

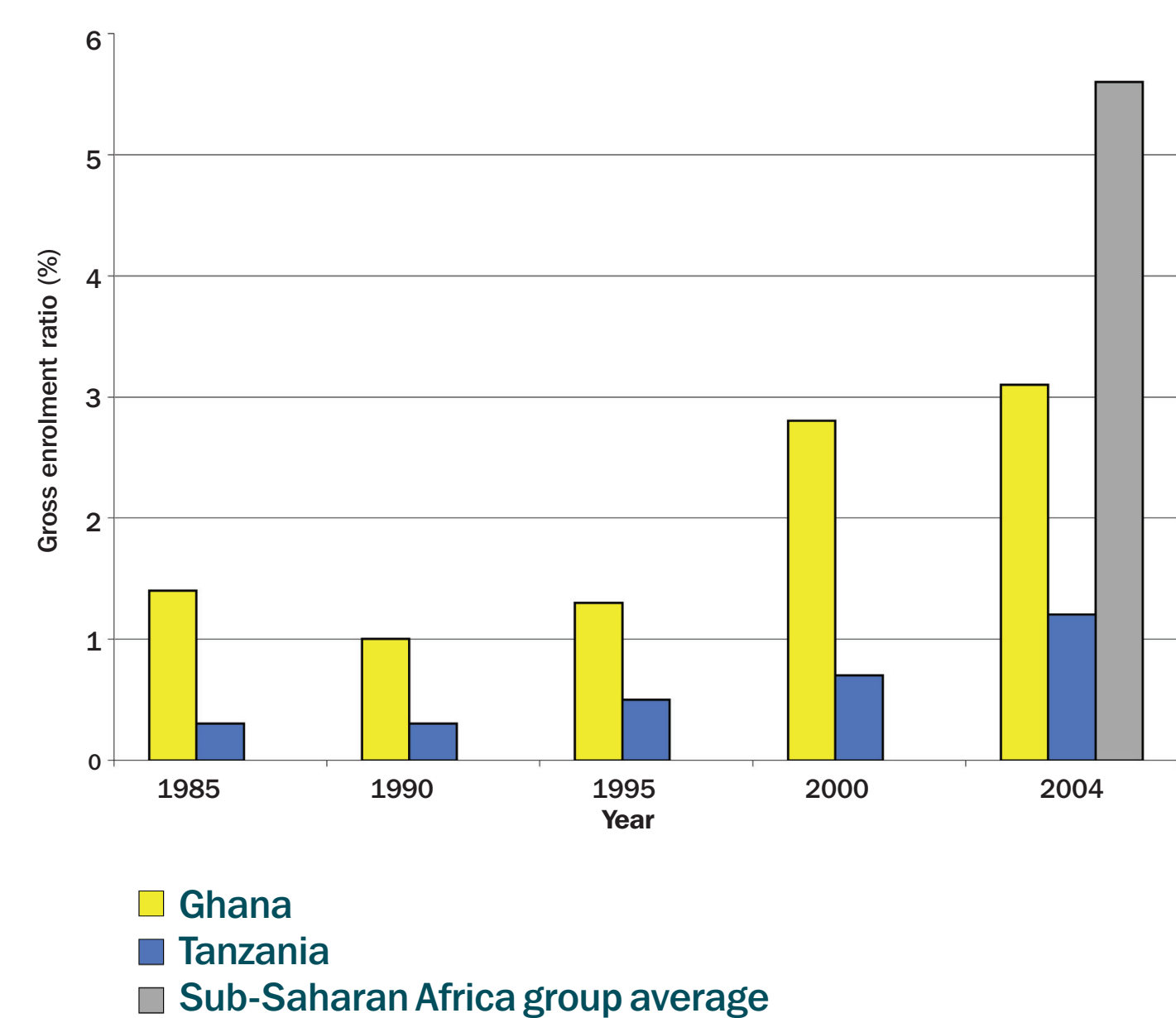
Counting people in

Measuring participation in higher education by developing Equity Scorecards

Introduction

There is a political economy of access and participation in higher education. 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. However, globally, there are concerns about who gains access to higher education and whether some socio-economic groups are persistently marginalised. In Sub-Saharan Africa, less than 6 per cent of the population is enrolled in higher education.

Access to higher education in Ghana and Tanzania



Access to higher education in Ghana and Tanzania is rising but remains low. In 2004, both countries had Gross Enrolment Ratios that were lower than the average for Sub-Saharan Africa, and other countries with similar levels of (low) income: Ghana (3.1%) and Tanzania (1.2%)

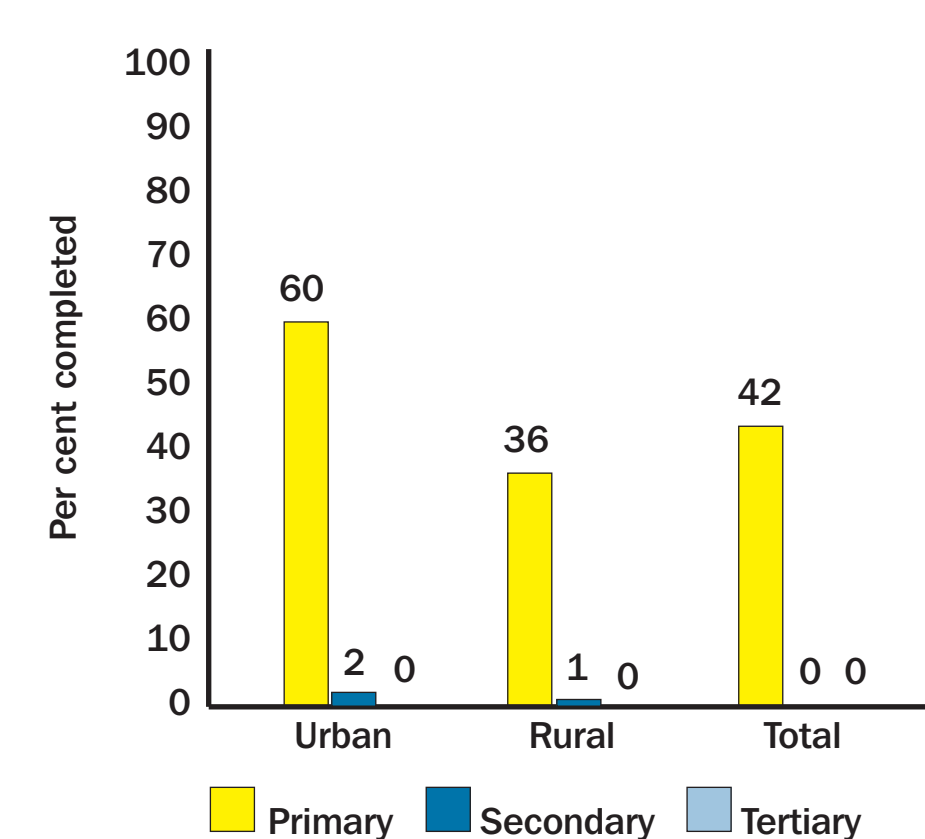
Source: <http://devdata.worldbank.org/edstats/>

This project – Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania – will examine patterns of inclusion and exclusion in higher education in Africa to interrogate the role that universities play in poverty reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Working with a public university and a private university in Ghana and Tanzania, the project will develop Equity Scorecards to measure inclusion and achievement of socially and economically excluded groups in the case study institutions. In the longer term, these scorecards will enable institutions to continue to measure how well they are doing in terms of widening participation in higher education.

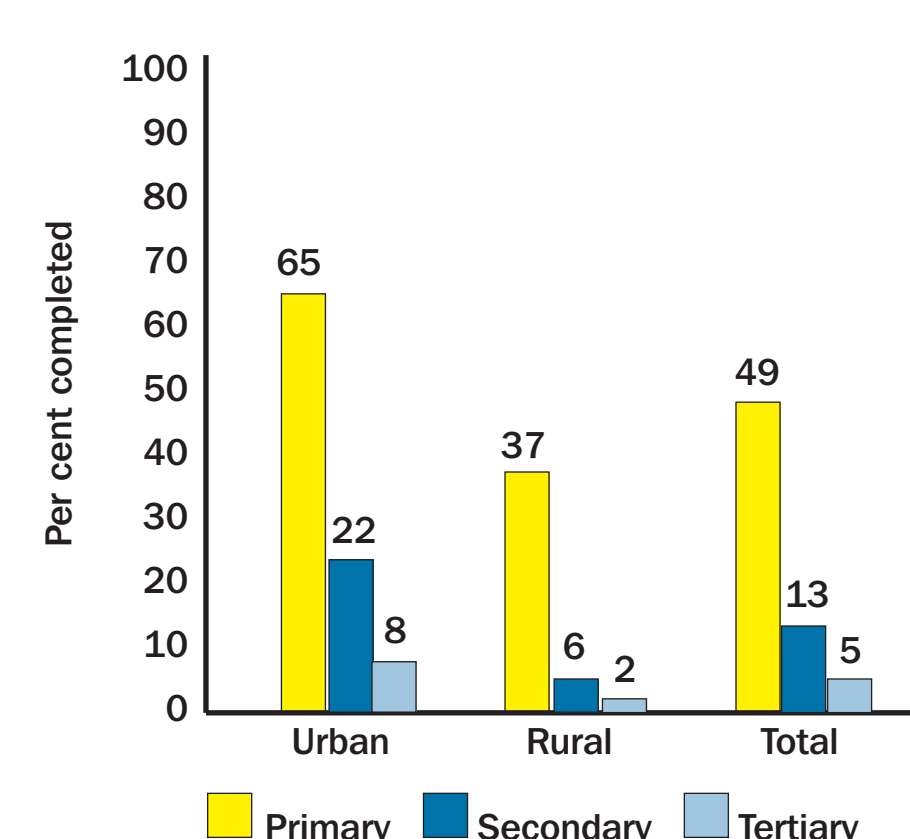
Participation in education throughout the course of a life

Tanzania 1999: educational attainment by level, age 25+, by urban/rural



Source: <http://devdata.worldbank.org/edstats/>

Ghana 2003: educational attainment by level, age 25+, by urban/rural



Source: <http://devdata.worldbank.org/edstats/>

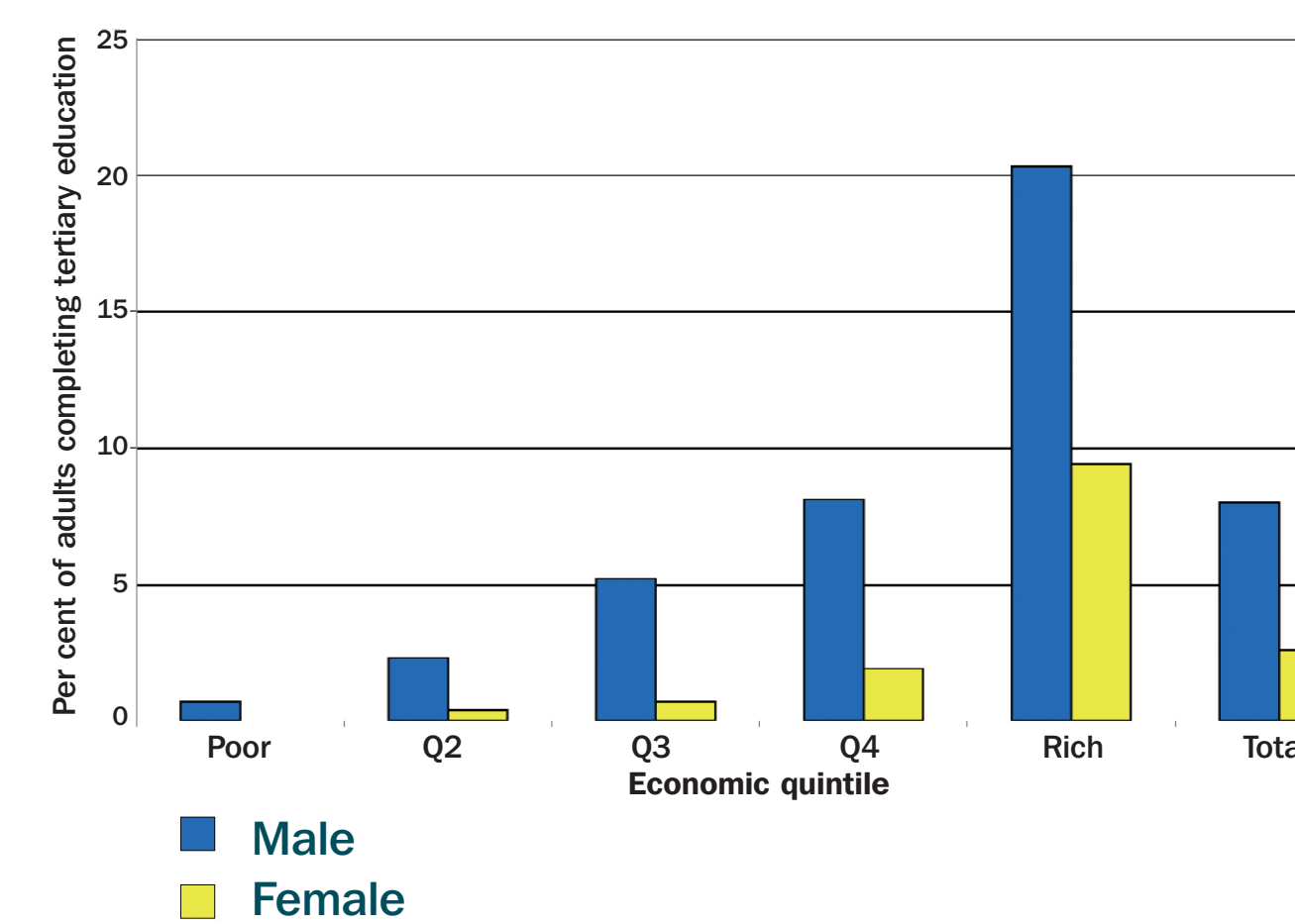
These graphs reveal that:

- levels of access to primary education do not continue into secondary and tertiary
- demand for access to these sectors is expected to increase with universal access to primary education (Millennium Development Goal 2).

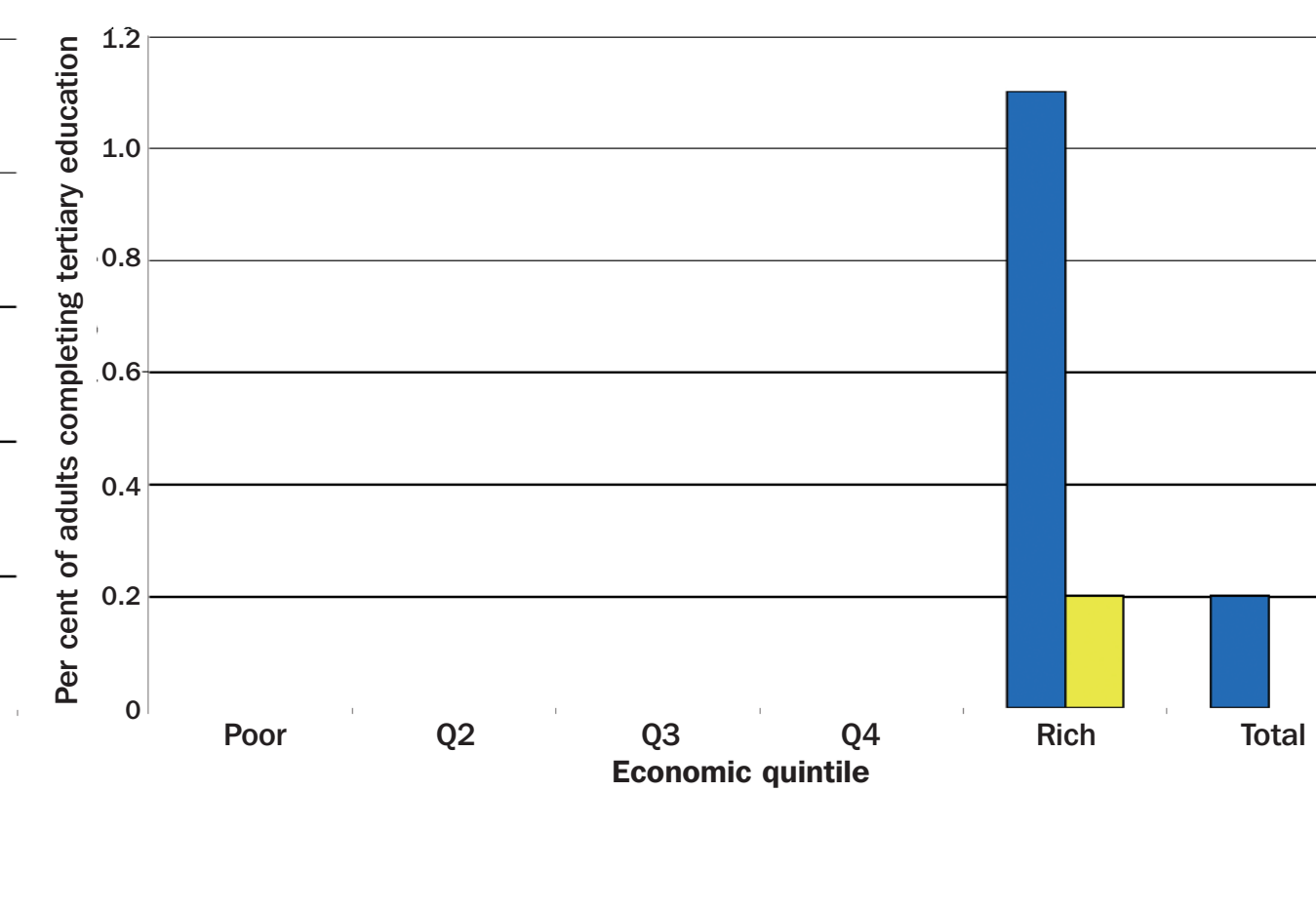
Who completes higher education in Ghana/Tanzania?

According to World Bank data, in Ghana and Tanzania the majority of students are male and from more privileged socio-economic backgrounds.

Who completes higher education in Ghana?



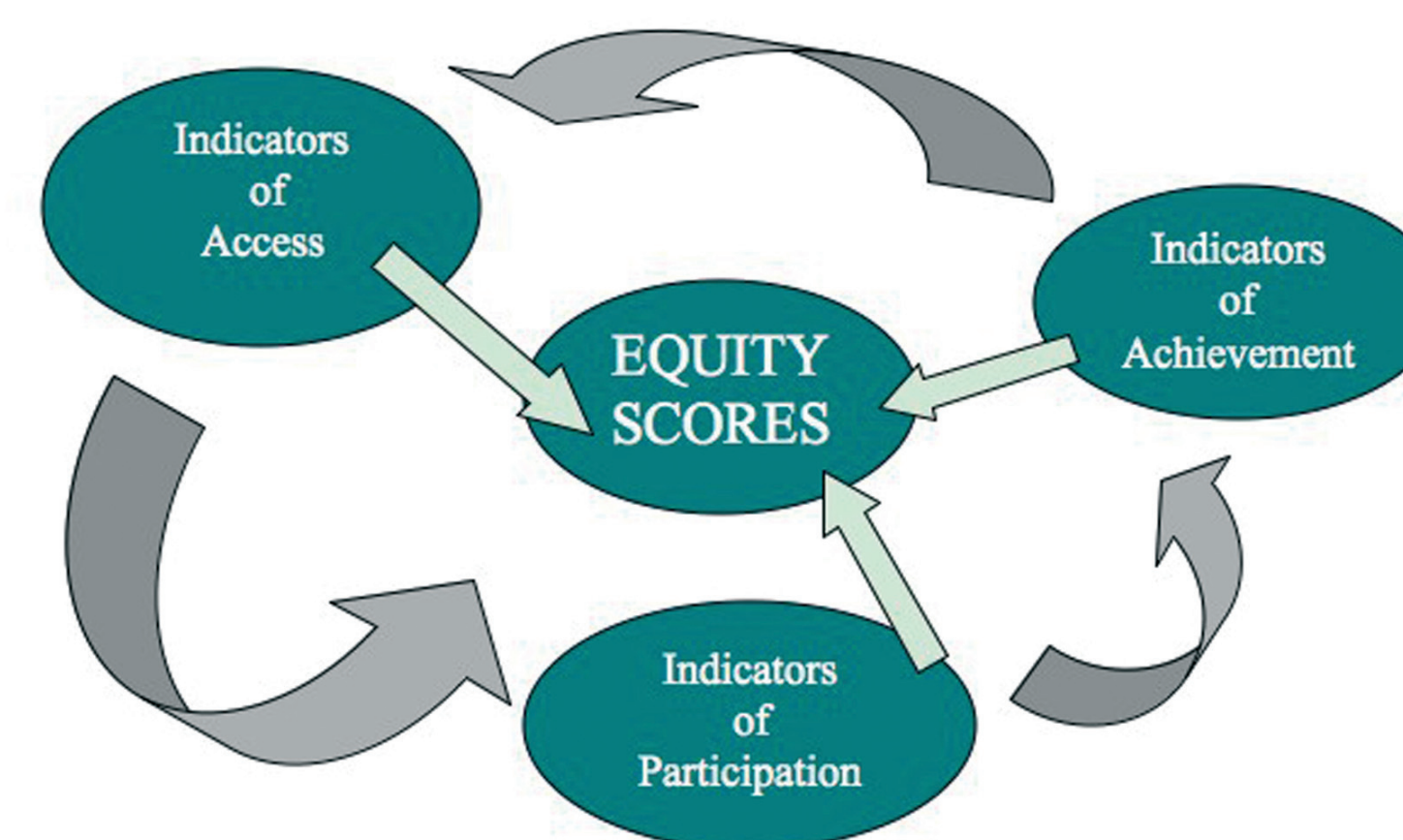
Who completes higher education in Tanzania?



Source: <http://devdata.worldbank.org/edstats/>

What is an Equity Scorecard?

The Equity Scorecard measures the extent to which access and participation in higher education is equitable. Based on a culture of evidence, the scorecard brings together diverse data on access, participation and achievement of socially and economically marginalised groups collected at each institution over a period of time. Central to the Equity Scorecard is disaggregation of institutional data. This allows the identification of critical gaps in recruitment, retention and achievement, with a view to action planning.



Stories behind the statistics

More textured understandings of enablers and barriers to participation and achievement in higher education will be developed through life history interviews. Semi-structured interviews will also be conducted with academic staff and policy-makers.

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The research methodology

A case study approach

Two case study institutions have been selected in each country: one public and one private university. Quantitative and qualitative research in these sites will build a better understanding of local patterns of participation and of the practices shaping them, within broader national frames.

Each case study site will be engaged in action research on widening participation in higher education through the development of Equity Scorecards.

Equity Scorecard Working Groups are being established in both countries, and will include senior staff from the case study institutions, policy-makers, equity advocates and student representatives.

Quantitative data

Quantitative data will be collected at four levels:

- international
 - national
 - institutional
 - Equity Scorecard datasets: working with Equity Scorecard Working Groups, the research teams will use statistical datasets generated at the institutional level to identify relevant indicators of access, participation and achievement. The data collected will be analysed in terms of sociological variables linked to student under-representation, for example gender, socio-economic background, ethnicity, regional background etc.
- #### Who will benefit from this project?
- communities who are currently excluded from higher education
 - higher education institutions in Africa
 - policy-makers and those implementing the Millennium Development Goals
 - international organisations seeking to develop African universities
 - NGOs concerned with equity, social exclusion and poverty alleviation
 - the international community of higher education scholars and researchers.

Funded by the ESRC/DFID Poverty Reduction Programme, the project is led by Professor Louise Morley working with Dr Fiona Leach, Rosemary Lugg at the University of Sussex, and Professor Amandina Lihamba at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Professor James Opare at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana.

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