, gender monitoring and evaluation, gender audit, and visioning (Beck and Stelcner, 1997; MacDonald et al. 1997). It is a long-term strategy, with different stages of development. The first step is to identify the subtle ways in which the status quo in

effect is designed with men in mind. The second step is to open systems up to accommodate men and women equally. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

Research teams set out to investigate how gender mainstreaming is faring, particularly in relation to access, curriculum transformation and staff development and how it is perceived by students and staff.

The research team in Tanzania investigated the progress UDSM has made with mainstreaming gender into the curricula. The attitudes of undergraduate and postgraduate students and teaching staff towards gender mainstreaming were also solicited. At the University of Dar es Salaam, efforts are being made to integrate gender into curricula. At present, almost every Faculty has included a gender component as part of the courses offered. However, Humanities disciplines offer many more options and opportunities than other courses. Attitudes and views on these subjects or topics on gender were thus sought from both students and teaching staff.

In Makerere, the Department of Women and Gender Studies admitted its first Masters' students in 1991. An undergraduate programme where Gender and Development studies form part of the general Bachelor of Arts degree was started in 1999. There are now a total of 2,300 students at different levels. A Ph.D. programme (by research) is offered, as well as training in short courses. Informants were sought from the student body who were following these gender courses. Students of veterinary medicine, agriculture and engineering were also included.

In South Africa, female second year undergraduate students' perceptions of integrating gender into the curriculum at the University of Cape Town were solicited. The informants selected for research into the curriculum initiative were all female, second year students who have followed one gender course within their degree studies, but who did not elect to major in Gender Studies. The reasoning behind this sample selection was the speculation that these students would be sufficiently sensitive to gender within the curriculum and would be in a position to comment on gender sensitivity in mainstream curricula.

While Women's Studies has been in decline in the UK, it has continued to recruit in several of the partner countries. The MA in Women's Studies at the University of Colombo, while only having had 159 students in the last decade, has continued to operate. The research team in Sri Lanka interviewed MA graduates and students currently following undergraduate gender courses to understand their experiences and how the courses have affected their personal and professional development. Additionally, Deans and Heads of Departments were interviewed to gauge the work being done to mainstream gender into the university curriculum.

At the University of Ibadan, the Faculty of Agriculture offers some courses in its Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology Department, which have a gender component. All students in the faculty have to take these courses. Undergraduate students were interviewed to assess their perception of such courses and their impact on their professional and personal development.

4.8   Gender equity in staff development

The under-representation of women as senior academics and managers in higher education is becoming an international concern (Husu and Morley, 2000; Singh, 2002). This project investigated how women's capacity is developed to enable them to take on senior responsibility and evolve a broad repertoire of academic or management skills.

Staff development is differently understood in different countries. For example, the University of Cape Town follows a Continuous Professional Development model, with a range of short courses provided by the institution. Staff development is undertaken at UCT to "encourage the development of a community of learning where the latest principles and methodologies are applied" and to "enable staff to keep abreast of changing environments." (UCT Human Resource Development, 2004). At Makerere on the other hand, staff development often involves provision for staff to study for higher degrees.

At the University of Ibadan, academic, administrative and technical staff at all levels were interviewed to identify their perceptions of the gender sensitivity of the university's organisational culture as evident in recruitment, promotion and staff training practices, as well as provision of facilities to assist female staff. Male and female lecturers were also interviewed in the Faculty of Agriculture in the University of Ibadan.

At the University of Cape Town, staff who had taken part in a 3-week staff development programme, linked with a programme in the United States, HERS-SA, and designed for women in middle management in higher education, were interviewed about their experiences of management development.

The Staff Development Centre at the University of Colombo conducts and hosts workshops, courses, seminars and other activities to improve the experience and quality of academic work among its staff and students. Participants taking part in these activities were solicited for information on their experience as part of this project.

A number of gender sensitisation programmes have been instituted at both the University of Dar es Salaam and Makerere University. Namely, at UDSM the Gender Dimension Programme Committee (GDPC) was instituted in 1997 to allow for the mainstreaming of gender into all levels of the University. These programmes were reviewed for their impact on gender awareness among staff within the University. The Ugandan research team explored the various dimensions around obtaining staff development at the University – funding, policy and motivation – among other issues.

4.9 The sample

Table 7: Sample Size

Country	Access				Staff Development				Curriculum Transformation				Total
	Students	Policy Makers	Staff	Totals	Students	Policy Makers	Staff	Totals	Students	Policy Makers	Staff	Totals	
Nigeria	10	4	6	20		0	19	19	11	0	8	19	58
South Africa	7	0	2	9		2	9	11	7	2	0	9	29
Sri Lanka	9	7	5	21		4	11	17	9	5	5	19	57
Tanzania	13	13	12	38		13	12	25	13	13	12	38	38
Uganda	12	3	6	21		0	2	2	4	0	0	4	27
Totals	51	27	31	109		19	53	74	44	20	25	89	209

Interviews were held with students, academic staff, managers and policy-makers in the five countries. Policymakers comprised representatives from ministries of education, planning and gender equality. Overall, informants were selected for their involvement in policy-making and implementation, their experiences of management, research, teaching or learning.

4.10 Capacity building

4.10.1 Team development

The development of research capacity in the area of gender equity and qualitative approaches to inquiry was also an aim of this project. This has occurred by providing resources and expertise for early career professionals to develop their skills in gender research. The project team across the six countries included a range of expertise and experience that was shared via the following mechanisms:

- In-country training sessions;
- Critical feedback on draft research instruments and reports;
- The compilation of the annotated bibliography (Morley et al., 2005);
- Distribution of literature on research methods and feminist theory;
- Training for data analysis software;
- International meetings (these included training sessions/ lectures);
- Training documents e.g. on interviewing, observation, case study research.

A further intervention for developing research capacity took place in-country. Each team was provided with initial and ongoing research training. This was organised by the lead researchers. In the case of Tanzania and Uganda, the London-based Project Director also participated in the process of developing new researchers.

Three research training workshops were held in Sri Lanka: Feminist Research, Interviewing and Qualitative Research Methodologies – Conducting Observations. The participants at these workshops included not only the members of the research teams but also academic staff from

the Faculties of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and Education of the University of Colombo and the Open University.

In Nigeria, training workshops were held on qualitative research techniques, interviewing, use of NVivo and training in observation techniques.

The decision to hold the international meetings in four different locations meant that local teams also had the opportunity to participate and benefit from working in an international team.

4.10.2 PhD students

Two competitive research studentships were attached to this project. Of sixteen applicants from eight countries (Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Zambia, Nigeria and South Africa) two PhD candidates were selected as part of the project. Maithree Wickramasinghe from Sri Lanka and Nyokabi Kamau from Kenya commenced their doctoral studies in October 2003. Ms. Wickramsinghe is supervised by Prof. Louise Morley on her research project titled, 'Making Meaning: Researching Feminist Research Methodologies'. Anne Gold is the supervisor for Ms. Kamau on her project, 'A Study of the Relationship between Gender and HIV/Aids and its Impact on Women in Management in Universities in Kenya'.

4.10.3 Resources

Each team was provided with a range of resources to assist their research capacity. Computers, transcription machines, tape recorders, and selected books and articles on research methodology were provided. Key software programmes including NVivo and Endnote and training manuals were also provided to broaden the repertoire of research skills in each country.

4.11   Dissemination of project outputs

Dissemination has been integrated into every stage of the project. It has been iterative and collaborative, with a range of outputs including seminars, conference papers, publications, a website and project leaflet.

The project attracted considerable attention across the Commonwealth, Europe and China. In the five countries, dissemination seminars drew large numbers of participants from communities of practice, users and beneficiaries. Senior academic managers, members of NGOs and policy-makers followed the progress of the project with interest and support. For example, two vice-chancellors spoke at the dissemination seminar in Sri Lanka. The outputs often received press coverage in national media.

During the course of the project, the Project Director, Lead Researchers, doctoral students and research team members presented papers and keynote addresses on the project at a number of organisational, national and international seminars and conferences including universities, gender networks in Australia, Europe, Asia and Africa. Further dissemination through presentation of papers at workshops, seminars and conference is planned.

A special edition of the *McGill Journal of Education* (December 2003) published articles from members of the South African, Sri Lankan and Nigerian teams and was edited by members of the London co-ordinating team. Other publications arising from the project included articles and papers in the *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, Australian Feminist Studies, Women's Studies International Forum, Proceedings of the National Convention on Women's Studies* (Sri Lanka), and DFES publications. A special edition of *Women's Studies International Forum on the project entitled Including Women: Gender in Commonwealth Higher Education* is scheduled for 2006/7.

From the beginning of the project dissemination was a priority. In its first months, a project website was developed as part of the main Institute of Education website to house information on the progress of the project (*www.ioe.ac.uk/efps/GenderEQComHE*). There, information on the London co-ordination team, each of the in-country research teams and steering groups, the funders and the case study universities was posted with downloadable copies of project outputs and publication lists.

The website contains copies of conference and seminar papers and details of publications from the project. An essential set of outputs has been the production of Working Papers at different stages of the project. The Working Papers are compilations of contributions from each of the five teams, with an introduction from the co-ordinating team.

A project leaflet was also produced listing information on the teams, outlining the project interventions, naming the two PhD students attached to the project and listing the project website. Copies of the leaflets were given to each of the in-country research teams for distribution at seminars, conferences and other dissemination opportunities.

Discussions and dissemination of project outputs to policymakers were also a priority. In Nigeria, discussions took place with officials of the National Universities Commission (NUC), Federal Ministries of Education, Women's Affairs, and House of Representatives Committee on Education and Women's Affairs and Civil Society Groups: Gender and Science and Technology, Third World Association on Women in Science.

In the South African project, the major dissemination to national and institutional policy makers took place through contact with the Steering Committee which comprised one politician (who during the course of the project was appointed National Minister of Education), one senior official in the National Department of Education, one academic working in the educational policy arena, one senior official in the National Department of Education (the Deputy Vice Chancellor of a neighbouring HE institution who had previously been seconded to the National Department of Education) and two senior staff members of the case institution responsible for transformation of the institution. These policy makers were all sent the South African Working Papers prior to Steering Group meetings. The Working Papers were extensively discussed during the Steering Group Meetings.

In October 2003, a dissemination seminar on 'National Policy and the National Statistics on Gender Equity' was held at the Open University of Sri Lanka and was chaired by the University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka. A presentation on 'Gender Equity in the University

of Colombo' was made at the National Convention on Women's Studies, Centre for Women's Research, Sri Lanka in March 2004 before representatives of several stakeholder constituencies. The session was chaired by the Secretary for the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The presentation of the paper evoked considerable interest, discussion and positive suggestions for further information clarifying the status on gender equity and supplementary documentary data to be collected. The chairperson of the session requested that the findings of the study be presented to the government for follow-up action and policy formulation. The new Secretary to the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Social Welfare joined the Steering Committee

In Tanzania, two meetings were held with the Steering Committee. The meetings were chaired by the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, and drew members with policy making positions from public, government and NGO institutions. Among the many suggestions given was the creation of a network of HEIs in Tanzania that would strategise for gender equity. The new Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Culture was invited to be guest speaker to a workshop organised by team members and became very interested in the project. Amandina Lihamba also interacted with policy makers as a member of Council. In February 2005, a gender sensitisation workshop was held for Council members in Zanzibar. She also invited the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Culture to be a guest speaker at a Women's Workshop.

In Uganda, the Steering Committee members held three meetings. The members had been selected according to their strategic positions (in relation to higher education) and their contacts with other policy makers. This was aimed at getting relevant advice and assistance regarding the project. At the University, the Acting Academic Registrar was one of the members, so were some heads of department (Department of Women and Gender Studies and Department of Agricultural Extension Education). At the ministerial level, there was the Commissioner for Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Sports; and the Director of Gender in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. During the meetings, the members were able to discuss and advise on different issues. The Project Coordinator participated in one such meeting held in March 2004 where she highlighted issues of gender equity in higher education at the international level, especially in the partner countries in the project. Dissemination sessions to the Steering Committee members were also conducted.

Feedback was also given to case study institutions. In Nigeria, discussions were held with Principal Officers of the University, Deans of Agriculture, Technology. The Faculty of Agriculture has set up a gender mainstreaming Committee to review the curriculum. As one of the project leaders in the South African study is a Deputy Vice Chancellor in the case institution, feedback was at a high level. In addition, a presentation was made to interested staff members, and consultations were held with senior managers. Members of academic staff from the case study institution in Sri Lanka participated in all the dissemination seminars, a majority of whom are in senior positions in the university. Copies of finalised reports were given to selected members.

In Sri Lanka two dissemination workshops were held which appeared to have significant impact on the participants. For example, representatives from the science department felt that they should revisit the gender dimension and see how the perceptions of students even at school level can be changed. One medical faculty representative expressed interest in following the Women's Studies course to learn more about gender. They also requested more workshops in their faculty for awareness-raising. The Sri Lankan team has also produced its own book about the project.

Chapter 5: Research Findings

5.1 General issues emerging from the research data

The project identified a number of ways in which gender equity is being promoted, through new constituencies in mass higher education, internationalism, policy development and links with the community. At the same time, the project identified ways in which gender equity is being impeded, through gender violence/harassment/abuse, organisational culture and micropolitics, men and masculinities, deficit models of women's agency, lack of understanding of diversity and weak policy implementation.

5.1.1   New constituencies in mass higher education

Higher education is expanding internationally both in response to state investment in the knowledge economy and also as a consequence of new private and offshore providers. More women are now entering higher education as undergraduate students. However, the percentage of women in senior academic and management positions is still low (Figures10 and 11). So while the number and proportion of women as consumers of higher education is increasing, the number and proportion of women as providers of higher education remains low at senior levels and in certain disciplines.

Gender equity is often an essential strategy in poverty reduction (Shabaya and Konadu-Agyemang, 2004). Higher education is perceived by some as having a mitigating effect on gender disadvantage, as a Nigerian policy-maker suggests:

> *Women are disadvantaged and we have come to believe that education plays a very useful role in anybody's life, be it a man or woman and we believe that if any woman gets proper education, it is like you have provided for her for life.*

The economic value of education is a subject of considerable debate - particularly in low-income countries. For example, every year of lost schooling is thought to reduce girls' future incomes by 10-20 per cent (Psacharapoulos and Patrinos, 2002).

5.1.2   Internationalism

Higher education is undergoing major changes as a result of internationalisation. Positive links with the international donor and policy community are reported, with the Carnegie Corporation of New York, national development agencies, including DFID, NORAD and SIDA, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Association of Commonwealth Universities offering a range of opportunities for new developments. These include libraries, Women's Studies Centres, bursary schemes for women, networks and workshops on women and management.

International links play an important role in enhancing academic women's career development. Being a member of the global citizenry is a potent contradiction to traditionally domesticated female roles. McDowell (1999: 206) argues that the 'idea of travelling challenges the spatial association between home and women that has been so important in structuring the social

construction of femininity'. The international context provides opportunities for new identities. A Nigerian academic provides an example:

> *I remembered that my going to the Netherlands made it possible for me to join the International Society for Horticultural Science and people all over the world write to me saying you are a special person in tropical crops.*

The gender agenda of international agencies often helps to raise awareness and facilitate discursive space at local levels, as a Nigerian academic describes:

> *…the fact that international agencies who were giving out research funds and so on, many of these made many of my senior colleagues, junior colleagues, male colleagues, made many of them to become gender sensitive overnight. They would come like "Please, I need to put something about women here. What can I say?" And these are the same people that used to say, "What are you talking about, you always bringing up the issue of women." So, they now had to, you know, if they wanted funding, they now had to be gender sensitive.*

However, externally driven change is perceived by some as being superficial, as a Tanzanian staff member indicates:

> *…the local people's attitudes have not significantly changed. So if they were left on their own, I don't think they would even be talking gender mainstreaming in the curriculum.*

For some, there is a clear value-added of international collaborations and influences, while for others, it can feel like a departure from the multiple domestic problems that need to be solved at local level.

5.1.3   Policy development

A strong international, national and organisational policy framework to promote gender equity helped provide awareness and resources for change. A Ugandan NGO member highlights some of the policies that have facilitated gender equity:

> *…the Universal Primary Education programme which allows free education for all…the 1.5 point for girls entering Makerere University…it is part of the wider Affirmative Action programme.*

The role of free primary education cannot be underestimated in enhancing girls' educational opportunities. After Uganda abolished fees, girls' enrolment in schools increased by 20 percentage points among the poorest fifth of girls, from 46 per cent to 82 per cent (Deininger, 2003).

A Sri Lankan academic also observes:

> *Free education is sacred in Sri Lanka.*

Following independence in 1948, the Sri Lankan Government invested heavily in health, education and other social services, creating an accessible free health system and free education,

resulting in a very high literacy rate and enrolment at primary schools. The World Bank (2004c: 1) points out that:

> *Sri Lanka was one of the first developing nations to understand the importance of investing in human resources and promoting gender equality. It has made advances in health and education more consistent with those of high-income countries and has maintained healthy economic growth despite a devastating 20-year civil conflict.*

A Sri Lankan professor connects the introduction of free education with enhanced access for girls and women:

> *When "free education" opened the doors of universities to men and women of different social strata, women's participation rates increased rapidly through the sixties and seventies.*

The argument that free access to basic education is essential in order to prepare a pool of qualified women to enter higher education was made repeatedly across the five countries. This exemplifies the need for integrated gender equity policies across the different educational sectors.

5.1.4 Links with the community

Community Partnerships can take the form of in/outreach programmes between universities and local schools, links with NGOs, women's groups and social movements. A Ugandan member of a women's group describes her organisation's interventions:

> *My organisation, the Uganda Association of University Women (UAUW), has been around for many years. Its main objective is to help uplift the status of women through education. We are doing activities along that line. For example, currently we have the career guidance activities in secondary schools. We go and talk about career opportunities available for the girls; not only girls, if we go to mixed schools, we talk to all of them. We tell them what is available in higher institutions of learning. For Makerere, we give them details of courses available in each faculty.*

A Sri Lankan professor comments on the role that universities can play in supporting gender work in the wider community:

> *Universities can also contribute to capacity- building in formulating and implementing gender sensitivity development programmes by conducting programmes for NGOs and development practitioners and a range of persons working in these sectors on gender issues.*

Hence collaboration is a two-way process, with universities influencing and being influenced by community organisations.

5.1.5 Gender violence/ harassment/ abuse

While there are a number of ways in which gender equity is being promoted, there are also ways in which gender equity is being impeded. A challenge in this study has been communication of the problem of gender violence without sensationalising or decontextualising the problem or

objectifying and victimising women in the developing world. We would not wish to suggest that people are more prone to violence in low-income countries (Morrell, 2002). A further discussion point in this project has been whether universities simply reflect the violence from wider society - particularly in those societies at war, in transition or under stress (McWilliams, 1998; Morrell, 2002) - or indeed, whether the physical organisation and power relations of academic life provide preconditions in which abuse of women can flourish.

Conflict is a major barrier to gender equity (Davis, 2004). Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Uganda all have recent or current wars and South Africa has the recent history of apartheid. Reardon (2001:21) suggests that 'in a culture of war and violence, human inequality is assumed to be natural'. Maitse (2000) argues that apartheid not only dehumanised generally, but also afforded men immense control over women. The social construction of masculinity plays a key role. Violence against women and children can also be more widely regarded as the rightful exercise of male authority (Fisher et al. 2000; Kimmel, 2000). Chilisa (2002) believes that violence against women is part of a value system that allows practices such as the genital mutilation of women. Studies demonstrate how corporal punishment and gender violence are normalised in many African schools (Dunne and Leach, 2005; Harber, 2000; Jewkes and Abrahams, 2000; Leach et al., 2000; Stambach, 2000). It appears that gender violence is sometimes continued in higher education.

A finding in this study was that gender-based violence and sexual harassment are widely reported in higher education. This can deter some families from sending young women to study. It can also deter women students and staff from attracting visibility e.g. participation in student politics, classroom interaction and campus citizenship. It can sometimes restrict women's freedom of movement on campus and fieldtrips and can create an atmosphere of mis-trust, fear and intimidation that is not conducive to women's academic and personal well-being. Sexual harassment and gender violence are ubiquitous areas of gender power, which mark out and reinforce gendered territory. They are forms of discrimination against women (MacKinnon, 1979). Abuse appears to be one of the many prices that women are expected to pay for entering traditional male reserve spaces.

Many of this project's research findings articulate with other studies on gender violence in higher education. For example, Bennett's (2002) study of African universities reports that sexual harassment and violence has undermined women's positions in higher education and that since the 1990s research within the African context has proliferated. An earlier study by Hallam (1994) also records how sexual harassment and violence in educational institutions frequently occurs between male instructors and female students. Students are pressured into sexual relationships with instructors in exchange for favours or protection. Lack of financial resources, social pressure, and an imbalance of power in favour of the teacher, according to the author, are responsible for much of the harassment and violence that takes place. She also reports that a major source of harassment and violence is student groups and organisations, some aimed at objectifying and humiliating female students, and others simply used as a vehicle for doing so.

Gender violence has an impact on the learning environment. In this study, a Nigerian student describes how sexual harassment contaminates pedagogical relations and creates a climate of mis-trust:

Basically, we don't really relate to our lecturers one-on-one. Me personally, because of stories which I have heard concerning lecturers trying to take advantage of female students and because of the fact that I am in a Faculty where there are few girls, it will be very easy for any lecturer who has it in mind to take advantage of female students.Because of that, most of the time, we try to keep our distance from lecturers.

A Nigerian staff member states how fear of violence restricts women's movements:

Boys can walk anyhow, anywhere at anytime of the day, whereas girls can't. They can't go to the libraries because it is far from them, and the study rooms are not too conducive.

A Sri Lankan professor describes how the sexualisation of women students continues to disadvantage them even when they are making good academic and social progress:

Women students are academically equally or even better, than men students. Socially, politically women are actively involved in university. They have taken part in sports. Emotionally women are targeted as sex objects among students as well as sometimes lecturers which puts them in a disadvantageous situation.

Gender violence takes a variety of forms e.g. verbal-abuse, intimidation or coercion into sex or unwanted relationships, cultism, rape, ragging (Sri Lanka) and other forms of sexual harassment. A Ugandan student relates how student hostels can be unsafe spaces for women:

Then in the hostels also… the general public thinks that all the girls who sleep there are prostitutes… this man comes as I was lying on my bed and … started touching me but I told him, 'you are touching the wrong person'. He started pulling the blanket and said that he wanted to lie on my bed… A few days later I spotted him coming from another girl's room.

Student-led initiation rituals known as 'ragging' have gender implications as young women are frequently subjected to humiliating and highly sexualised bullying as a type of endurance test. A Sri Lankan student recounts:

Also ragging was an obstacle in my first year. It was quite bad…I think ragging is so much about the class and economic differences amongst students.

Another Sri Lankan student reports how ragging affected her participation:

The ragging went on for one month. During that time I didn't feel like coming for classes.

Ragging appears to exist for the benefit of men and the detriment of women. In her study, Jayasena (2002) found that the number of young women who actively disliked and disapproved of ragging was 89.4 per cent while only 10.5 per cent of the young men fell into this category.

The disturbing incidence of rape on campus was reported by three informants in Nigeria and three informants in South Africa. Fear of rape is also mentioned in the other three countries. A South African student narrates:

Well, I don't know if you know about these rapes in toilets and stuff. That is quite scary that people get raped on campus... I've felt unsafe on campus... at night when it's empty.

Cultism, or gangsterism and gang warfare is rife on Nigerian campuses (Aina and Odebiyi, 2002). A Nigerian student considers that the existence of cults could act as a barrier to women's access:

Some parents may not want to send their female children to school so that they will not be influenced.

Another Nigerian student also discusses how fears of violence impact on women's access:

It has really affected the access of female students to higher education. When some parents think of what their children do when they come to school, they would not want to send them to school. When they think of the sexual harassment that the students pass through, they have second thoughts.

A Sri Lankan student points out how fear of violence entraps women:

In terms of society, I think the fact that women can't stay out late at night is a huge burden... But I can't spend time in the library after 5 and we have classes till 5. But I am too scared to stay late, whereas the boys stay till late and study in the library. Just getting around is so difficult for women. We are always fenced in.

Private higher education was perceived by some as being safer for women than the public universities, as a Nigerian policy-maker suggests:

For some reason some parents believe that sending their children to private institutions, apart from the fact that it will cost them money ...because the present understanding now is that the issue of harassment and cultism are more in the public schools.

This somewhat elitist response and desire for 'gated communities' (Morrell, 2002) will not solve the problem of gender violence for the community as a whole.

In conclusion, gender violence is a major problem which needs to be challenged via strong policies and codes of practice, curriculum interventions, staff development, pastoral services and grievance procedures. It is having a negative impact on access and the learning and working environment for female students and staff and is deterring families from sending young women to university.

5.1.6   Organisational culture and micropolitics

Micropolitical activities can undermine the achievements of women academics and influence women's participation and engagement in leadership roles. A feature of micropolitics is that the

subtlety sometimes leaves recipients of discriminatory behaviour unsure about the accuracy of their interpretations. A Nigerian female academic comments:

…generally people believe that there is equity. But I don't think so. What now operates is done in a subtle way, so that if one complains, one looks stupid because it is so subtle. It is there, but you can't pin-point it.

Gender regimes symbolically construct and regulate quotidian experiences. Gendered processes can be open and explicit as in the case of sexual harassment or 'submerged in organisational decisions, even those that appear to have nothing to do with gender' (Mavin and Bryans, 2002: 236). Gender discrimination can take place formally through structures including limited childcare facilities or lack of opportunities for professional development, but also informally through name-calling, gendered networks and exclusions.

One informal relay of gendered power is dress code. There were numerous comments on the unspoken laws of appearance. A South African student describes some double standards:

I mean, the guys in our class dress like they are going to play squash. They wear shorts and T-shirts and slops and tackies and they will wear the same thing the whole week. But mind you, if you come to university dressed in a short skirt or maybe not even a short skirt, but you are wearing something that looks flattering or looks feminine, you get comments.

Sexuality is a vehicle for the subjugation of women. In Nigeria, women were sometimes held responsible for gender violence on account of what was perceived as inappropriate, for example provocative dress. The emphasis is on how women should behave and dress rather than on the need for men to stop attacking them. There is no sense that educational strategies need to be evolved to combat gender-based violence (Oguli-Oumo et. al. 2002). A student espouses the blame-the-victim approach that constructs male (hetero)sexuality as an unstoppable and normative force:

You find out that some girls dress abnormally and the lecturers will go after them. In such situations, the lecturers should not be blamed but the girls themselves because they asked for it and they have gotten it. But in a situation, where people are reserved and dressed in a suitable manner not calling for anybody's attention… in such a situation, I see no reason why anybody should harass them.

A Ugandan student expresses similar views:

Socially female students suffered from sexual harassment more than boys because of the way they used to dress e.g. putting on mini skirts, blouses with open backs.

A Nigerian lecturer explains how women students are trained to construct themselves in relation to the potential of male violence:

When they come in during the orientation week, we have lectures for them where we tell them all they need to know. We also inform them of the need to dress decently, especially ladies so that they will not be victims of attack of some of these wild men.

The behaviour of young women in this study was regulated by dominant social structures and hegemonic discourses about gender identity. Women appeared to be constantly at risk of being objectified and even attacked by male desire and domination. One hegemonic discourse is that women have to regulate themselves because men cannot control themselves. Mirembe and Davies (2001) remind us that in many sub-Saharan African countries, polygamy and hyper-sexuality for men are socially acceptable, while female hyper-sexuality is socially condemned. However, a Nigerian policy-maker blames detraditionalisation for the escalating violence against women on campus, in other words, it is women's modernised clothing that has caused the problems:

> *Gender-based violence, based like rape, it is unfortunate. Well, it is not a local problem, it is a global problem. Whenever you have the male and a female, there is always this kind of problem. But in our environment, I think some of the reasons that I believe is on the increase is the loss of traditional values that we used to have. But the moral laxity now in the way women fling themselves on the men and therefore the hazard they get sometimes is they called for. Like I will use some of our students for example, they come into classes with provocative outfits and I have had to ask some of them 'What exactly were you thinking of when you were wearing this to the classroom? I thought you were coming for lectures. Even in your room, this is rather provocative'. So the moral decadence, the loss of value, self respect, that is contributing to exposure of our young females to sexual abuse by the males, both their own colleague students and their lecturers some of them who have no control over their own emotion. It is unfortunate.*

Foucault (1990) argued that wherever there is power, there is resistance. It appears that in Uganda, some women are contesting this gendered regulation, as a staff member indicates:

> *Last week we had the academic exhibition and we had some few pictures, which we were giving to the girls and telling them about the dress code. Some girls say it is their right to dress the way they want.*

The issue of dress code is one way in which women are regulated and controlled. It also provides a useful vehicle for blaming the victims, rather than the perpetrators of gender violence.

5.1.7   Men and masculinities

Gender is still mainly associated with women. Men and masculinities were left untheorised by the majority of our informants, with few reported interventions to challenge male behaviour or attitudes. While there is a large body of theory developing on the subject of hegemonic masculinities in high-income Commonwealth countries (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2003; Connell, 2000; Hearn, 1994; Hearn and Parkin, 2001; Morrell, 2001), theorising the social construction of masculinity is in its early stages in many low-income countries. Very few informants comment on the need for pedagogical and curriculum interventions to challenge male students' attitudes and beliefs, with the exception of one Sri Lankan student who observes that discrimination against women often comes from students:

> *I think they need to work more on changing students' attitudes. Students are so conservative and try to put down people, especially women who are doing well.*

Academia was also conceptualised as being male terrain, with older male staff refusing to let go of the privileges and status that the profession bestows. Lack of young blood entering the profession and poor succession planning were thought to impede women's opportunities to enter management. Older, senior men were perceived as blocking opportunities for women, not by design, but simply by default, as a South African lecturer describes:

> *…academia … people hang around forever. So that is where the culture of old, white male, old boys club is probably sitting. It is not to say they are bad people, it is just that they are there.*

5.1.8   Structures and agency: the deficit model

Explanations for women's under-representation are frequently posed in terms of agency that is independent action, rather than structures such as recruitment and promotion criteria, academic timetabling and the long hours' culture.

Women students are perceived as impeded by internalised oppression, rather than academic ability. Women's academic self-worth is often presented as fragile and unstable. A Ugandan student states:

> *The problem most girls have is lack of confidence.*

A Sri Lankan policy-maker also attributes the low level of women in management to women's reluctance to apply for the posts:

> *Managerial posts are not held by women in large numbers. In universities, if you take generally speaking how many heads of departments are females…no not even 20 per cent are held by the females. Even in politics there is no equity. Politics of course it is very very poor. That is because they don't come forward. That is the reason.*

The problem with attributing problems to psychic narratives such as lack of self-confidence, is that it suggests that women are in deficit and lacking the personal attributes to succeed. It overlooks the power relations that create structures and barriers, and indeed that undermine women's confidence in their abilities. However, women are both impeded by structures, but able sometimes to use their agency to negotiate and navigate their way around discriminatory structures.

A Nigerian staff member also reflects an agentic approach i.e. that gendered change is related to women's individual actions rather than to structures:

> *The thing is, there is no discrimination as per 'women must not enter this profession, woman must not do this, woman must not do that'. There is no written code or unwritten code. That's why I say the problem is the women themselves. If you feel you are up to a thing, you should go ahead and pursue it, not allowing any cultural barrier or whatever.*

However, comments from a member of a Ugandan NGO combine agentic and structural analysis:

The problem comes when women do not take advantages of those opportunities offered. Another big barrier is that these institutions are still dominated by men. They will do anything to ensure that women do not go up. They will say, "we have put this thing women must go, women must do this' but implementation becomes a problem. Women must be assertive but the doors are not open. The problem is how to go through the barriers. They say the doors are open, but we are still tied. They tie your hands and blind fold you then they say 'the door is open'. So how do you move, we are still very far.

It appears that the degree to which people are able to develop their capacity for agency depends largely on how power differentials influence their lives (Preece, 2002).

5.1.9   Lack of understanding of diversity

Higher education in most national locations has been characterised by exclusion. This has been on the basis of race and ethnicity, social class and poverty, disability and age as well as gender. A challenge is how to intersect different structures of inequality. There is often a hierarchy of oppression with competition created between different inequalities e.g. gender, race/ethnicity and social class. A challenge is how to account for the intersections of different structures of inequality. A South African academic comments:

UCT has a number of equity programmes, but I think it is more along the lines of race than gender. Gender is a bit of an afterthought. My sense is that the priority is, and I don't say it is wrong but my sense is that the priority is more about race than gender.

Gender, race and social class discrimination are often difficult to disentangle, as a South African student observes:

…it was a prac, just me and two other guys and the technician, who is another white male, … they were all white males, so whether it was just me being super-sensitive, but I felt that when they could not do something, they would just laugh about it with him… he said something to me like "oh you should know this, how did you get here to fourth year if you don't know this". And maybe I was just having a bad day, and I just felt that I don't deserve that kind of comment …I don't know if it was a gender or a race thing[2].

Discrimination occurs via informal relays of power through sarcasm, jokes, exclusions and throwaway remarks, leaving individuals hurt and disempowered, but unsure of their readings of the situation (Morley, 1999).

Another South African student introduces the issue of age in relation to gender as a cause of discrimination:

It's actually shocking - the kinds of issues one comes up against as a woman.   I often wonder whether it is also because I'm a young woman that sometimes it's different if you are older, it depends on your age, or does it depend on your race, gender and age?

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[2] The technician was later disciplined.

5.1.10   Weak policy implementation

The implementation gap between macro (national) and meso (organisational) policies and micro (women's everyday lived) experiences was a cause of frustration for many. A strong national policy framework should enable developments at the organisational level. However, there was a sense that policy only existed at a symbolic or textual level and was not always supported by implementation or evaluation strategies. Disappointment with the impact of transformation policy in South Africa has been expressed by several authors (Martineau, 1997; Mabokela, 2000; Ndungane,1999).

A South African academic highlights the difference between policy intention, text and outcomes:

> *…there's a policy framework and we live in a wonderful democratic country which supports gender equity in so many ways but in practice we don't experience that in our daily lives.*

The implementation gap is sometimes attributed to lack of monitoring and evaluation. In their Working Paper 6, the South African team comment 'What is distinctly lacking in the documents analysed, is an indication of consequences for institutions or individuals for non-compliance with the policies' (Riordan et al, 2005).

A South African administrator also comments on the lack of monitoring and accountability and hints at the complex issue of interest representation, or, in other words, the paradox that means that high status groups are the most able to effect organisational change. However, it is not always perceived by them to be in their interests to do so.

> *…our democracy started in 1994 but…nothing has changed at UCT. I mean the employment equity plan came into place and is now being forced down our throats…why have they not clamped down on people that have not done it (employment equity)…Because the same people, the same white males are still being employed since then.*

A further cause for concern was the implementation gap between the international and the national policy terrains. Whereas gender is a policy discourse in Tanzania, South Africa and Uganda, it is not in Nigeria. Adeyemi and Akpotu (2004) bemoan the fact that the National Policy on Education (1998) has no special provision for gender. A Nigerian policy-maker in this study contrasts the international policy context with lack of national progress and, like Kwesiga (2002) attributes lack of progress to socio-cultural barriers:

> *It is an acknowledged understanding all over the world, that women are disadvantaged in education and ours is not different. We have attended international meetings, conventions, listened to the people's responses. We discovered that we have not achieved much and like all other African countries, we equally have a socio-cultural barrier mitigating against the advancement of women.*

5.2 Widening women's access and participation in higher education: Enablers

5.2.1 Socio-economic and cultural advantages: The triangle of family, school and community

The social and cultural capital of the extended family, encouragement and structured advice at school, plus strategic interaction with role models in institutions and in the extended family play a crucial role in determining women's access to higher education. Attendance at elite, single sex schools is also a factor.

Higher education seems to have a 'multiplier effect' (Dyhouse, 2002). That is, once people have experienced it, they encourage those around them to do the same. This has often been researched and theorised in relation to the influence of social class on higher education choice (Ball et. al., 2002). In this study, young women with parents and/or siblings who attended university were more likely to aspire to higher education.

South African students relay how there had been a normalised expectation in their families:

> *It was never really a choice. I always wanted to go to university since I can remember and I was encouraged by my parents. I wanted to get a tertiary education.*

> *I always knew I was going to go to university, it was almost a given thing. My dad was at university and so was my mum, so I was expected to go.*

Traditionally, upward social mobility via higher education has been perceived as an emancipatory form of personal and social improvement (Makhubu, 1998). Improved literacy rates in Sri Lanka as a consequence of social welfare policies raised aspirations for upward social mobility. Equally, young women from Asian backgrounds in South Africa report considerable support to enter higher education as this was seen as a way of developing the capital of the community as a whole. It seems as if many of the students that we interviewed are located within a triangle designated by their family, their school/university and their community (Tamboukou and Ball, 2002). Their decisions and identities are shaped by public and private narratives in their immediate communities. Two South African students report:

> *…from a family point of view, if I did not go to university it would have been absolutely terrible, it would not have been acceptable at all… academics is very, very highly regarded in my family and so too in my community and society and it's very culturally backed. I mean if you don't go to university it is just not acceptable.*

> *…my dad insisted. He said he doesn't care what we study at university as long as we go there because the only way we can better our family, better our community is through education.*

Affective and material support from the family and the state are seen as essential components of participation. A student in Sri Lanka relates the financial sacrifices that her family - particularly her mother - made to send her to university:

> *I had a lot of financial obstacles. Coming to Colombo meant a lot of expenses. My mother pawned most of her things to send me here.*

A Nigerian student also cites family sacrifices:

> *My father prefers not to have food to eat but will do anything to educate his children to the highest level.*

A Sri Lankan policy-maker observes how higher education is seen as an essential step in social mobility:

> *Higher education can provide opportunities for upward social mobility, a career path and improved life chances make higher education a kind of "family survival" strategy for the majority of middle and low income Sri Lankans.*

A female student in Uganda rehearses parental messages about the importance of educational investment:

> *It was personal morale coupled with advice from parents that encouraged me to join University. Without education it's difficult to have good jobs and income.*

Higher education is often perceived as a cornerstone of nation-building in post-colonial developing countries (Gray, 1999). A Ugandan student reports a sense of duty to her community that was facilitated by the wider international community:

> *I liked the field of academia and I also got government sponsorship. I wanted education in order to assist my village because my area has been lagging behind. …I was one of the first beneficiaries of a project called 'Mustard Seed Project'. This is a religious organisation based in UK. Majority of the beneficiaries were girls.*

It appears that poverty and socio-economic background combine with gender and race to structure higher educational opportunities.

5.2.2   De-traditionalisation

Detraditionalising processes can facilitate women's participation in higher education. Some young women report detraditionalising influences emanating from their fathers. A Sri Lankan student relates the difference in aspirations between her father and mother:

> *My father believes in women's rights. So he encouraged me a lot. My mother is sometimes worried about finding a husband for me.*

A South African student relates how her father introduced her to Gender Studies:

…the psychology I decided on because I wanted to be a child psychologist. But I needed a second major, and my Dad suggested Gender Studies he was like, this is something that could help you.

A Ugandan student also acknowledges her father's role in her entry into higher education:

There is a long background to it - my father is a Moslem but he is among those few who have one wife but we are two girls. Traditionally, he should need a heir who is a boy but he wasn't interested, that is how I grew up knowing that I have to be as good as a boy. So I opted for gender.

Yet questions still remain whether enhancing educational opportunities for women is leading to detraditionalisation in wider civil society. Joshi and Pushpanadham (2001) believe that educational opportunities for women in India have brought transformational change in social and domestic relationships. However, Jayaweera (1997) points out how, in spite of being university educated, many Asian women continue to internalise negative gender norms and passively accept oppressive social practices including dowry deaths, female feticide and infanticide. This corresponds with observations from a Sri Lankan academic in this study who believes that women are entering the professions in greater numbers, but that this is not contributing to detraditionalisation:

So you wonder then what has education accomplished to this country socially. Professionally yes, we have achieved a lot but socially we are going back. So that's why I say it is a paradox.

5.2.3   Links with the community; Outreach programmes and role models

Outreach programmes and links between schools and universities have a positive impact on encouraging women to enter higher education. This is noted by many South African students:

One of the lecturers … came to speak to us at school when I was in standard 9. And she explained about the Geomatics[3] course and it seemed like an interesting thing to do.

Exposure to women role models as academics, managers and professionals was perceived as important. It was reported that female contribution to scholarship is not always recognised. A South African student describes how students need to start associating academic authority with women as well as men:

…a lot of them sort of don't really expect to be in a position where they are learning from a woman as an authority figure. I think it is definitely important to have female lecturers as well and to also break that thing of men in control of knowledge.

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[3] Using the latest satellite, laser and information technology, Geomatics professionals are involved in planning, conducting and managing activities related to land and engineering surveying, information systems, land development and planning, land reform, law and commerce.

5.2.4   Raising aspirations and challenging gender stereotyping

Agency is perceived as important, with numerous comments about the need to raise young women's aspirations. Many informants comment on how young women are socialised to consider themselves as wives and mothers and that there are still strong beliefs that these roles are incompatible with professional life. A policy-maker in Tanzania relates how women need to aim higher:

> *The challenge is, I think with the females themselves, that many students they shy away themselves, there is nothing, which is preventing females from joining our universities. So the challenge is that we should do whatever we can to make the females get interested and work hard towards getting into the university, assisted by the affirmative action.*

Raising aspirations has happened for several decades in Nigeria. Back in 1987, Akpan observed that 'The achievement of higher education is perhaps one of the greatest desires in the hearts of most young Nigerians today', (1987:545). In this study, high educational aspirations are a feature of the Nigerian students. A young woman student recognises that personal ambitions are reinforced or even constructed by the educational capital of family networks:

> *Because from my childhood, I had been nursing the ambition to enter university and besides I don't have any other option than to enter university… Like I have many relations that are in or have passed out of the university. They are like role models and I know that there is something about having higher education and the way Nigeria is today, university degree is the best.*

Whereas Nigerian female students in this study display considerable educational drive, Biraimah's study (1994) argues that educational ambition is gendered and notes that, once entered in universities, Nigerian men and women's career aspirations are vastly different. Biraimah discusses how male students, regardless of class, maintained extremely high educational goals, while females, who came primarily from high socio-economic status families, held less elitist goals. Taking an individual/agentic, rather than a social/ structural stance, a female Nigerian student berates women for their poverty of aspiration:

> *The problems lie more with the female; then I don't think that they are being denied any access, just that most of them do not aspire beyond secondary school level or some get pregnant along the way and drop out of school.*

The theme of blaming individual women for their under-representation pervaded this study. Achieving women who had ambition and social privilege were often intolerant of others who did not display the same characteristics or have the same advantages.

5.3 Constraints to women's access and participation in higher education

5.3.1 Low participation rates in primary and secondary schooling

Higher education is inextricably linked with primary and secondary education. The pool of women qualified to enter higher education is often low because of low participation rates of girls in basic education. High rates of attrition in primary and secondary are an ongoing problem.

A Tanzanian academic emphasises the need to strengthen interventions at earlier educational stages:

> *That is at primary level because in some areas parents need to be educated to send girls to school although it is not considered economical in their villages. At secondary level, girls' school number is low. This should be increased. So due to those problems at primary and secondary level, as a result, at university stage there is no pool from which to choose.*

A Ugandan student argues that affirmative action programmes at tertiary level could act as incentives to girls at primary and secondary levels:

> *The rate of girls dropping out after primary is very high so it is important to redress that by encouraging those who reach 'A' levels to continue to university.*

Much activity has taken place at community level in Uganda. For example, from 1998-2000, the Ugandan Alliance for Community Action in Female Education brought together a network of community, governmental, local, international and non-governmental organisations to work together to improve girls' education. They found that education programmes must be trusted by the local community (Kikampikaho and Garrow, 2004).

Violence, in the form of conflict is also noted as a major barrier to girls' and women's education. For example, in Northern Uganda, many schools closed due to insecurity and girl soldiers were abducted during their primary education (Mazurana, 2004). The problem of girls out of school, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, will continue to undermine initiatives to increase enrolment in higher education.

5.3.2 Social class, poverty, ethnicity and lack of preparedness for higher education

Bernstein's earlier observation (1970) that education cannot compensate for society can usefully be recalled in relation to the myriad challenges involved in encouraging more women to participate in higher education in low-income countries. It is hard to theorise barriers to access without resorting to deficit models. The poor, whether classified as the working class in industrialised countries such as the UK, or uneducated rural communities in Africa and Asia, are disadvantaged in relation to education at all levels.

The access agenda combines an invitation to women to leave their pasts behind and to belong to a new place, which, according to Walkerdine (2003:238), is also an invitation to 'feel shame about what one had been before'. For many, this can mean losing connection with their original communities, while never being fully accepted into new and more privileged communities.

Material poverty is sometimes conflated with poverty of aspiration, with poor families negatively implicated in the educational failure of their children. A challenge is how to recognise socio-cultural impediments without attributing blame and overlooking structural barriers. It is not sufficient simply to lift the barrier. One must also examine the nature of power relations that construct and maintain the barrier in the first place (Levitas, 1999).

Poverty was specifically cited by twenty six of our informants as a major barrier to accessing higher education. Traditional socio-cultural practices were also frequently cited in this study as impediments to women's education. Kwesiga (2002) reveals the importance of understanding the specific contexts in order to identify localised solutions to women's access to education. She too argues that change must begin at the familial level, involving parents and extended family. A Sri Lankan student explains how parental attitudes restrict women's independence:

> *Parents are protective of the daughters. We can't freely attend to our work, our interests, because they don't want us going out on our own. It's very restrictive. I mean, they have to be protective of children, but it curtails our freedom to do what we like.*

A theme permeating this study is how women's responsibilities in the private domain frequently disrupt possibilities for them to participate fully in the public domain. Girls and young women are often expected to take considerable domestic responsibility (Dunne and Leach, 2005). An academic in Tanzania describes how the gendered distribution of housework disadvantages girls educationally:

> *…you know the female students are the disadvantaged especially at the lower end of learning at Primary School, Secondary School because they are the people who work hard at home more than what boys do. So they have little time to study and a consequence of course is that they will score less marks.*

A Sri Lankan academic comments on how young women from poor, rural backgrounds might have the academic ability to succeed, but are hindered by lack of social capital:

> *Academically female students are sound, get more merit and are committed. Socially - females are average, their beliefs differ according to their class differences, their mannerisms differ from male students on the whole and depend on one's socio-economic class. Village folk (females) fall more in to trouble than others because they are inexperienced.*

It appears that social class as well as gender continues to disadvantage certain groups and privilege others.

5.3.3   Pregnancy, motherhood and early marriage: Inflexible structures and changing bodies and lifestyles

Women's bodies are characterised as forever changing and unreliable. This makes them unstable educational consumers. It also contributes to a gendered educational pyramid with the gender imbalance increasing in tertiary education, compared with primary education.

Higher education is often seen as being incompatible with women's bodies and lifestyles. It is felt that there is insufficient structural and social flexibility to cope with early marriage, childbirth and care, pregnancy and menstruation. Chilisa (2002) documents how expulsion of pregnant girls is a legacy of missionary activity in sub-Saharan Africa. She also argues that women's bodily functions are frequently used to control their life chances. A senior manager in Uganda suggests that school facilities are still not geared up to coping with girls'/women's bodies:

> *children have difficulties in accessing education because of problems associated with their biological nature e.g. poor sanitary facilities in schools discourage girls from going back to school…*

Kanyike, Akankwasa and Karungi (2004) also relate how menstruation interrupts girls' schooling in Uganda. They estimate that girls between the ages of 11-14 are absent for an average of three to five days a month due to their menstrual period and the lack of facilities in schools. They also cite cultural practices e.g. in the Kalangala district, menstruating women are made to sit on a pile of sand for absorption, leaving them immobile for three to four days. A Ugandan academic suggests that counselling facilities could help to overcome some of the difficulties associated with shame and taboo:

> *We need to create an environment where the affected students can receive counsel in a preventive manner…If someone is having a menstruation, she should not stay in the room and suffer. If someone is pregnant, someone should talk to her.*

Adeyemi and Akpotu (2004) relate how poor families in (largely Northern) Nigeria often have to give their daughters up to early marriage in order to raise money for the sons' education. The cultural practice of early marriage in many developing societies was discussed with considerable frustration. A Nigerian policy-maker describes how social attitudes to girls' education is regionalised and how there is little structural provision for dealing with dropout from school:

> *The course of (girls' education)… is so frustrating, the girl will finish secondary school; the next thing that comes to her parents' mind is to marry her out. Again by the time she starts babying … it takes a lot of commitment to take the woman back into the system. That is one major thing that is affecting the access of women. Then another area we have seen again is that there is this drop out rate, high drop out rate; by the time they finish secondary school, very few of them move on. A lot of them drop by the wayside and there is no provision within the system to cater for those that drop, except in some few areas, that can see school of continuing education. In the north here it's not very common.*

Retention problems caused by pregnancy are noted by a Ugandan academic:

> *One thing is the usual biological problems, sometimes girls get pregnant and fall by the way side…*

generally when you look around in primary schools you find girls are very many. Sometimes they are even more than the boys, but most times because of what I called the biological problems, they tend to drop out.

Another Ugandan academic also comments on the disruption to studies caused by pregnancy:

On our programme the women compete quite favourably with men, they are doing well, except when they join the programme when they become pregnant and they have to take a break to have a child and so on. It may affect their progress.

A Dean believes that it is social stigmatisation rather than structural difficulties that influences young women's re-entry into school after pregnancy:

And then if they had a sexual encounter, the woman is at a greater risk of getting pregnant and when they get pregnant, they are extremely embarrassed. Many of them step out of school because they can't stand the stigmatisation that would be generated among fellow students. Even when they come back, they are overly apologetic and overly embarrassed. So these must affect their performance.

The ancient madonna/whore binary was also noticeable. If women are not embedded in traditional gender roles, then they are seen as the dangerous 'other'. There appear to be beliefs in some communities that link women's sexuality to education. Higher education is thought to produce a certain type of sexuality that is perceived as undesirable or dangerous. A Ugandan senior manager relates an interesting juxtaposition:

The different cultural practices performed by different societies in Uganda impinge on the girl-child education opportunities e.g. among the Karamajong of Northeastern Uganda, a learned woman is considered to be a prostitute, so girls from childhood grow up without desire for higher education.

Elaborate mythologies to deter women from entering higher education in the UK have also been well-documented (Dyhouse, 1995). Women's education has always been resisted by particularly patriarchal communities, as it can offer women financial independence, empowerment and the possibility of alternative lifestyles that are threatening to male domination (Davies, 2004).

5.3.4   Investment in sons, rather than in daughters

Poverty often means that families have to make strategic decisions about who should enter education. Investment involves risk. There is still a strong belief that sons will yield a higher return on the investment and that women represent a poor risk. Fears of wasting women's education have also been debated for many years in the West (Dyhouse, 2002). Poverty means that higher educational benefits are often discussed purely in economic, rather than social terms. A Sri Lankan staff member describes this pattern in relation to rural communities:

I have also found that expectations of families from girls are much lower…especially in rural areas. They feel that we don't expect you to do better, maybe you can go for a small job, you should not go to university whereas maybe we should send our son.

Another Sri Lankan student refers to the age-old cultural practice of investing in boys, as they are perceived as 'agents of genealogical sustenance' (Adeyemi and Akpotu, 2004:362):

> *I feel when it comes to girls, parents worry about marriage. So, parents tend to discourage girls from doing higher studies. I think if families are poor, boys get priority over girls. They think boys are the best, they will give the back-up to the parents.*

This feature is also noted by a senior manager in Uganda:

> *Increasing poverty levels in households contribute in shaping attitudes and perceptions of men and women e.g. amidst scarce resources a boy child will be preferred to go to school and study while a girl child will be recommended for marriage in order for the parents to acquire bride price. That is the reason why there are so many early dropout cases for girls from schools.*

5.4   Interrogating specific interventions for enhancing access

5.4.1   Affirmative action: opportunities and stigmatisation

Affirmative action is one type of intervention for change in equity driven political agendas. Writing in the USA, Tierney (1997) classified three positions of affirmative action: a compensatory procedure to address injustices of the past; a corrective tool to address present discrimination; and an intervention to promote social equality and diversity. Programmes tend to consist of organisational goals for increasing the representation of historically excluded groups, timetables for their achievement and the introduction of strategies and practices to support the targets (Bobo, 1998; Konrad and Hartmann, 2001).

Affirmative action programmes and pre-sessional courses have played a positive role in enhancing female participation in Uganda and Tanzania. The programmes can sometimes highlight how academic potential is not developed in women earlier on in their education. A Tanzanian lecturer compares the pedagogy in mainstream education to that of the pre-entry-schemes:

> *…we find those who undergo this training it brings new ideas, I think it brings new ideas [and challenges] the perception that there other problems we thought differently but using affirmative action for example, pre-entry training, what we are seeing now is that there is something wrong within training of science. Because why these girls who finish the pre-entry course most of the time become best students. Why, why? It means there is something wrong with the way science is taught.*

Affirmative action is perceived by some as a short-term solution to a long-term problem. A Tanzanian academic questions the sustainability of the interventions:

> *I think that is a good direction, but that is almost you can call it a remedial action. It does not address the primary problem.*

Whereas another Tanzanian academic constructs the remediation ethos as a type of confidence-building:

> *Since they have shown positive results I think the affirmative action programmes are important. It is so because they build confidence for females. The programmes help them to understand that they can make it in higher education given the fact that they could not perform as male students in high school.*

While some affirmative action programmes have been successful in addressing gender, this has not been intersected with socio-economic background. Hence, the beneficiaries tend to be from more elite sections of society, as they possess the social capital that enables them to access benefits. This is evocative of the Assisted Places Scheme in Great Britain[4] in which fewer than ten per cent of the young people had fathers who were manual workers (Whitty, Power and Edwards, 1998).

Naidoo (1998) questions whether the students most likely to be selected for affirmative action schemes are those who are perceived as being most like the mainstream and therefore represent a reduced risk. Makerere found that ninety per cent of the beneficiaries of affirmative action come from more privileged families, who are the minority population category. This highlights the problem of treating women as a unified group with a common identity. It overlooks difference and diversity among women. A Ugandan policy-maker argues that the most socially marginalised groups do not always participate in access programmes:

> *The 1.5 scheme has been a very positive contribution towards attaining gender policy in higher education because the number of girls have since increased. But in my opinion, I feel that the scheme doesn't benefit the poor.*

A Ugandan NGO member also feels that the scheme needs to be more effectively intersected with socio-economic backgrounds:

> *It only benefits the urban rich girls who would otherwise be able to pay their own school fees at the University…The scheme should be redesigned. It should be school specific and/or district specific such that the rural poor girls can also benefit.*

The Ugandan team also reported that affirmative action programmes are making more impact on arts and humanities subjects than on science and technology (Kwesiga et al, 2005).

Affirmative action is often perceived as a challenge to quality (Morley, 2004). Many of the Nigerian informants discursively locate affirmative action in opposition to merit and indeed as a form of unfairness, believing that success was not achieved according to a just system of awards. Gender, in their view, was not to be used as an excuse for under-achievement. Defending the discourse of meritocracy works against systematic structural changes and analysis of pedagogy and the curriculum or indeed of male privilege. A Nigerian student argues against special treatment:

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[4] The Assisted Places Scheme in Great Britain that was introduced by the Conservative Government in the 1970s, and was phased out by the Labour Government in 1998. The aim was to enable academically able children, particularly from the inner city areas, with limited financial means, to attend private schools. In 1995, total public expenditure on the scheme was £104 million pounds.

The thing is that if I were to suggest that the university should do certain things for females, I would not want it; you know that there is this case of people treating you specially, you know, getting special treatment … For instance, if I should say that because we are female students that we should be getting extra lessons or special treatment, it would not be fair; think about it, yes we are female and they are male but nevertheless, they also need to understand, they also need help. So, there has to be a line that is drawn between us; yes, we can do with some encouragement but we don't want it to go over board and all that.

The belief in individualism, the concept that people's life chances are determined by ability and effort, rather than by power relations, was noticeable in many Nigerian responses. An emerging anti-welfarism is exemplified in attacks on dependency culture. According to Konrad and Hartmann (2001:420), 'traditional attitudes to women are likely to be associated with negative attitudes to Affirmative Action'. A Nigerian student in this study believes that affirmative action programmes could make women passive and dependent:

…it will not be wise to now do everything for the female and think things will work out that way because in spite of everything, the female has to be independent to some certain level and if she gets to a place where everything is being done for her, the product at the end of the day will not be worth it. So they have to really think about it. Yes help us, but don't go too far.

Affirmative action implies changes in benefit streams and can be perceived as a form of 'reverse discrimination' (Jordaan, 1995: 53). Affirmative action programmes can sometimes be perceived as charity, welfare benefit or preferential treatment that automatically signifies inferiority (Fraser, 1997; Monroe, 1991).

There has been some backlash and stigmatisation in relation to affirmative action. This often takes place at the informal level through name-calling, assumptions of academic inferiority and negative constructions of identity. In the US, affirmative action programmes in Michigan and Los Angeles were effectively dismantled as a consequence of high profile legal cases in which rejected white students sued the universities for unlawful discrimination (Milem et al., 2004). Backlash was less structural and more interpersonal in this study. A Tanzanian academic reports name-calling of women students who enter via affirmative action programmes:

First is social challenge. This is because the females entering through these programmes are dubbed names like "VIDU – the short form of 'Viwango Duni[5]" (i.e. low merits), which may tend to make them feel inferior to other students and also discourage others to join the programmes.

This raises questions about the quality of the learning environment for traditionally under-represented groups once they enter higher education. There is a missing conceptual link between diversity and learning. The educational benefits to all students of creating a more diverse higher education population are frequently overlooked (Gurin et al., 2002). In the USA, Johnson and Lollar (2002) found that exposure to diversity positively enhances students' cultural awareness and democratic citizenship. In this study, nobody commented on the benefits to the wider population. They tended to focus on the advantages or dis-benefits to the recipients.

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[5] This means something below standard, of poor quality.

Quota systems exist throughout the Commonwealth. However, they are often problematic. For example, Adeyemi (2001) notes how Nigeria has over 150 ethnic groups, with significant regional variation in educational attainment and opportunities. Hence, the catchment area, rather than gender, is one of the admissions criteria. However, in most cases the educationally disadvantaged states in the north of Nigeria could not find the 20 per cent of suitably qualified candidates.

Quota systems were introduced by the Ministry of Education in Sri Lanka in 1974 for the purpose of university admissions (De Silva, 1974). The main aim was to challenge spatial inequities and to favour candidates from rural and/or socially disadvantaged backgrounds. However, a senior academic in Sri Lanka comments on how the district quota initiatives only partially confronts social class and gender disadvantages:

> *Though Mahapola Scholarships are given to women students too, some very low-income students who qualify and are required to be in residence cannot afford to live away from their homes. These students tend to drop out due to economic pressures or lack of family support to continue their education. Very low-income men students tend to supplement the Mahapola aid, by undertaking part time employment. Women students tend to be "hostel" bound in their living quarters and are invariably "full time" students with no other income support.*

However a Sri Lankan policy-maker describes how a rural background can seriously impede participation in higher education, even when the young woman is well-qualified:

> *Impeding factors are for example their rural background. When a girl comes from a rural school , even if she gets 3 A's she is reluctant to come. That is one of the things that impedes. Rural background. And in our country if you say those days and maybe even now 75 per cent of our people are rural, 25 per cent of our people are urban then the majority of them come from rural backgrounds. Then in addition to that we have a quota system for university admission. 40 per cent is merit 60 per cent is on the district quota. That is we take from all districts 60 per cent. So therefore we are giving the quota 60 per cent. 55 per cent districts and 5 per cent underprivileged districts.*

Some informants believed that quota systems reinforce stigmatisation. A student in South Africa comments on the negative equity of benefiting from quotas in affirmative action schemes:

> *I was told by a fellow colleague that I would not have such a problem getting a job because of affirmative action. And I took that so harshly because I don't want to get a job because of the quota I am going to fill up, because of some tick that I am going to be on somebody's register…that's what really disheartens me because at the end of the day I am going to fit into a position and think they are paying me this salary but they have got somebody under me doing my work.*

There was very little mention in this study of disability as a structure of inequality. Just one Ugandan academic makes a reference to it and considers the gender implications:

> *Among the disadvantaged people, we have some who are very bright and you know if it is a girl who is disadvantaged, the situation is even worse. So if we make facilities easier for them, they can also aspire to come and improve their lives. There was a disabled girl who used to have difficulty walking*

around the campus. The university bought her a wheel chair. There are many girls of that nature in the villages. Sometimes they are ignored because they are disabled.

So, it appears that affirmative action programmes are achieving some success in promoting quantitative change. However, the quality of the learning environment for new student constituencies requires closer examination. Furthermore, it is important to attempt to intersect different structures of inequality in order for these programmes to reach some of the most socially marginalised groups.

5.5 Women entering 'non-traditional' disciplines: Gendered subject choice, visibility and stereotyping

There is ongoing horizontal segregation in the disciplines, with under-representation of women staff and students in science, engineering and technology. This has been the subject of much research and policy activity internationally (Bebbington, 2002; Etzkowitz, Kemelgor, and Uzzi, 2000; European Commission Directorate-General for Research, 2003; Fielding, Glover, and Smeaton, 1997; Greenwood, 2000; Huyer and Westholm, 2005; Rose, 1998). However, there are limited data about women in middle and lower income countries, and few studies that place gender and science within a wider global framework with consideration of the consequences that this has for social and national development (King and Hill, 1993; Rosser, 1999 and UNESCO, 1999).

A challenge to reviewing the position of women in science internationally is the lack of systematically collected and analysed data and gender disaggregated, published statistics (Rees, 1998). Some studies in the West have been criticised for operating within a remediation or deficit construction of women in science i.e. aiming to coach women to 'fit in' to science and technology, via confidence-building, career guidance and mentoring (see Cronin et al, 1997). More recently, emphasis has been placed on changing the culture of science that could be exclusionary (Bebbington, 2002). The masculine culture of science includes the number of male scientists and teachers, male examples used in lectures and course materials, images in textbooks and gendered language (Rosser, 1990).

There have also been debates about what constitutes a 'non-traditional' subject area. In an international study of how different disciplines are classified 'non-traditional' for one sex or another, the WISTA project (Women in Science and Technology in Australia) found that if one sex is represented by less than a third of those involved in the discipline, it may be designated 'non-traditional' for the under-represented sex (Byrne, 1993). Under-representation can lead to practical and social difficulties, with girls and women facing attacks on the 'normality' of their sex-role identity.

It appears that even when women are slowly entering 'non-traditional' disciplines, certain embodied identities are irreconcilable with the subject matter. In the gendered thinking associated with the disciplines, this can mean masculinisation if women enter science. Women entering non-traditional disciplines are often subjected to negative stereotyping, as academic disciplines are discursively associated with gender-appropriate behaviour. A South African

student notes how women are perceived to be transgressing socially prescribed rules on femininity:

> *…like engineering, there are more guys than girls, and you get stereotyped as a girl. I know the engineering girls they always said they are butch, the ugly ones you know*.

Gender is still a major determinant in subject choice. Women students report struggles to convince families and teachers. In these two examples, the fathers were the agents of traditionalisation. A South African student relates:

> *I decided okay well I will do geology because I really like rocks and structures and the earth and my Dad said "No you can't do that because it's a very male dominated field and it is not safe for a young female."*

A Nigerian student observes:

> *Before I applied … my dad asked me what I was hoping to study. I told him Architecture but he did not really want me to go for it because he was of the view that ladies don't really get jobs in it nowadays, but in spite of that, I still saw the need for going for it because I love constructing.*

A South African student also describes attitudinal problems:

> *…there were a few guys along the way who was like, why're you doing engineering? You know girls should stay at home and clean and cook. And I was like, that is such rubbish. That is such a medieval idea.*

A Tanzanian staff member illustrates how disciplines are still heavily gendered:

> *…there is an attitude of girls thinking that science is something for males, which is not true. I don't agree with it.*

A Sri Lankan academic discusses the under-representation of men in arts subjects as this is considered incompatible with masculinity:

> *I feel that particularly more male students refrain from entering the Arts stream because it is not appealing to them, not falling within their purview of "male" jobs. More females study in the Art stream. This year (2003/4) there had been 400 out of a total of 500 female students studying in this Faculty.*

A Ugandan academic describes how social attitudes locate scientific study in opposition to women's traditional roles and hence restrict young women's aspirations:

> *Women have been given a very narrow agenda and then very many of them think science is specifically for the men. So they don't even try it. Okay? And then the demands placed on women. Many parents do not tell their women children that for example "I want you to be a doctor". They're telling them "I want you to become a good wife"*

Another Ugandan academic believes that public misinformation about science and technology means that the professions are associated with physical strength:

> *Most people think that in the engineering girls are going to be climbing trees, jumping or carrying these machines and all that but that is not the case. It is a perception but it is not the case, an engineer is a planner, designer who directs the technicians.*

For some students, subject choice was arbitrary, for others it was highly strategic. A Sri Lankan student describes how her father's social and cultural capital helped to decode the system for her:

> *I asked my father. We have international relations, political science, geography, sociology and economics. Then my father told me to do international relations and economics and political science. So I did according to him. So I did international relations, political science and economics in my first year and special for international relations and economics. He told me to do economics. He said that I might have a better chance.*

Whereas a South African Geomatics student whose parents did not attend university themselves relates her process of negative decision-making:

> *I did not know what I wanted to do when I was in school, but I knew what I did not want to do. Like I did not want to do medicine. And I really did not want to do business.*

In Sri Lanka, a staff member in the Faculty of Law reports that passivity or preoccupation with social status and rewards in the labour market drove subject choice, rather than an interest in the discipline:

> *There were probably about 10-12 students and we were supposed to be hiring lawyers. So we said "so why did you choose the law?" and most of them said "because my parents wanted me to". Very few said, "because I think it is exciting". You come in coached in the sense and say that, "I think I can change society; I think law is a tool which we can utilise". None of that.*
>
> *My sense is that the youngsters don't look at the field or that they choose what they are passionate about it. Now even Medicine... very few of the students really think about what the medical profession entails. It's really the perks they look at. It's social status, it's social mobility, it's about the money they think they can make, it's about marriage, for women it is part of the dowry…,*

The reference to the dowry suggests that gaining access to higher education feeds rather than challenges traditional gender relations (Jayaweera, 1997). For some, it simply provides more capital in the marriage market.

Fear of mathematics is reported by students and academics as a reason for many women's reluctance to enter and continue studying science, engineering or technology. This is an area that has been well-theorised (Burton, 1991; Cooper and Dunne, 1999; Walkerdine, 1998). Mathematics is a powerful educational filter or gatekeeper to the sciences that remains gendered in many societies. Research in the UK and in the USA indicates that young women tend to end

their mathematics education earlier than their male counterparts (Boaler, 1997; AAUW, 1998). A Tanzanian professor relates a similar story:

> *There are those who say mathematics to girls is difficult. It is meant for men. So by the time they reach form four, the number who would qualify to reach sciences and join Engineering finally had already dropped significantly.*

There is a perception that if a subject is hard then it is not suitable for women. The hard/soft binary thinking around academic subjects is gendered. The challenge is for women to push through what is socially accepted as 'hard'. A South African student describes her uncomfortable relationship with mathematics:

> *There was a time when I really wanted to stop, I think that was the middle of last year, but I think it was probably because maths was so hard and I was not enjoying that aspect.*

Low numbers of women in science and technology classes and fears of visibility often inhibit their participation. Women are often silent or reluctant to make verbal contributions- especially when they are numerically in the minority (Seymour and Hewitt, 1997). Acker (1994) observes that women in the academy are simultaneously invisible and extra-visible. Furthermore, one woman comes to represent all women, so if she fails, this is attributed to the deficiencies of her entire social group. A Nigerian student describes her fear of visibility:

> *Me, being the only female in the class, I don't talk so much because it would be like, you being the only one, what do you want to say! The guys talk more because they are more in class than the girls.*

Verbal and physical space are often reported as being male-dominated. This was witnessed in the project's observations that are documented in the next section. A Sri Lankan student explains her reluctance to work in computer laboratory:

> *You know the computer lab is always dominated by men, so it's a little uncomfortable for us to go in sometimes.*

The length and perceived lack of social interaction of some science courses are seen as unattractive by some female students. Over one-third of students in a UK study believed that their science courses were not equipping them with communication skills (PRISM, 1994). Other studies have reported that students find science subjects taught in a way that is dull, uninspiring, and unappealing (Tobias, 1990; Strenta et al., 1994, Seymour and Hewitt, 1997). A Ugandan student of veterinary medicine relates:

> *Another problem is that the course takes a very long time. Five years is quite a long time as compared to other courses. By the time you leave, you are aged. So you find social problems when you get out. Another issue is that you are always confined to animals and not people (humans). This is also a social problem.*

Science and technology are perceived as essential to economic development. Hence, Nigeria has an admissions policy of 60:40, Science to Arts and Humanities, in higher education. A Nigerian senior manager discusses how this policy could discriminate against women:

The government wants 60:40 Science versus Arts. Basically, we know ladies tend to like Arts field disciplines more than Science in which case, by the time you allocate 60 per cent of admission to science, you are already limiting the number of ladies that can come in because you have only 40 per cent for that group out of which boys will also compete there with the ladies.

Reasons for excluding young women from certain aspects of Agriculture are sometimes rationalised in pragmatic terms. A male lecturer in Nigeria explains:

They (female students) are expensive to supervise… when we travel, we have to book a hotel. If we are all men, we could all sleep in the same room. That will save money. Whereas when we go with a lady, she will take a room for herself.

The argument about lack of facilities for women further highlights how higher education is normed towards male participants. It is also evocative of arguments used in the 19th century to exclude women from UK higher education (Dyhouse, 1995).

Several informants believe that attitudes and trends are changing as a Nigerian academic suggests:

…it is very encouraging to note that more girls get into disciplines that we thought belonged exclusively to men, example engineering, all aspects of it. Petroleum, electrical etc. and they do very well. And you can't even count the number of female students studying medicine. They are so many now unlike former times when they were concentrated in the humanities and social sciences.

The South African team also note progress, 'In 2003, only 26 per cent of the students registered in the Engineering and Built Environment Faculty were women, although it should be noted that this represents an increase of nearly 300 per cent in real numbers over the past ten years. The greatest increase has been amongst black women entering the faculty' (Riordan et al., 2005).

Young women are entering 'non-traditional' subjects, but this is often accompanied by battles with family and peers about what is considered gender appropriate. Once they enter, they have further struggles to be taken seriously – particularly by other students. Women's minority status in some science and technology subjects can create an additional burden for women.

5.6   Curriculum transformation

5.6.1   Gender mainstreaming

Gender sensitisation and gender-mainstreaming programmes are viewed as essential strategies for gender equity in Uganda and Tanzania. Initiatives, principles and guidelines have been fairly well-documented (Bishop-Sambrook, 2000; Jahan, 1995; Kabeer, 2003; Leo-Rhynie, 1999; Mangheni and Beraho, 2002; Rai, 2002; Razavi, 1995; UNDP, 2002; UNESCO, 2002a).

Makerere has a particularly evolved programme, accompanied by logical frameworks, timetables and achievement indicators (Bishop-Sambrook, 2000).

Some informants have a sophisticated understanding of how to incorporate gender into their fields, such as a medical educator in Uganda:

We even have a department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. We have in the wards a male and female side and we are taking into account to know that gender is not forgotten in the training. In addition, we are developing a programme of Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health. Again this will have a gender dimension. We have renovated the entire curriculum to problem based learning and community based education and service. Again this will help address dimensions in gender. When we go to training sites, we have to address the problems of both men and women e.g. accommodation. So we haven't yet found the gender gaps but we address issues. We appreciate that in planning health care needs, we need to include women. We do not have to assume that when you are a doctor, your thinking is gender balanced. So we would like to bring in women in planning and in our faculty as heads of departments, members of committees etc. We haven't yet necessarily prescribed percentages but we intend to include them.

This account incorporates consideration of course content, staffing, professional development, assessment, pedagogy, practical matters, planning, representation, monitoring and evaluation. There has been an integrated, rather than an add-on approach to introducing gender.

Other informants are supportive of initiatives to mainstream gender into the curriculum, but lack information and expertise. The knowledge base of gender studies is often assumed and under-estimated. A Ugandan academic describes how academics had been asked to mainstream gender without being adequately sensitised:

Gender is a very complicated discipline…in patriarchal societies like Uganda, women's issues tend to attract little attention which makes gender unpopular. There is a lack of sensitisation…many people do not know what gender is all about.

A Tanzanian policy-maker also describes the gap between intention and expertise:

It is a good idea but it is hard to implement… it does require experts who are already gender sensitised - maybe women but people who are really knowledgeable.

Some informants believe that some disciplinary fields are more conducive to mainstreaming than others, for example literature and sociology. They fail to see how gender relates to 'hard' sciences. This analysis focuses simply on the factual content of the subject, rather than on pedagogical process, resources, and assessment. A policy-maker from Tanzania questions how to engender sciences:

It is not clear to me how you can engender the curriculum…you are teaching physics…how can you teach gender science or gender perspectives?

For others, gender mainstreaming was interpreted in a very pragmatic or applied way. For example another Tanzanian policy-maker discusses how architects must not assume that kitchens are women-only domains:

> *For example, the department of architecture – we are asked to incorporate gender mainstreaming in architectural designs, for example making the kitchen bigger, so that the wife and husband can go together in the kitchen.*

Other disciplines have been able to integrate a gender analysis more into the theoretical basis of the subject, as a Ugandan student of Agriculture reports:

> *The curriculum is gender sensitive in that a course on gender and agriculture has been introduced in which we are taught to appreciate the fact that balanced development can be achieved if men and women equally participate in activities and share the benefits.*

A Ugandan academic describes the messages relating to positive representation that she tries to communicate when she is training colleagues to mainstream the curriculum:

> *The courses should be gender mainstreamed. For us, we teach people to write to develop materials, so we also talk about that when we are developing materials; that writers should not always put down women, …we tell the writers to give the women a positive representation, take women as people who can be doctors and not only people who can peel 'matooke' and whatever.*

A Sri Lankan lecturer explains the rationale for introducing gender in Economics, emphasising the need to develop a gender-sensitive analysis:

> *We have realised that the gender issue is involved in most of the decision-making in Economics. For example, decision making at the household level, at the community level and also at the national level. So we feel that the courses should be geared towards training the students to become policy analysts in the future market by researching into the different aspects. Therefore it is important that we give them a gender perspective on economic issues. This is a long-term opportunity.*

In Nigeria, a lecturer in Agriculture believes that the lack of organisational policy means that the inclusion of gender depends on the individual staff member's interests:

> *Unfortunately, because agricultural issues in the past used to be a men's affair, few of the lecturers have shown interest in such issues. But in recent times, we have a number of women here that are interested in those issues.*

Many informants argue for the need to reform the curriculum in order to sensitise all students about gender issues. A Sri Lankan staff member suggests:

> *Firstly, curriculum reform to mainstream gender issues and realities, so that a large cohort of men and women students at undergraduate level acquire a mandatory background on these issues, as part of their learning experience.*

Students often express surprise and disappointment about how gender has not been included in their mainstream studies. A South African student relates how her gender courses helped her to recover disqualified discourses:

> *… in Economics they don't ever mention women. Like I have done two years of Economics and nobody ever said,' women have specific needs because of this and this and this. You just hear about capitalism, and making as much money as you can. But then you hear the other side of things, like we have now in the gender and development and how some of those capitalist things actually exploit women.*

So, gender mainstreaming is a widely used, but partially understood and executed concept. Some academic staff had in-depth understandings of the myriad considerations involved in integrating gender in academic disciplines, while others interpreted it on a fairly superficial level. Many knew what they did not know and while they were committed to gender mainstreaming, they felt that they lacked the expertise and professional training to make it happen to a high and meaningful standard.

5.6.2   Gender courses and feminist pedagogy

Within the sixty institutions of higher education in Nigeria, there are five existing centres of Gender/Women's Studies. Women's Studies courses are operating in Uganda and Sri Lanka. Tanzania has courses on gender within faculties and colleges. South Africa also has Gender Studies courses.Women students note how these courses helped them to develop personal and academic skills and competencies that could be transferred into other subjects and to employment. The importance of inclusive pedagogical process is highly appreciated (Mahony, 1988; Morley, 1992). Students often compared the transmission, uni-directional pedagogy of 'mainstream' disciplinary areas to the interactive pedagogy and autobiographical relevance of Women's Studies or Gender Studies. A South African student denotes the difference:

> *I think it is more interactive, more discussion. … you can see a different perspective and where people are coming from and then if you want to argue a point and then you can see it from where they are coming from and say well, you see it like this but if you look at it like this – whereas if the lecturer is just talking, you know, people are going to lose interest when they don't think she is saying what they want to hear.*

There are positive accounts of how gender courses had impacted on students' intellectual and professional development. The relevance of gender courses to women's personal and professional lives was positioned in opposition to traditionally decontextualised forms of knowledge. There was a strong knowledge-self conjunction (Barnett et al, 2001). It also appeared that Women's Studies straddles what Gibbons et al (1994) term Modes 1 and 2 of Knowledge. It is Mode 1 because it contains academic knowledge, but also Mode 2 because it is knowledge created in the context of application. Students note how Women Studies and Gender courses helped them to develop personal and academic skills and competencies that could be transferred into other subjects and to employment. A Sri Lankan student evaluates the transformative effects of her Women's Studies programme:

> *I have become much more proficient in understanding development and gender issues in my work. I am able to deal with my work better. The assignments have really helped me improve my writing*

and I have noticed that I write much more critically - I am able to critique the information I am dealing with. I feel it has also really contributed to my personal development. For instance I applied for this Women's Leadership Conference and I was able to draw on what I have been learning in class to write the essays required. In terms of my personal life, I have become more conscious, maybe I am not directly practising these things as yet, but I am more "in-tune".

The empowering aspects of studying gender are conceptualised in relation to individual and community/social benefits. A Ugandan student believes that her gender course will contribute to women's liberation in wider civil society:

I had a friend, who was taking Gender Studies. During my vacation I was feeling the heart for women who are in the villages, women who are not empowered. My friend used to tell me that if you do Gender and Development, you can get the knowledge of how to help those people; how to stop gender violence. That's how I developed interest for doing Gender and Development.

A Tanzanian student also comments on the wider social benefits of studying gender:

The modules are good for example, if people get more of the gender issues for example the postgraduate students will gain more experience about the gender issues, so that they can transform this to other people or society…So that we can see females are leaders, females are there in management without fear. So I support the programmes and the courses that their programmes will increase awareness about gender issues in our society.

Exposure to gender courses is thought to liberalise students' attitudes. A Sri Lankan student relates how her gender courses challenged homophobia:

I have become much more aware of issues of identity and sexuality. Before I would notice certain things, but perhaps didn't have the language to talk about issues like lesbianism. Now I feel issues of sexuality should be discussed more in the open - people are entitled to different lifestyles.

Visweswaran (1994: 31) challenges researchers to 'learn not only from women's speech, but women's silences as well'. The above informant was the only person in the entire study to mention lesbianism positively. Women's sexuality and relationships were discussed largely within the framework of compulsory heterosexuality.

Women appear to appreciate the academic and personal potential of Gender and Women's Studies course. The course content and feminist pedagogy is thought to enable them to develop transferable analytical and communication skills as well as enabling them to develop a sense of social responsibility.

5.6.3   Social and pedagogical relations: The hidden curriculum

A range of arguments for curriculum transformation are offered by students and staff in this study, particularly relating to attitudinal and behavioural change. A strong sense of a hidden curriculum emerges. One example is the powerful conjunction between gender and ability and achievement.

In this study, there was widespread reporting of negating women's academic abilities and hostility towards women from male students and staff, as a South African student illustrates:

And I mean the guys… think we are absolutely useless. I mean we might score high marks you know in courses, but it is just the fact that they think we are stupid. And even our lecturers, I mean, I have a particular lecturer, who just thinks I am an idiot, and I have no reason, I have given him no reason to think that. But I am not interested in proving him wrong and if he wants to think that, then that's great.

Femaleness is repeatedly perceived as irreconcilable with intellectual authority (Shah, 2001). Another South African student reports negativity towards women staff from male students, thus reinforcing the notion that women are perceived as inauthentic academics:

I have also noticed how we've had maybe two or three female lecturers and how the guys in our class just do not listen to them, they do not respect them. And I mean these women are really good, they are brilliant, they know their stuff, they worked hard they have their PhDs, but guys laugh at them, ridicule them.

Another South African student also comments:

In terms of women lecturers, in my experience, it seems like the men are sort of more in control.

Two Sri Lankan students report discriminatory behaviour from some male lecturers:

There are some who try to put the women down by asking a question and then laughing at us when we can't answer it, or ask something just to put us down.

Some male lecturers look at the women in an odd kind of way. Sometimes you catch them staring at you in an odd way …they laugh to themselves. We feel quite uncomfortable. We can't say what's going on in their minds, what kind of thoughts, vulgar or what, but it happens.

Once again, there is the theme of sexism being hard to capture as it can operate at subtle and informal levels, leaving recipients feeling uncomfortable but unsure of their readings of the situation.

A Ugandan student points out that there is a 'horns' effect towards women and a 'halo' effect towards male students, and that this distorts academic assessment:

The curriculum should be designed in a way that it looks at men and women. Male lecturers need to be gender sensitised so that they can avoid their patriarchal tendencies of thinking that male students are better than female students e.g. there was a situation when two students (a female and male) handed in the same piece of work, the lecturer awarded marks to the male student and cancelled the work of the female student on assumption that the female student had cheated. This in my view was not fair.

This is also noted by a Sri Lankan student:

[Men] hardly attend class. But get their notes from women. I know of several incidents where the boys have copied the tutorial and given it in and they've got higher marks for the same thing.

The demonisation of feminism and backlash are particular problems for change agents (Faludi, 1992). Many women students who opted for Women's/Gender Studies reported hostility towards them from male students. A South African student talks of the negative connotations of feminism:

> *…the guys have a typical response. I was walking up to upper campus and talking to this guy, and it's like what are you studying and I said Law and Gender Studies and it's like "oh no, we have a feminist on our hands" and stuff like that.*

Another South African student describes how the existence of Gender Studies appears to activate male fears and insecurities:

> *Like my guy friends, will be like oh, you're going to Gender, oh okay, go and talk about how men put you down and how you don't need them and da da da… that's what they think Gender Studies is - which is unfortunate.*

Another South African student comments on how Gender Studies is perceived as a discredited academic subject, with a negative equity value in the labour market:

> *I am so tired of answering the question of what I am studying, because if you say gender, people say 'So, there is men and women- what is it that you do? And they sort of write it off as almost a cop-out of a subject choice … 'How can you actually get a job with it? Where can you go, are you just wasting time?*

Anti-feminism was also reported by a Nigerian student:

> *…when you are tagged as a Women's Lib person they see you as way out, deviant person.*

It appears that the social penalties are sometimes high for those individuals who set out to interrogate and challenge gender inequalities.

5.6.4   Assumptions about gender, ability and academic performance

The hidden curriculum is irrational and contradictory. Negative attitudes to women's academic abilities do not correlate with their actual achievements. There were many reports that academic work is rapidly becoming feminised in so far as the dispositions required for scholarship are now heavily perceived as more conducive with socially constructed female behaviour e.g. discipline, diligence, perseverance, commitment to self-improvement. The feminisation of learning is becoming an international concern, with increasing anxieties about boys' and men's academic failure (Epstein et al, 1998). A common belief expressed by students and staff was that women students worked harder than their male counterparts. A Sri Lankan academic reports:

> *I also think that it is by the very fact that women have persevered. I don't know, we find that women are much more committed to what they do. It's the same in the Medical Faculty.*

Another Sri Lankan academic observes that:

Female students are particularly persevering and hard working.

A South African student believes that women are more committed to their studies than men:

I just wrote this exam yesterday, everyone left an hour early, and it was all the guys and at the end it was all the girls left writing. I think we take things a little more seriously …

A Sri Lankan student expresses similar views:

It's always the boys who ask us for notes. They hardly turn up in class. Most of the time they are loitering somewhere.

One explanation for the feminisation of higher education is that it involves delayed gratification and that this is incompatible with masculinity. A Nigerian Dean comments on the 'failing boys' syndrome:

I believe men are not doing well, they feel that education does not bring prosperity quickly and they are not as serious in passing their exams as ladies and things are changing a lot.

Young women's academic success can also sometimes provoke hostility towards them. A Tanzanian student describes how male students are competitive and feel threatened by women's achievements:

The majority of the male students do not like women who perform better than them. If they see that female students perform better academically than them, male students develop a tendency of discriminating female students. Not only that, but also they name female students certain names which, even discourage female students from joining those programmes.

Another aspect of the hidden curriculum was the gendering of classroom participation. Male dominance in the classroom and in the field is seen as a reason why women are silenced and disempowered (Lewis, 1994). A South African student narrates how a male student automatically assumed a leadership role on a fieldwork trip:

We had to go out surveying. The one guy took charge and he ordered everybody around But I think it was more his nature you know, he wanted to show he is the guy - he wants to become a surveyor. But he said what we were going to do.

As mentioned above, male confidence and female lack of confidence were thought to have an impact on students' learning. A Nigerian student describes gendered patterns in students' interaction with lecturers and how women always have to consider the potential for sexual harassment and gendered power relations:

If they have problems or need anything, they (the male students) will not think twice but go to the lecturer and say "Sir, we need this, or we did not understand this class…" they are freer , but for

us, we have to think, meditate on it, "should I go or not, what are the pros and cons? Will I benefit from it, will it be turned into something else?" We really need to think about it before we do. We prefer to get help from fellow students or someone out there who can help.

A Sri Lankan student describes how female silence is not an indicator of disengagement. She too comments on the female peer group as a learning resource:

The boys in my class ask the most number of questions. We don't have a problem with that. But if you take the girls we are concentrating on absorbing the idea during the lecture. Also we are intent on writing notes. It's only after the lecture that we discuss amongst ourselves any questions we have.

A Sri Lankan policy-maker believes that the silencing of women impedes their development of communication skills and that this works against them in the labour market:

It is after female students pass out, that the problem is encountered in the job market. In the private sector, what they want are outgoing people. At interviews, you are required to "sell yourself" in the private sector. Most female students, especially from the social sciences, fare very badly at interviews, since the idea of "selling yourself" goes against cultural norms to which they are used.

It appears that women in higher education frequently have to act in relation to other people's expectations, prejudices and domination. A strategy that is often used is to avoid conflict and danger is to occupy as little space and visibility as possible. Another interpretation of the female silence/male talking binary is that some women do not feel the need to perform in the same way as some men and conserve their energy for the written components of their programmes.

Women report a range of subtle and covert forms of discrimination and prejudice against them from students and staff. It appears that they are often caught in a double bind. If they fail, then this confirms prejudices about women's inferior academic abilities. If they succeed, this makes them threatening and carries the potential danger of feminisation of academic study.

5.7   Staff development: Enablers for women's career development

5.7.1   Internationalism

International networks, exchanges and attendance at conferences, seminars and sabbaticals help to develop women academic staff's careers and professional capacities. It is also important that international networks include representation from low-income countries. A Nigerian professor describes how enhanced access to resources on international sabbatical leave increased her productivity:

I have had three sabbatical leaves in America… I was able to write more papers. It was the early stage of using computers … I could get e-mail too.

One of the major challenges of internationalisation is to open up new possibilities for networking and comparative intellectual work without adding to the problems of brain drain.

5.7.2   Women-only staff development courses

Women-only development programmes such as the HERS-SA scheme in South Africa and the Women into Management workshops organised by the Association of Commonwealth Universities were perceived as particularly empowering for women. A South African staff member comments:

> *What I did gain was a sense of empowerment and my own rights and responsibilities as a woman by listening to and learning with groups of women. And I wasn't as clued up on those things before.*

Another South African staff member relates how the HERS-SA programme sensitised her to gender:

> *I have grown up in quite a male dominated society, and also being in science first, which is also very male dominated. I did not have a problem with that, but I think I viewed it as the norm. Whereas the HERS programme certainly highlighted some of the problems associated with this, and also some of the good things associated with it, but at least I got a bit of an understanding of what the different issues are that are being played out.*

A Sri Lankan academic believes that a women's caucus could also contribute to organisational development:

> *An environment should be created within universities to develop women's caucuses, which discuss women's issues and conduct a regular gender audit for the university.*

The Gender Mainstreaming Programme of Makerere University has a special component focusing on women only. This consists of workshops to enhance their abilities to analyse the institutional environment, devise individual and group strategies for the advancement of women, and there is a specific mandate of the programme to ensure that women enter the decision-making cadre. As a result, three workshops have already been run as follows:
- Self Development workshop for Senior Women Staff held in September 2003.
- 2 Strategic Life Management workshops for Senior Women Staff held in August 2004 and in October 2004.

A rationale for providing women-only space was that women are often silenced in mixed groups, as a Sri Lankan academic observes:

> *Democratic institutions such as Faculties, Senates and Councils exist, but they do not function democratically because members, including women members do not actively participate to make these institutions function democratically. The silence of young women professors and heads of departments and also women deans in these fora is a cause for grave concern.*

Women-only programmes appear to provide the opportunity for women to develop confidence, deepen their analysis of their own situations and gain skills in working strategically towards professional and personal goals.

5.7.3   Networking and community-building

Staff development programmes have formal applications such as professional development, but also provide informal ways to develop social capital in the form of networking. Schein (1994) suggests that alliances and influence networks are important for professional success but that this is not openly admitted by organisational members. Without formal mentoring programmes, it can take organisational members a while to realise the importance of strategic networks. A South African staff member demonstrates this recognition:

> *I have certainly found that it has been, the people that I have met through HERS, mostly women, have been an incredible resource.*

A Nigerian academic also comments on the networking potential of academic conferences:

> *Some conferences that you go to, you may not get a publication but you will get a lot of contacts, and you will get a lot of information.*

The role of networking in the development of social capital is well-documented (Fine, 2001). Networking is seen as a vital component in the knowledge economy. Cooke (2002) suggests the sources of innovation lie in networks of social relationships, that is, knowledge networks. While the internet economy suggests that networking no longer needs to be geographically clustered, it is important for women to be included in opportunities to develop their social capital. Equally, it is important for global knowledge networks to include women from developed and developing economies.

5.7.4   Training as empowerment and capacity-building

Training was frequently constructed as empowerment. This is evocative of Imenda's observations (1995) that academic development programmes should aim to empower students and staff so as to enable them to perform at their maximum potential. A Tanzanian policy-maker stresses the importance of professionally preparing women for leadership:

> *So we don't pick someone just from anywhere and then we say we want to put you here because we want to have gender equity or balance. I think that is not the proper way. The proper way is to empower them so that they have the basic requirement to aspire for the leadership posts. …so encouraging women to aspire for leadership positions without the tools I don't think that is the proper way.*

A South African staff member also stresses the need for training as capacity-building for women:

> *I think a lot has still to be done in empowering women and also in acknowledging that we are also capable of doing things. For instance, my personal observation is that most women, who are black, are holding positions like secretary, and they stay in it for years. And I don't know what programmes are in place to empower them to move up the ladder a bit … there is a lot that can be done to train women for management positions.*

A Sri Lankan academic believes that an essential component of women's staff development should be communication skills, as women's silence prevents them from taking action on gender issues:

Maybe how to speak at meetings and those types of things because they are so quiet. Even if they have something they won't speak up. Even if it is something affecting them personally, they won't talk. So that kind of leadership training, kind of empowerment. Leadership… I was talking to you about the sexual harassment, and nobody seems to know to sort of make them aware. To stand up for their own gender or whatever their rights are, to stand up for them.

These observations above raise a number of complex questions about whether women's silence is a consequence of poor communication skills, or whether it is a strategic choice to avoid visibility and possible conflict. It is never entirely clear if silence is a symbol of powerlessness or resistance.

5.7.5   Mentoring

Mentoring as a form of staff development is gaining international recognition. Programmes for women have been developed to remedy the under-representation of women in senior posts (Cullen and Luna, 1993; Eliason et al, 2000; Jacobi, 1991; Neumark and Gardecki, 1998). Mentoring is conceptualised as providing support and guidance, with mentors seen as critical friends - often in environments that are experienced as alienating or mystifying. Mentors are seen as sponsors, protectors, research coaches and role models (August and Waltman, 2004). The importance of mentoring and role modelling for women's professional development was widely reported in this study. This was occurring formally and informally. A Nigerian staff member comments:

Prof. X is a very good mentor for many of us… She provided the support group. She was a good role model for many women. She mentors quite a lot of women and if you look at the mentoring process, it is a conscious thing. The mentors seek out this mentee, the mentee seeks out the mentor. The role model may not even know that she's somebody else's role model, so they are two different things. Sometimes, you don't know you are somebody's role model. So the way senior colleagues carry themselves, support other people is important because you don't know also that you are somebody's role model.

Mentoring sometimes has to be informal, as it is not always recognised as a legitimate use of resources, as a South African administrator suggests:

And you know mentoring; they will feel they are wasting the company's resources by doing that and not using their time productively.

Many informants reported lack of capacity-building for them as researchers. A Nigerian academic reports how she failed to get any mentoring at crucial times in her career:

I didn't get all that kind of mentoring. …making sure your paper is either published here or published there, nobody told you such things; you find out when you needed to submit your papers, rather than for you to have been told. … Maybe it is a gender thing, I don't know.

Comments from a Ugandan academic highlight some of the complexities of mentoring, as it assumes altruism and collectivity between women in a competitive and individualistic profession in which women are not valued:

> *Sometimes we lack the support system. Sometimes those who move up do not do anything to help those who are still down. Sometimes even women down there are not used to seeing a woman as a leader. So when they see one, they want to pull her down. The will say, 'she also, why not a man?' I have heard women say 'that place, only a man can manage'. So even women do not support each other.*

A South African academic questions what the performance indicators of mentoring are:

> *Mentoring is much more difficult. We need to put our mind to it: how do we define it, how do we know whether a person is a successful mentor, I mean we know it, but how do we know it. We need to be able to measure those things.*

While mentoring can be hard to initiate, evaluate and sustain, it is widely reported to be of significant benefit to the women who receive it. This is particularly noticeable in relation to developing research capacity.

5.7.6   Gender sensitisation courses

Some staff development programmes, such as gender sensitisation courses, have been designed specifically to challenge gender inequalities and build capacity in gender mainstreaming. Makerere University and the University of Dar es Salaam both have staff development programmes addressing gender issues. This study reports mixed reactions to the impact, importance and organisational cascading of these interventions. Gender sensitisation/ awareness courses are perceived by some as useful and informative for men and women and should be extended to all staff members. A Tanzanian staff member believes:

> *These give them courage and also sensitise the otherwise "traditional thinkers".*

However, gender sensitisation courses are perceived by others to have an impact on individuals rather than on the organisation as a whole. A Tanzanian staff member observes the lack of cascading effect:

> *There is little impact for the staff. At least for the few who have attended you can observe the impact. But for the rest who are the majority there is no impact at all.*

The Tanzanian research team also report that these courses were given a low priority and attendance frequently delegated to junior staff members. They state that out of the 233 members of UDSM already reached by sensitisation programmes, 70 were females and 88 were students or student leaders, arguing that gender was a marginalised or sidelined issue and that mainly junior female staff were participating in the training, one of whom was told by her Head that it was 'ideal for her to represent him since gender was a women's issue' (Lihamba et.al., 2005). A Tanzanian staff member also reports that gender courses are not always a priority in busy working schedules:

> *…few people realise that there are gender-training programmes around… when you are busy to get in you have got other things to do and you will really need to give priority to life. And then attending gender conferences often that will not be one of them.*

A key consideration is how to evaluate the impact of gender sensitisation courses. A Tanzanian policy-maker reports change in recruitment patterns but cannot attribute this to the courses:

> *…last year we recruited two females and there was no male academic staff. But I can't say well, this is an impact of gender sensitisation - it just happened those who were qualified were females.*

There are varying views about whether gender should be integrated or mainstreamed into all staff development programmes or offered as a separate provision. A South African staff member argues for the former model:

> *I think that it can't be an add-on. For me, gender issues are like academic development issues. You can't have a programme for academic development that gives extra classes to people who need extra help because it just marginalises them. And I don't think you would have people flocking to go to a gender training programme that sold itself as that. Because they would go 'how is this relevant? I am nice to my wife and small children. Why do I need gender training?' ' You know. Uh, what I think needs to happen is that an awareness of gender issues should be brought in to all kinds of training. So that just as we discussed professionalism, we discuss gender.*

There is often a lack of awareness about how gender operates or why it is a relevant concept in higher education, as a Ugandan staff member comments:

> *Yes, the university has been carrying out gender training workshops since 1998 co-ordinated by the Department of Women and Gender Studies. Some lecturers have been trained and others have not. However, the training is still lacking. There is a big gap that needs to be attended to in as far as gender awareness and gender behaviour is concerned in the University. Some people up to now don't know the meaning of gender and even those who know don't know its usefulness. They keep on asking why people waste a lot of time on gender issues.*

Another Ugandan academic believes that for these courses to be successful, they must incorporate men:

> *I am happy with that programme which is being done in Makerere for that programme in Women and Gender Studies. You have incorporated the men and I think the men now understand it better and when we have men talking about it like that, we get more impressed. So if you can get more men together so that we raise awareness in gender issues, I think the other men listen to their fellow men better. Getting more men on board we should have men say these things, which others see as women things.*

This observation highlights some of the complexities involved in mainstreaming gender. If it is left to the women to execute, it has no status. However, by asking men to lead on the subject, this informant reminds us that men have more academic and managerial authority. This is evocative of Shah's study of women in management in Pakistan (2001). Change agency is

restricted because women's institutional power is constantly undermined by the powerlessness associated with their gender. It appears that gender sensitisation courses are important, but need to be extended to all organisational members, with carefully identified impact measures.

5.8 Impediments to women's career development

5.8.1 Challenges of work/life balance

Normative values and expectations about women's caring roles dominate this study. Women have to keep negotiating their way around social prescriptions. Many of the informants commented on how academic life is incompatible with motherhood and wider domestic responsibilities. Even when women do not have children, they feel that they are discriminated against because it is assumed that they will have them at some point.

It seems as if women's identities are frequently written for them by others. Dyhouse (2002:335) argued that educated women can become 'prisoners of an ideology of family life'. Lack of senior women is frequently explained in terms of subjectively justifiable decisions to prioritise family over career (Krais, 2002). A South African lecturer believes that women have to make difficult choices:

> So it seems to be a choice thing. If you want to be a successful academic woman, don't get married and have kids, because you cannot have both.

The sense that women academics were caught between two greedy institutions - the extended family and the university (Currie et al, 2002) was a recurring theme. A Ugandan academic describes:

> Combining so many roles. As a mother you have to take care of children at home. As a wife you have to take care of the family and as a working person, you have to take care of the office duties. So you find that they are conflicting.

A Nigerian academic also quantifies the delay to women's careers as a consequence of motherhood:

> I met two other women who were lecturers who were telling me that she stayed fifteen years between Lecturer I and Senior Lecturer while the other one said she stayed twelve years between Lecturer I and Senior Lecturer, because they felt that they were still raising children and it was not possible for them to make any progress.

The Director of the Staff Development Centre in Sri Lanka suggests that it is poor time management, rather than structural impediments, that inhibits women's academic achievement:

> I think that is one of the different, bigger issues in our part of the world with regard to females. When they come in and do a job of work also they are still expected to carry out their household and home work to the same extent. They find it extremely difficult to more or less balance and I have had

a lot of the staff come to me with a lot of personal problems and some of those personal problems are to do with this inability from the male as well as the female partner to prioritise and balance.

However, a Ugandan academic relates how structural arrangements such as the timing of staff development courses, impede women's participation:

…lectures here start at 5:00p.m and end at around 11:00 pm and I have only a house-girl at home to take care of the baby. They are not reliable. So I couldn't keep up with that 5:00 to 11:00 pm schedule. So that has really kept me behind but I am very much interested in advancing.

It seems as if there is also an academic equivalent of women being expected to walk four paces behind men. Female success is frequently perceived as damaging to men. A Nigerian academic feels that some women have to ensure that they do not exceed the academic achievement of their male partners:

…we have to care for the children, you have to care for the family and being a woman that has a delayed effect, but another consideration is that in this society, you don't aspire to get to any level where the husband has not already made his mark. So psychologically, that also had a delay effect, since my husband is also in academics and pursuing the same kind of advancement.

The academy has been traditionally constructed as elevating the life of the mind. Dominated by a Cartesian dualism, there is a sense that the body and emotions are problematic in the culture of abstraction. In the wider social terrain, women's reproductive functions have long been seen to account for women's marginalisation from production processes. Throughout this study, the issues of pregnancy, marriage and motherhood recurred as offering explanatory power for women's under-representation as students and staff. Access to higher education is based on norms, values and practices that appear antithetical to many women's lifestyles. A Ugandan academic reports:

Many graduates who are working far from Kampala find it difficult to pursue masters' programmes. I did some research and these women teaching in the village were saying, we still have to look for firewood, to look for water, cook for children…They still have problem of producing many children. People say that with education, fertility might reduce, but you still find primary school teachers getting 6 or 7 children. They do not have domestic workers and with UPE (Universal Primary Education), all their bigger children are in school. They lack baby sitters. All these are problems hindering women from moving up.

Age was also cited as a structure of inequality – especially if women took time out of their careers to raise children. A female academic in Uganda explained that her age disqualified her from doctoral studies:

Recently I went to look for funds for my PhD, what shocked me was the age limit… I can't access funds because of the age limit and our requirements are that if you have to become a manager at the university, you have to have the qualifications. That limits us as women… The age limit was 35.

A major challenge facing work/life balance issues is how to accommodate difference without sealing women into traditional domestic roles and responsibilities. If allowances are made for childcare, domestic labour etc., then this perpetuates the notion that these are women's areas of work. If allowances are not made, women often feel that they cannot prioritise their professional lives. However, structural support or changes can facilitate work/life balance issues. Flexible employment practices, family friendly policies and, changes in timing of staff development training, for example, can serve to support women in combining care and work responsibilities.

5.8.2   The gendered division of labour

While there is a gendered division of labour between the private and public domains, there also appears to be one within academic organisations. Specific tasks are gendered and signify and reproduce power relations. A central division seems to be between teaching and research. For example a South African academic comments on how hard it is for some women to achieve as both teachers and researchers:

> *I do think that there are few women that succeed in becoming leaders in teaching and research. If you look at them, there are very few, and whenever they are, they are pretty well, with the exception of one or two, remarkable people that have not got children… I do think for the women they tend to be the nurturers and the teachers more than the men, and I do think that our promotion criteria do not take that sufficiently into account.*

A Tanzanian academic poses questions about why women get stuck in unpromoted and non-research-oriented roles:

> *But I think more needs to be done about the constraints faced by women, may be we need to do another study from the women, academic women of the University of Dar Es Salaam? For example why do they stay in certain positions for so long without publishing…I mean they move more slowly in terms of promotion and so on, compared to men.*

The gendered division of labour often leads to problems with workload and time management. There is sometimes a lack of awareness of the availability of staff development programmes. Many women feel too over-burdened with quotidian responsibilities to be able to take advantage of staff development opportunities or to make long-term strategic decisions about their careers. A South African academic describes how some women are propelled into reactive rather than strategic professional behaviour:

> *Just on the issue of being busy, I think it is true for women, and I could be generalising but also my experience with my other women colleagues is that we tend to, we tend to work harder and … being a woman in higher education you end up taking on all of the stuff and as a result you don't really have time to do other things like setting up a forum and sharing your experience.*

Campus citizenship, like citizenship in wider civic society, is profoundly gendered (Preece, 2002). The preoccupation with daily responsibilities also means that women are not always encouraged to take up networking opportunities. There appears to be limited access for women to existing networks and a reluctance to form their own networks. For example, the Nigerian

Society of Engineers has a women's section, but few female students in the Faculty of Technology are aware of its existence. In Sri Lanka, there are no societies of women students even in Faculties of Law or Arts with high student numbers.

There is sometimes discrimination against gender-based courses and conferences. A Nigerian academic reports how her attempts to network internationally were blocked and how she faced discrimination in relation to attending a gender conference:

> *When I was going for the Canada conference … my Head of Department was against it. He was excited that I was travelling but when he got to know that it was on gender issues, he said "Absolutely no", then he was not going to sign the papers. We had to fight about it; we argued about it.*

The gendered division of labour can be a form of discrimination against women as it denies them opportunities to gain experience that is vital for career advancement. It leaves women stuck in the organisational housework of student support and heavy teaching loads.

5.8.3 Discrimination against women

Women report that they did not feel encouraged to apply for senior management or academic posts, or to seek appropriate training to qualify them for seniority. Widespread favouritism of men for training and development opportunities was communicated. There were also complaints about lack of guidance, mentorship and facilitation of women's academic and management careers.

A policy-maker in Sri Lanka believes that affirmative action is required to support women's training and development:

> *Some proactive, affirmative action programmes to ensure that women teaching staff acquire research and training opportunities may be necessary to balance the current "gender neutral" policies where scholarships and advanced training may be based on disciplines or fields. These policies do not intentionally discriminate against women but they result in fact in women staff not having access to training and research opportunities. This can impede their opportunities for career advancement in competition with male staff.*

'Gender neutral' was a term that surfaced throughout the project and generated much debate within the team. There are dangers that this can mean 'gender blind', rather than 'gender aware' (EOC, 2000). Gender neutral policies and practices are not specifically aimed at men or women and are assumed to affect both sexes equally. Gender blindness means ignoring the different socially determined roles, responsibilities and capabilities of men and women (Kabeer, 2003). Gender neutrality can be inadvertently discriminatory. We wish to advocate that all higher education processes should be gender aware, rather than gender neutral/blind.

Discrimination against women is often justified in terms of an inevitability of reproductive roles. A female staff member in Nigeria comments:

> *It was at the interview. In fact, before we went for the interview, our director had been saying that he*

didn't want to take a woman. When he saw the application and saw what we can do he said no. All these things are OK, but I cannot take a woman because she will go on maternity leave.

This example raises serious questions about accountability and transparency in decision-making and the need to apply equity procedures to recruitment, selection and promotion.

Discrimination against women occurs for a range of irrational and sexist reasons. A Nigerian academic relates how a woman's physical appearance was used as a selection criterion:

…there were 2 fellowships available. A lady led the class in the final examination, but they gave the fellowship to study abroad to two men. When I asked 'Why? Why? This lady led the class. They told me, 'well, you can see she's not too good to look at'.

Discrimination is also reported in relation to resource allocation - particularly for professional development. Two Nigerian academics discuss favouritism of men:

There should be some allowance made for women to be sent on training programmes, development, staff development and all that, women should be considered, because here… the men are given upper hand.

When there are conferences to be attended, they should make it 50-50, if they need four people, two female, two male, two female members of staff, two ladies, two women.

As already mentioned, discrimination can be overt, but also nebulous, as a South African academic suggests:

You know it's hard to put a finger on any outright sexism that ever happens, but I think it does. I think there is, as I say that expectation that men do a better job than women and so perhaps women are not selected for committees to the same degree, perhaps not promoted to the same degree.

The research team in South Africa believe that women are not targeted negatively but they are not actively promoted either. Policies mention gender, language is sensitive, numbers are counted, and women are welcomed at the institution but are then left to fend for themselves. They are not prevented from (or encouraged to) rise to leadership positions and very few of them do (Shackleton et. al., 2005). This corresponds with research undertaken in Kenya (Onsongo, 2000) and in Finland (Husu, 2000). Both these studies highlight how there is an invitational system to apply for promotion and that women are less likely to be invited than their male counterparts.

Morley (2005) argues that women's under-representation in senior and decision-making roles is not merely symbolic. It is a form of status injury. The lack of women in senior positions is both cultural misrecognition and a material and intellectual oppression (Fraser, 1997).

5.8.4   Retrogressive attitudes to women in management

Strong desires were expressed by many women students and staff to see more women in senior management positions. Sometimes, the rationale was based on an essentialist notion that women

would bring different, that is more communal and nurturing, skills to the role. A South African student exemplifies this view:

> *…perhaps they need more women up there in the management positions, not because we just want to be represented, but because women bring ways of thinking into management and perhaps a sensitivity and a nurturing aspect of it.*

A question frequently rehearsed in the literature is whether women managers are necessarily gender sensitive or politically committed to representing women's interests (Luke, 1998). The gendering and essentialising of management styles and skills are themes in much of the Commonwealth literature (Gill, 2000; Lamptey, 1992; Manya, 2000; Tete-Menseh, 1999).

A further view was that once women are given the chance to demonstrate their management abilities, they thrive, as a Tanzanian policy-maker suggests:

> *I would like women to take up more top jobs. I think that is what can pull up women a bit. Women should not fear to apply for those big jobs like Academic Registrar, University Secretary etc. …I think we as women should put our socks together; we should work as a team to see that each one of us tries to move up to face the challenges and keep up with competition. Not remaining behind because you are a woman. Some men support us and that's very good. And men have started realising that there is actually no difference.*

Leadership is often associated with men and masculinity both in terms of academic management and student politics The skills, competencies and dispositions deemed to be essential to leadership including assertiveness, autonomy and authority are embedded in socially constructed definitions of masculinity (Kerfoot and Knights, 1998). It seems that women managers challenge a gender stereotype.

Women are under-represented, but when women are present there are often claims that they have been incorporated, do not represent the interests of the women in the organisation and/or that they are surrogate males. Feminist psychology has long theorised the concept of agentic and communal behaviour (Miller, 1976). If women display agentic, rather than communal behaviour in the workplace this is condemned and there are social repercussions (Rudman and Glick, 2001).

Eagley et al's study (1992) showed that female leaders who exhibit a democratic, participatory style were less likely to receive negative evaluations, compared to those who have an autocratic, directive style. A South African academic confirms these ideas:

> *I think we have had big issues … with the lack of visible women in senior positions…we don't have a chance to see enough women working with men. When we see them in senior positions, they, they are not part of co-operative teams. They, they are acting like men! You know, they are following the basic rule. It is not gender sensitive. They just happen to be women in that space.*

A recurring theme is that women entering leadership are male surrogates. A student in Uganda observes:

> *Basically leadership in the university is male dominated. For example, if you look at the Guild President's office, you will see that very few females have made it over the years. I think this is because of the girls' low self-esteem. When a girl tries to come up people will say, "she is like a man, that's why she is doing this".*

However, Mac an Ghaill (1994: 178) reminds us that men and women 'constantly construct and reconstruct masculinity and femininity'. A Head of Department in South Africa describes how she tries not to manage like a man:

> *I very much try not to be a man… For example I spend a lot of time, I take care to follow people's lives a little bit, and giving them things and thank you's.*

These observations suggest that entering management can be a tricky business for women. They experience gender discrimination from traditional thinkers and are seen as inferior to male managers. They are met with mistrust by many of those who are committed to gender equality as they are seen as some kind of traitor or collaborator, particularly if they do not appear to represent the interests of all the women in the organisation.

5.9 The gendering of time, space and course content

Additional information was gleaned from observation. The aim of the observation process was to triangulate interview data by witnessing gender relations at work in the academy. Rather than relying on reported accounts, the observers were able to see women in classrooms, meetings, training sessions and note processes for inclusion and exclusion.

5.9.1 Male dominance and female silence: The absence of gender-sensitive pedagogy

In all five countries, overt sexual discrimination was less visible than the more subtle forms. Observation data revealed that female students in all countries except South Africa were excluded because male students dominated the classroom interaction. Male students often sat so that they were more visible in class and took up more of the discussion time. This finding has been documented in numerous studies of mixed sex classrooms where men are seen to exert more control over the discussion topic. Studies reveal that men interrupt women, male lecturers interact more with male students, wait longer for male students to formulate responses and offer non-verbal reinforcement in the form of nods and gestures to encourage male contributions (Kramerae, 1980; Sandler et al., 1996; Tannen, 1994).

While some lecturers in this study took care to use gender-neutral language e.g. in South Africa, they did not factor gender into the content of the lecture. In other words, they were not necessarily gender aware. Nor did they always make specific attempts to include female students. The teams observed many examples of gender-insensitive pedagogy and active (teacher)/passive (student) transmission teaching.

Table 8: Observations Conducted

	NIGERIA	SOUTH AFRICA	SRI LANKA	TANZANIA	UGANDA
ACCESS	1 Civil Engineering Practical 1 Electrical Engineering Lecture 1 Faculty of Tech Board Meeting	4 Careers counselling/recruitment sessions in the EBE faculty	1 Botany class 1 Physics class 1 Computer Science class 1 Financial Management 1 Accounting 1 Faculty Board – Education 1 Faculty Board – Arts 1 Faculty Board – Science	1 Gender and Development lecture. Institute of Development Studies. 1 Curriculum Development course - lecture for 3rd and 4th year students in Faculty of Education 1 Communication skills for Engineering Studies. Seminar for 1st year students in Prospective College of Engineering 1 Gender and Politics Course. Seminar for 3rd year students in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration	4 Agriculture lectures 2 peer training workshop 1 Veterinary Medicine
CURRICULUM	1 Faculty of Agric Board Meeting 1 Agric Extension Lecture 1 Agric Farm Practical	1 Lecture in History 1 Lecture in Organisational Psychology 1 Lecture in Social Anthropology 1 Lecture in Microbiology 1 Lecture in Physical Oceanography 1 Lecture in Human Resource Management 1 Lecture in Hydraulics 1 Lecture in Anthropology and Sexuality	1 Journalism-2 1 Journalism-3 1 Mass Media-2 1 Human Rights Law 1 Humanitarian Law 1 Family Law	1 Gender and Development class 1 Gender and Politics Curriculum Development 1 Communication Skills for Engineering Studies 1 Gender and Politics Course	4 Agriculture lectures 2 student peer gender training workshops 1 Veterinary Medicine masters lecture.
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	1 Senate meeting 1 Faculty Finance Officers Meeting 1 Registry Staff Discourse	2 Staff training. 2 Selection committee 5 Council meetings	1 Workshop-1 1 Workshop-2 1 Council-1 1 Council-2 1 Senate Faculty Board – Graduate Studies	1 Gender and Mainstreaming workshop for Heads of Department 1 Meeting of Research on Education and Democracy for leaders. 1 Staff workshop on gender-based violence	3 gender analysis workshops 1 University senate meeting 1 Staff development meeting 1 Planning meeting in Faculty of Agriculture
	9	21	20	11	20

The Nigerian team reports that while female students were passive in class, when encouraged, they demonstrated a good grasp of the subject. The Sri Lankan team records passivity from both female and male students and speculates that this is the effect of prior learning practices at secondary school level. The South African team reports a gender inclusive student environment in the classroom. For example, apart from the engineering lecture where only one out of the nine questions asked came from a woman, women and men students seemed equally comfortable in asking and answering questions in class. However, both Tanzanian and Ugandan teams report male dominance. In two of the agriculture student seminar presentations observed in Makerere, none of the presenters was female, even though both groups had a reasonable number of female students. The lecturer did not notice this as a significant omission.

5.9.2   The gendering of time

The gendering of time allocation and pedagogical attention was a key theme. The Tanzanian team observed that, in student presentations, males made the bulk of the presentation and answered questions, while females tended to just introduce and conclude. Generally, they saw that male students tended to take longer to elaborate and develop points. The Ugandan team notes similar patterns:

> *The participation of male students was found to be higher than that of female students. The males dominated discussions, asked more questions and raised issues more frequently.*

The Ugandan team also points out how interactive teaching methods were hijacked by the male students.

> *There were group presentations observed in each class and they were all represented by males yet the groups also had female members. There were cases of males interjecting the lecturer, demanding for tests, the males also spoke for longer periods than females.*

Female participation seems impeded by a combination of gender-insensitive pedagogy and gendered socialisation. The hidden curriculum of pedagogical relations was also noted by the Sri Lankan team. In an observation evocative of Spender's early work in the UK (1982), and Brooks' early work in the USA (1982) the Sri Lankan team relate how male students receive more pedagogical attention:

> *Towards the end of the lecture when the lecturer was relating real-life examples to the theory he had been teaching, he mentioned a project the female student was involved in and briefly asked her a question related to it but he did not give her any time to answer, smiled and moved on to the next question very swiftly.*

The Sri Lankan team also note how generally male students were invited to comment and question more than females. Consequently, male students became more confident, more assertive and relaxed than their female counterparts. They also report how women students often participated more when there was a female lecturer.

5.9.3　The gendering of space

The gendering of space was also reported. The Tanzanian team notes how women students form groupings, particularly in religious groups, possibly as an unconscious form of solidarity:

In some cases however, clustering was common for especially older women and hijab-wearing female students

The South African team also comments on the clustering:

The staff training session observed had three times as many women as men attending. In all but one of the sessions observed, men and women tended to sit alongside colleagues of the same sex around the table.

The Sri Lankan team reports how seating arrangements reinforced the gendered pedagogical interaction:

…the lecturers displayed very subtle signs of gender discrimination. The lecturers had tended to address the aisles where the male students were seated and rarely or never turned towards the aisles where the women students were seated. Eye contact with male lecturers and female students was shown as less. Even in instances when the female student could contribute to the quality of the discussion it had not been utilised.

The Nigerian team also observes how male staff members tended to sit together to establish dominance and form a power bloc that acted as a social barrier for women.

While these observations might not appear to relate directly to learning or management processes, the gendering of space can provide potent non-verbal signals about inclusion and exclusion or margins and mainstreams.

5.9.4　The gendering of content

The gendering of content and some overt sexism were observed. The Ugandan team reports the use of gender - biased/sexist examples in the classroom.

…while explaining optimum fertility of a cow recommended for insemination, a male lecturer in a "Dairy Production Systems" class paused to ask "do we have mothers here?" The whole class burst in laughter. The lecturer was comparing women with cows. In the same class, when the lecturer explained that "old cows are not supposed to be inseminated". Male students shouted back "Sugar Mummy!"

The South Africa team reports that while lecturers made careful efforts to avoid gender-biased language they did not integrate an analysis of gender into the course content:

Most striking is the fact that in contrast to the ambiance and gender-sensitive language used, the content of the non-technical lectures did not appear to take the opportunity to raise gender issues.

5.9.5   Exclusive/ inclusive meeting skills

Regarding staff, all countries note the under-representation of senior women academics and managers and the low number of women as chairs of management meetings. The Tanzanian team suggests that women were at their most participative when the subject for discussion was gender. They also argue that it was clear that female staff still take the lead in including gender issues in their courses.

The Nigerian team believe that certain styles of facilitation are more conducive to women's participation such as restricted input from the chair, interactive styles in which contributions are encouraged, developed and valued. The Nigerian team describe how a female chairperson appeared to adopt generally participatory methods of leadership – identifying contributors by name and affirming or acknowledging contributors. She also used mannerisms (nodding) to encourage contributions. She allowed members to do most of the talking while she encouraged inputs by her actions. Her attitude was the same for both males and females. The male chairpersons exhibited different styles of leadership. While one concentrated just on one major cluster of professors who dominated the meeting, others were doing most of the talking. Only two of the male chairs encouraged contribution. They also note that males dominated meetings and decision-making, even when the chair was a woman. Gendered power relations were emphasised by the use of gendered titles:

> At the Agriculture Faculty Board meeting, in spite of the fact that the chair was female, the first in the history of that faculty, the female members hardly contributed. Males were still dominant. A number of them appeared to be using diversionary tactics against the Chair – making gender biased remarks such as Mrs. Dean, Mr. Chairperson, Mr Dean, Madam Dean, Mrs. Chairperson, and Sir. There was only one noticeable contribution by a female and she spoke inaudibly.

The Nigerian team describes how the meeting procedures and processes also excluded women:

> The males generally moved adoption of minutes and motion and seconded motions. At the Agriculture Faculty Board meeting, no female made any contribution in the first 40 minutes of the meeting. At another faculty meeting, the pattern was the same with no contribution by a female till close to the end of the meeting.

Much of the behaviour observed, particularly in Nigeria, evokes Luke's findings (1994: 281):

> Men dominate speech interactions by monopolising turn taking, by speaking longer and thereby maintaining the floor, and by turning up the vocal volume in order to assert dominance and minimise the potential for disruption.

The 'Didn't I just say that' (Roberts, 1995) syndrome was also witnessed, as indicated in a Nigerian observation that shows how women's contributions are ignored, but taken seriously when recycled by male participants and skewed towards their interests:

> When a woman raised the issue of age as a factor precluding women from securing funding for research, the issue was not carried forward for discussion. However, when a man raised the issue of

registration fees for postgraduate studies being a factor delaying the completion of these programmes by males, a motion was immediately raised, discussed and adopted to exempt PhD students in the teaching staff from paying registration and examination fees.

The gendering of authority was a recurrent theme, The Nigerian team reports how:

…males tended to contribute to general as well as their specific areas of interest. So in the meetings, they spoke about security of the faculty, training, finances and earlier Senate decisions. In contrast, the females tended to speak about their schedules.

The Sri Lankan team argues that seniority, rather than gender, determined the right to speak at meetings. Whereas the Ugandan team suggests that the low representation of women, that is lack of critical mass, is the major cause of women's silence:

In the Senate meeting observed most of the presenters were men. There were 4 males and 1 female who presented. This can be attributed to the fact that there are few women on the University Senate. In this particular meeting there were thirty-seven males compared to thirteen females.

The Tanzanian team also makes a similar observation about a staff development session:
Not only were female members or participants quite few, they were equally outclassed in most of the sessions in terms of the number of contributions and active participation.

The South African team notes women's under-representation, but calculated that their contributions exceeded their critical mass:

On average during the meetings women made up 19 per cent of those present, fewer than their 27 per cent official representation on Council. (At this point it is worth noting that the monthly Council meetings took place from 16h00 until about 19h00, possibly a difficult time for women with family commitments.) However, the women who were present were involved in 26 per cent of the discussions on average over the five meetings, indicating interventions in excess of their numbers present.

In conclusion, there appears to be a silencing of women – both as students and as staff in 4 of the 5 countries. Issues of voice and silence have long been a concern of feminist theorists (Gatenby and Humphries, 1999). The gender insensitive pedagogy and poor facilitation of meetings could also be viewed as unskilled rather than overtly discriminatory and gender - insensitive. While South Africa reports more participation from women in classrooms, they are still numerically under-represented in management and in decision-making fora.

Chapter 6: Summary of Research Findings, Examples of Good Practice and Recommendations

6.1 Summary of research findings

6.1.1 Widening women's access and participation in higher education

Enablers:

- **socio-economic and cultural advantages: the triangle of family, school and community**

Structured advice from schools and families, accompanied by exposure to role models and contact between primary, secondary and higher education institutions helped to prepare women to enter higher education. Women who came from families in which one or both parents had been through higher education often saw entry into higher education as an unquestioned norm;

- **de-traditionalisation**

This means that gender roles in wider civil society are changing to allow women to move out of traditionally prescribed roles of wives and mothers. This is accompanied and facilitated by changing attitudes and educational and professional opportunities. However, the study notes that detraditionalisation is more a feature of the urban middle classes. Poorer rural communities are still embedded in traditional cultural practices based on women's subordination;

- **an integrated approach to gender equity through the educational sectors**

Links between universities and primary and secondary schools help to communicate information about higher education opportunities. This takes the form of outreach programmes in the University of Cape Town, and schemes to raise girls' aspirations in Makerere. An effective way of challenging the gender stereotyping associated with subject choice is for women scientists and engineers to visit secondary schools. Equally, gender sensitive education at school level helps to empower and prepare girls to aspire to higher education.

Constraints:

- **low participation rates in primary and secondary schooling**

This severely reduces the pool of women qualified to enter higher education. It also culturally reinforces the notion that girls are not worthy of educational investment;

- **social class, poverty, ethnicity and lack of preparedness for higher education**

For example, young women in Tanzania, Sri Lanka and Uganda reported how they would not have been able to enter higher education without scholarships. Policy-makers in Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Tanzania all comment on how young women from poorer rural communities are only prepared for motherhood, not for study, and that this meant that they often fail to enrol or complete basic education;

- **changing bodies and inflexible structures**

Women's reproductive functions are frequently cited by students and staff as major obstacles to women's participation in all sectors of education. For example, early pregnancy, lack of advice about contraception or religious opposition to its use often means that basic education is interrupted. Early marriage and motherhood are fairly common and there are beliefs that educational services are still too rigid and inflexible to cope with women's changing bodies and lifestyles. Informants comment on social taboos of young mothers returning to school, and policies that ban pregnant girls from schools;

- **investment in sons, rather than in daughters**

There is still a strong sense, particularly in poorer rural communities, that sons will yield a higher return on the investment as it is assumed that their participation in the labour market will be for a longer period;

- **gender violence**

University campuses are perceived by many as unsafe spaces for women. The violence takes a variety of forms: sexual harassment, name-calling, ragging in Sri Lanka, cultism and gangsterism in Nigeria and assault and rape.

6.1.2   Interrogating specific interventions for enhancing access

Enablers:

- related national policies (e.g. National Gender Policy, National Machineries which promote gender equity – such as Ministries of Women/Gender and Development in Uganda);

- community initiatives (apart from the state/institutions) – mainly referring to individual or group activism (which, for instance, in the Ugandan case, provided the push for affirmative action).

Constraints:

- subject choice is still highly gendered with women still under-represented in science and technology. When women do enter 'non-traditional' disciplines, they suffer the discomforts of being highly visible or subjected to negative stereotyping from families and peers.

6.1.3   Curriculum transformation

Enablers:

- **gender mainstreaming**

The process of reviewing institutional structures, resources, course content, language and pedagogy to ensure that women's interests are included and represented is an essential stage in transformation;

- **Gender and Women's Studies courses**

Some academic disciplines had specific modules on gender e.g. gender and agriculture in Makerere. Interdisciplinary programmes also existed e.g. the MA in Women's Studies at Colombo. Both forms of provision were positively evaluated by the students interviewed in this study.

Constraints:

- **social and pedagogical relations: the hidden curriculum**

This can take the form of male domination of time and space and informal practices that exclude or marginalise women. The hidden curriculum is often where gendered power gets relayed and has an impact on the learning environment for women;

- **negative assumptions about gender, ability and academic performance**

Women students report how their academic abilities and those of female academics are often under-rated by male students and staff. This has an impact on their academic identities and self-worth. Observations also revealed that teachers validated male students' contributions more than those of female students and helped to reinforce a sense of female inferiority;

- **anti-feminism**

This took a variety of forms. Women who promoted gender equity or participated in gender courses or even in higher education were subjected to negative stereotyping in all five countries- often influenced by homophobic attitudes perpetuated in the media. Hence women were accused of being 'man-haters', 'butch', or even 'prostitutes' if they stepped outside of traditional frameworks. Advocates for gender equity were demonised and marginalised in a way that was often perceived to impede career progress.

6.1.4   Staff development

Enablers for women's career development:

- **internationalism**

International conferences, seminars, professional networks and sponsorship provided valuable ways to support women's career development;

- **women-only staff development courses**

The opportunity for women to develop skills amd competencies in a setting where their learning needs are prioritiesd;

- **networking and community-building**

Women often report a sense of isolation and entrapment in their everyday professional and domestic responsibilities, with few opportunities to stand back and evaluate their development strategically. Sharing information, advice and experiences can encourage women to think differently about their careers and potential;

- **professional development programmes**

Women benefit from access to courses associated with women's empowerment. e.g. women into management courses;

- **mentoring**

Formal and informal programmes can help develop women's potential;

- **gender sensitisation courses**

These can develop awareness and strategies for challenging inequalities.

Impediments to women's career development:

- **challenges of work/life balance**

Women report how they are often caught between two greedy institutions - the extended family and their universities. This means that whenever they give attention to one, they feel guilty about neglecting the other. This raises issues of time management. It also raises questions about the way in which time is organised in academic life and how there are often assumptions that academics have no outside responsibilities. For example, South Africa relates how women's attendance at crucial decision-making meetings might have been affected by the fact that they were scheduled from 4-7pm;

- **resistance to gender courses**

Women reported how it was often difficult for them to get funding to attend courses that focused on women or gender;

- **lack of networks and networking opportunities**

The gendered division of labour can mean that women can get tied to domestic, everyday responsibilities in the workplace, with limited opportunities to think strategically about their careers or develop their social capital;

- **the gendered division of labour**

Women described how they had heavy teaching and pastoral commitments which excluded them from research opportunities;

- **discrimination against women**

There was a perception that women were seen as second-class academics because it was assumed - even if they were single and child free - that they would always prioritise domestic rather than professional responsibilities. This had an impact on appointments and promotions;

- **retrogressive attitudes to women into management**

Leadership and authority are still heavily associated with men and masculinity;

- **lack of equal opportunities/ anti-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment, retention and promotion**

With the exception of South Africa and Uganda, promotions and recruitment procedures do not appear to be regularised in the context of equal opportunities practices.

There have been some successes in promoting gender equity in higher education. The number of women students is increasing via interventions including affirmative action and community links. Women are slowly entering science and technology subjects as students and staff. They are also slowly entering senior management positions. The curriculum, apart from specific courses on Women's and Gender Studies, has been unevenly mainstreamed. Academics, while supportive of the principle of gender mainstreaming, have concerns about their expertise to execute sustainable change. There is a need for more national and international exchange of ideas, strategies and good practices.

Women students and staff are still reporting discrimination and male privilege in pedagogical processes, management and assessment. Sometimes discrimination is overt and easily identifiable. Other times, it is abstract, nebulous and difficult to read. Gender, together with socio-economic background, ethnicity and poverty, still constructs higher educational opportunities across the Commonwealth.

Gender has a significant impact on academic and professional identity formation and institutional life in universities is a highly gendered experience. The meso-level of higher education institutions can be significant sites for the reproduction of gender inequalities. Equally, they have the potential to challenge them. Gendered power relations symbolically construct and regulate women's quotidian experiences of higher education.

Policies have been developed internationally and variously interpreted at national and organisational levels. A source of frustration articulated throughout this study relates to the implementation gap between international and national policies and between national policies and organisational change.

It seems that at least five aspects are essential to the promotion of gender equity in higher education: awareness, commitment, capacity, accountability and evaluation. Gender awareness, rather than gender neutrality, should be integrated into all organisational processes.

The project discovered a number of discriminatory practices such as excluding women from career development opportunities, prejudice against women – particularly mothers; gender-insensitive pedagogical processes; sexual harassment and gender violence left unchecked; prejudice about women's academic abilities; poor policy implementation, and widespread male-domination of knowledge, decision-making and research opportunities.

The project also discovered a range of good practices to promote gender equity, which will be itemised in the next section.

The findings from the empirical data, backed up by international literature, seem to suggest that for many women, entry into higher education can be a means of mitigating gender oppression. However, this is accompanied by contradictions and tensions as they experience

a range of discriminatory practices, gendered processes and exclusions within higher education itself. For gender equity to be established, it is vital that higher education itself should be empowering and a positive learning experience for women and men.

6.2   Examples of good practice

6.2.1   General

1. A strong national policy framework e.g. gender equity in South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda and social welfare policies in Sri Lanka.

2. Effective national implementation strategies e.g. gender disaggregated data, gender-linked resource allocation monitoring and evaluation of gender procedures and discursive space.

3. Evolved organisational policies for equality e.g. UCT, UDSM and Makerere.

4. Implementation strategies for organisational policies e.g. units, evaluation mechanisms, human resource allocation and specific programmes, including the 1.5 scheme in Makerere and UDSM.

5. Organisational gender audits e.g. of the curriculum, staffing, facilities at Makerere.

6. Policy frameworks and procedures for dealing with sexual harassment and gender violence. For example, the University of Colombo has introduced a Sexual Harassment Code; UCT has an office, with 2/3 postholders, counselling, casework, training courses and lobbying for security measures.

7. Affirmative Action programmes e.g. for students (the 1.5 schemes and Female Scholarships Initiatives at UDSM and Makerere); staff recruitment procedures in UCT; quota systems for female representation including membership requirement in University of Colombo Councils which mandate that at least three of the external members be women. UCT also has requirements for women's representation on committees.

6.2.2   Access

1. Outreach programmes between the university and local schools e.g. UCT, UDSM and Makerere.

2. Organisational research on equity and access e.g. UCT's Engineering Faculty investigated the gender composition of the student body.

3. Formal links with gender-focused NGOs and community organisations e.g. Makerere, UDSM and UCT's link to HERS-SA.

6.2.3   Curriculum transformation

1. The gender mainstreaming programme accompanied by logical frameworks and impact measures at Makerere.

2. Provision of Gender and Women's Studies courses and modules (UCT, UDSM, Makerere, Colombo and Ibadan and Women's Centres (Ibadan, UCT, Makerere).

6.2.4   Staff development

1. Staff development programmes for women e.g. HERS-SA, the Association of Commonwealth Universities workshops on Women in Higher Education Management, the Nigerian Institute of Management's Women in Management courses.

2. Gender sensitisation programmes to raise awareness and train people to initiate gendered changes e.g. at Makerere and UDSM.

3. Lastly, this research project was a major form of staff development and capacity-building for academic women. It involved collaborative working processes and extensive opportunities to learn from each other across national boundaries. The international meetings held in different locations had a positive impact on local research and policy communities. The meetings and dissemination seminars held in four locations (London, Cape Town, Dar es Salaam and Colombo) also served to internationalise the local work. The project facilitated sustainable capacity-building by combining experienced with new researchers, by research and ICT training, by providing presentation and dissemination opportunities and through the circulation of documentation and literature. Furthermore, by the end of 2006, two more academic women in low-income countries should have PhDs. The Project Director's visits to the five countries provided opportunities for validating the importance of the project in local communities, for dissemination and for research training. Many interview informants also commented that the project had raised their awareness of gender issues.

6.3: Recommendations and policy implications

	GENERAL
Organisational:	• Organisations should undertake gender audits; • higher education organisations need to mainstream gender equity into their strategic planning, with resources allocated to promoting and sustaining gender equity; • success in working towards gender equity and diversity should be a performance indicator in management appraisal; • affirmative action programmes that include attention to student and staff matters should be developed and regularly reviewed to ascertain impact and effectiveness; • different structures/intersections of inequality need to be taken into account e.g. access schemes for women should include consideration of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds and disability; • learning environments need to be made safe for women via material measures e.g. lighting, campus security; by strict policy frameworks e.g. grievance procedures for sexual harassment; by pastoral services e.g. counselling and welfare; and via the curriculum and pedagogy e.g. challenging discriminatory attitudes and behaviours; • gender mainstreaming should relate to governance as well as to curriculum. Decision-making for a need to include women members and consideration of gender issues; • equality policies need to be accompanied by action plans and grievance procedures, with sanctions against discriminatory behaviours; • crèche facilities need to be available on campus.
National:	• There need to be action plans, steering mechanisms, accountability measures and evaluation systems for state policies; • ministries need to monitor gender equity policy formation and implementation; • international policies for equality need to be domesticated, with implementation mechanisms. Good practices should be shared across national boundaries; • all organisations (e.g. Ministries of Education, Universities and University Grants Commission) need to maintain gender-disaggregated data.
International:	• There is a distinct added value in providing international opportunities to share good practices in promoting gender equity e.g. strategies to challenge gender violence and sexual harassment.

ACCESS	
Organisational:	• Affirmative action programmes should be developed and sustained, accompanied by evaluation mechanisms and impact measures; • preparedness for higher education is essential. Pre-sessional courses should be available – particularly for women from socially disadvantaged groups; • career Guidance Units need to be established in all universities. Where these have already been set up (e.g. Sri Lanka) they should be guided to focus on the following: career counselling, publicising job opportunities for the various disciplines, including job postings and seminars/presentations by public and private organisations and NGOs, workshops on interview skills, CV development and alumni networks. The Centres could also co-ordinate outreach programmes to high schools on career counselling; • gender sensitisation programmes should be conducted at orientations for undergraduates. They should address the desired academic environment conducive to gender equity, including concepts of inclusion, respect for diversity and sexual harassment codes and the need for gender balanced participation in all university activities including student unions.
National:	• Poverty continues to be a major barrier to participation. Availability of scholarships, bursaries, pre-sessional courses needs to be more widely disseminated; • outreach programmes between universities and schools should be encouraged, particularly in relation to 'non-traditional' subjects; • links between communities and higher education should continue to be developed in order to raise aspirations and provide information about programmes of study e.g. parents' groups, NGOs; • there is a need for integrated gender equity policies across primary, secondary and higher education education.
International:	• Gender equity needs to be considered in qualitative as well as quantitative terms by policy-makers and practitioners with issues of retention and achievement considered in relation to access statistics. Qualitative data on women's lived experiences could help retention and completion statistics.

CURRICULUM

Organisational:	• Gender disaggregated statistics on women's enrolment in different disciplinary areas should be maintained, accompanied by action plans to increase women's participation in areas where they are under-represented; • student evaluation of courses, teaching and learning quality and the learning environment should be introduced, with implementation mechanisms and audit loops; • there is a need to build capacity in gender analysis especially on how to review the university curriculum to make it more inclusive and representative of women's interests; • gender should be mainstreamed into all academic programmes. This means ensuring that gender is a consideration and category of analysis in the course content, resources and pedagogy; • women's and Gender Studies courses should be supported and further developed; • good pedagogy is inclusive pedagogy. Staff development on gender sensitive pedagogy should be promoted; • impact measures need to be developed and applied to gender mainstreaming programmes, e.g. review of booklists, resources and content.
National:	• There is a value-added dimension to universities working together in national locations to disseminate good practices; • universities should conduct workshops on why/how gender should be introduced to the curriculum and how it can be incorporated with local and international academics currently engaged in or interested in curriculum transformation initiatives.
International:	• Gender mainstreaming in higher education is taking place in a range of regions e.g. the European Union. It is also taking place in a wide range of organisations outside higher education. Yet few opportunities exist for nations, regions and sectors to share expertise; • international expertise on gender mainstreaming in higher education needs to be developed and shared via conferences, seminars and networks.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Organisational:	• Gender disaggregated statistics should be kept on recruitment, retention, professional development and promotion of staff; • gender equity policies and affirmative action schemes need to be reinforced by staff development programmes that are available and even mandatory for all staff; • gender indicators should be applied to the allocation of funding for national and international conferences; • gender awareness/sensitisation programmes need to be accompanied by impact measures; • mentoring schemes should be formalised; • gender should be included in appraisal schemes for managers; • gender should be embedded in staff development programmes; • where policies do not already exist, equality of opportunity criteria, principles and practices should be applied to recruitment, selection and promotion procedures; • gender equitable representation on decision-making committees should be instigated; • gender-related research skills (e.g. including gender analysis, gender-based needs assessments, application of gender theoretical concepts) should be developed.
National:	• There should be earmarked funding for women to attend staff development programmes.
International:	• Courses on women in higher education management should be developed and promoted e.g. the Women in management in Higher Education programme initiated by the Association of Commonwealth Universities to motivate women to develop their research and management skills and aspire to be managers and leaders; • there is an urgent need for capacity-building of women's research skills and competencies. International programmes and training schemes could help to share and develop competencies.

6.4   Follow-up/future research

The project highlighted the need for research on:

- what impedes or facilitates capacity-building for women in research skills in low-income countries, particularly in relation to qualitative approaches;

- gender violence and sexual harassment in higher education;

- the implications for gender and social responsibility of private higher education in selected regions of the developing world;

- initiatives in different national locations to promote the entry of women into science and technology;

- perceptions of and achievements in gender mainstreaming in higher education;

- whether women's enhanced access to higher education is effecting their participation and achievement in the labour market;

- links between socio-economic background and educational achievement of women undergraduates in the developing world;

- national and organisational initiatives and impacts in gender mainstreaming;

- what constitutes inclusive and gender sensitive pedagogy;

- the interplay between hierarchies of discrimination (especially with respect to race and gender), and how this is played out on the campuses of historically white and historically black institutions in South Africa;

- the implementation gap between policy and practices with respect to staff in senior positions - e.g. why in such a supportive policy environment are there so few senior women in higher education institutions in South Africa?;

- the effectiveness of gender equity/ sensitisation training.

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Appendix 1: Research Teams and Steering Groups

Nigeria

Research team:

Prof. Abiola Odejide – Lead researcher, University of Ibadan

Dr. Bola Akanji, Nigeria Institute of Social and Economic Research

Dr. Kolade S. Odekunle, Nigeria Institute of Social and Economic Research

Steering group:

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Dr. Nkoli Ezumah, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Dr. Iyabo Fagbulu, UNESCO, Abuja

Mrs. Tayo Ikotun, Deputy Registrar Academic, University of Ibadan

Mr. Mohammed Ndanusa, National Universities Commision

Dr. Adebimpe Odetola, Gender, Science and Technology

Prof. Ayo Ogunkule, Dean of Students, University of Ibadan

Mrs. N.S. Onuoha, Federal Ministry of Education

South Africa

Research team:

Lesley Shackleton and Prof. Cheryl de la Rey – Lead researchers, University of Cape Town

Sarah Riordan, HERS-SA

Desiree Simonis, HERS-SA

Steering group:

Ms. N. Badsha, Deputy Director General, National Department of Education

Ms. Naledi Pandor, National Minister of Education

Prof. George Subotzky, Director, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Western Cape

Ms Nazeema Mahomed, Transformation Manager, University of Cape Town

Ms V Tanga, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Peninsula Technikon

Sri Lanka

Research team:

Prof. Chandra Gunawardena – Lead Researcher, Senior Professor of Education and Dean, Faculty of Education, Open University of Sri Lanka

Ms. Asha Abeysekera Van Dort, Researcher, Psycho-Social Support Group, Colombo

Ms. Kanchana Bulumule, Lecturer, Department of Social Studies, Open University of Sri Lanka

Prof. Tressie Leitan, Former Professor of Political Science, University of Colombo

Prof. Yoga Rasanayagam, Emeritus Professor of Geography, and former Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo

Steering group: Prof. Senake Bandaranayake, Chairman, Standing Committee on Humanities, and Standing Committee and Member, University Grants Commission

Ms. Lalitha Dissanayake, Former Secretary, Ministry of Women's Affairs

Prof. Savithri Goonasekera, Senior Professor of Law, and Former Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo

Ms. Seela Ebert, President, Sri Lanka Federation of University Women

Prof. Swarma Jayaweera, Vice Chairman, National Education Commission and Coordinator, Center for Women's Research

Prof. Chitra Karunaratne, Former Secretary, University Grants Commission and Gender Specialist, Ministry of Policy Planning Implementation, Member, Core Group on Women in Higher Education Management

Prof. Kamala Liyanage, Professor in the Department of Political Science, University of Peradeniya and Member, Core Group on Women in Higher Education Management

Ms. Seetha Rajapaksha, Secretary, Ministry of Women Empowerment and Social Welfare, Sri Lanka

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Research team: Prof. Amandina Lihamba, Lead researcher, UDSM

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Ms. Ave Maria Semakafu, UDSM

Dr. Rosemarie Mwaipopo, UDSM

Ms. Lucy Shule, UDSM

Steering group: Mrs. Ruth Mollel, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Science Technology and Higher Education

Prof. Mayunga Nkunya, Chairperson UDSM Gender Dimension Programme Committee and UDSM Chief Academic Officer

Ms. Priscilla Ole Kambaine, Director, Ministry of Education and Culture

Ms. Fatuma Kiongosya, Acting Director, Information and Research, Planning Commission

Prof. Maurice Mbago, Director of Research and Publication, UDSM

Ms. Mary Rusimbi, Executive Director, Tanzania Gender Networking Programme

Ms. Mercy Sila, Director, Tanzania Education Authority

Prof. Saida Yahya-Othman, Professor in Linguistics and Foreign Languages, UDSM

Uganda

Research team: Prof. Joy C. Kwesiga, Lead Researcher

Ms. Elizabeth Ssendiwala, Makerere University

Mr. Sam Tumugarukire, Makerere University

Mr. Moses Kadobera, Makerere University

Ms. Berna Twanza, Makerere University

Ms. Margaret Banga, Stastician, Makerere University

Steering group: Ms Elizabeth Gabona, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education.

Mr. Muhwezi Kahundha, Chief Accountant, Makerere University, Researcher in Financing of Higher Education and Gender

Dr. Grace Bantebya Kyomuhendo, Head, Department of Women and Gender Studies, Makerere Univeristy

Dr. Margaret Mangheni, Head, Agricultural Extension Department, Makerere University

Ms Jane Mpagi, Director, Directorate of Gender and Community Development, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

Ms Maude Mugisha, Coordinator, East African Sub-Regional Support Initiative (EASSI).

Mr. Sebastian. M. Ngobi, Academic Registrar, Makerere University.

Appendix 2: Standard Interview Schedules

Access

Students
- What are you studying? What year are you in?
- What motivated you to enter university? Why did you decide to enter university
- Who encouraged/discouraged you?
- How did you make decisions about what you wanted to study? (probe about future career plans).
- What were some of your hopes/aspirations/fears about entering university? (explore in detail)
- What have been your impressions of university so far?
- What has been particularly positive/ negative? Give details
- What barriers/enablers/support, if any, have you encountered? Give specific details e.g. of welfare, pastoral support, negative gender relations etc.
- How would you describe the support that you have received from: staff, other students, your family and friends?
- How would you describe the university in terms of its support for women students? What is working well? What needs to change?
- In your view, what do women students need in order to be able to enter and achieve in higher education? (in society, in families, in the organisation etc.) Do you have any specific recommendations?

Staff
- What is your role here?
- What programmes/schemes are in place to attract women students to your university?
- How did these originate? What were the main drivers/ reasons for wanting to attract more women into higher education?
- How are these publicised?
- In your view, what enables/prevents women from entering higher education? Do you have any specific examples?
- What specific support is there for women students e.g. mentorship schemes, bursaries, counselling?
- How are these working?
- How do women students fare in your institution? (academically, socially, emotionally?)
- What, if anything, do you think needs to change (short and long term), in order for women students to be able to enter and achieve in higher education? (in society, in families, in the organisation etc.) Do you have any specific recommendations?

Staff Development

Staff
- What is your role here?
- What training have you received on gender equity in higher education?
- How useful did you find this training? What was particularly helpful to you?
- What prompted the introduction of the gender equity training?

- Was the training optional or compulsory? How did colleagues react to the training? Any specific details?
- What specific changes have you made to your professional practice as a response to your training?
- Is there any staff development on gender equity that you think is already working well? Why?
- What further training on gender equity do you think would be useful to you and to other colleagues?
- How do women fare as academics and managers in your organisation?
- Are there any specific programmes to develop women academics and managers?
- What, in your view, needs to change to promote gender equity in higher education?

Curriculum Transformation

Students
- What are you studying? What year are you in?
- How sensitive is your curriculum in general to gender issues? Can you give examples of the curriculum being particularly sensitive or insensitive to gender?
- What motivated you to take (this particular programme e.g. women's studies course)?
- How does (this particular programme) contribute to gender equity, in your view?
- What do you consider to be the most useful teaching methods to promote gender equity?
- What needs to change with regards to the curriculum in higher education? E.g. resources, content, teaching methods etc.

Staff
- What is your role here?
- What particular changes have been made to the curriculum to make it more gender sensitive?
- What were the drivers behind these changes? E.g. policy, community organisations, academic staff, management, the students themselves?
- What barriers and enablers were there for introducing these changes?
- What aims and objectives are there for these specific curriculum interventions? How long-term are they?
- How are the aims and objectives evaluated?
- What teaching methods are used?
- What resources are used? Who teaches the programme? How are they prepared/ trained?
- Are there any plans for further changes/initiatives? What changes would you like to see?

Interviews with Policy Makers/ Community Organisations etc.

- Could you tell me something about your organisation and your role within it, please?
- What initiatives for promoting gender equity have you been involved in?
- What are the key policies in your country for promoting gender equity?
- Could you describe any partnerships that you or your organisation has with higher education institutions?
- What role do you believe, if any, that higher education can play in promoting gender equity in your society?
- In your view, what factors facilitate or impede women's participation in higher education?
- What, if anything, do you believe needs to change within higher education to promote gender equity?
- Do you have any further observations or comments?