



Annual IPAR Research Conference 2011

Improving the Lives of Ordinary Rwandans: Evidence for Policy

Have Child Friendly Schools improved Girls' Education in Rwanda? A Case Study Approach

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Outline of the Presentation

- Background to the study
- Problem statement
- Conceptual framework
- Research methods
- Main findings
- Implications for policy and action

Children hold the Future of Rwanda and Africa – Ordinary Rwandan Children in Child Friendly Schools have a Right to Quality Education



Background of the Study

- GoR's commitment to gender equality, women's empowerment, and the education of girls
- MIGEPROF's National Gender Policy
- MINEDUC's Girls' Education Policy and its Implementation Strategy
- UNICEF/GoR's Child Friendly Schools Program focused on making a difference to girls' education

Problem Statement

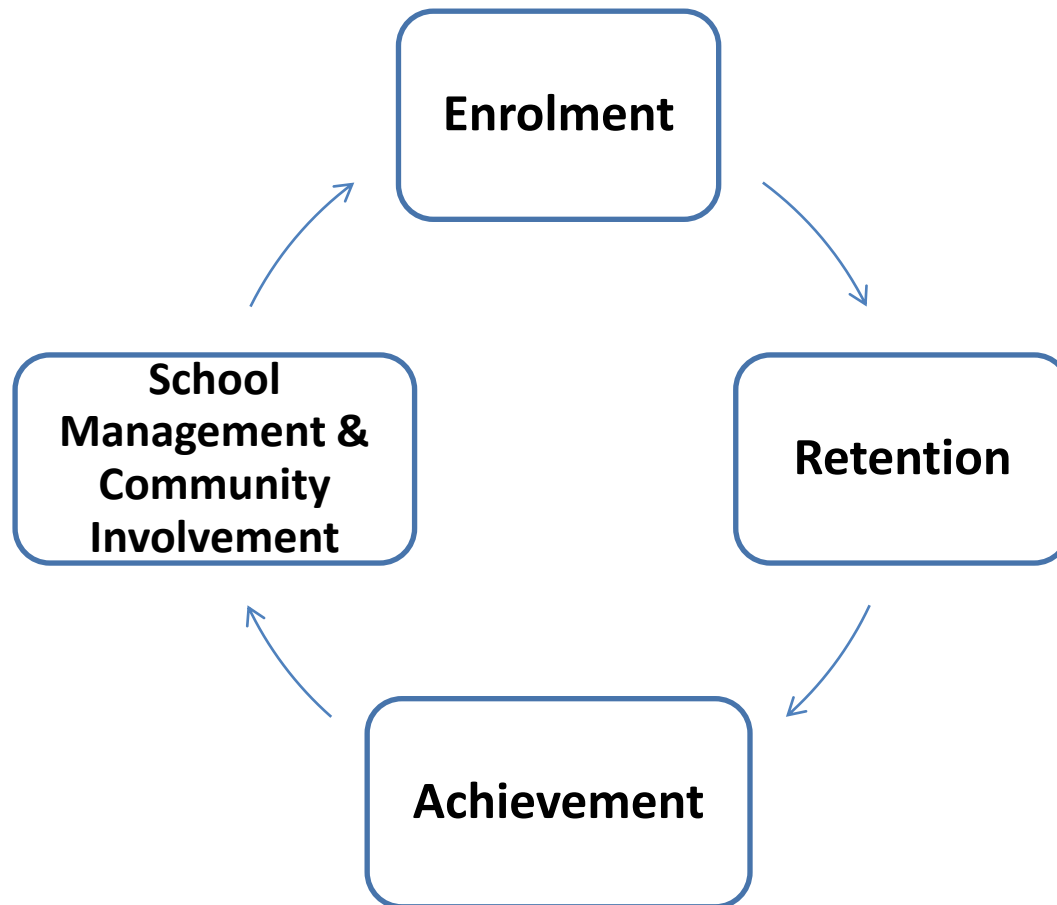
- Girls and boys have equal enrolment in Rwanda at primary and lower secondary levels, but the retention and achievement of girls and their transition rates to upper secondary and tertiary education are lower than boys

(UNICEF, 2010, MINEDUC, 2010)

Conceptual Framework

Gender-responsive, human rights based approach

**Four case studies of CFSs to examine four critical issues
in girls' success**



Conceptual Framework (Cont)

- **Enrolment**-related activities – accessible schools and friendly infrastructure
- **Retention** activities - friendly and encouraging environment for students
 - School feeding programs
 - Separate toilets for girls
 - Clean drinking water
 - Social amenities
 - Airy classrooms
 - Attractive playgrounds

Conceptual Framework (Cont)

- **Achievement-related strategies**
 - appropriate pedagogy
 - improved child-teacher ratios
 - adequate curriculum and materials
- **School management and community involvement**
 - functioning Parents Teachers Associations
 - trained district education officers, headteachers, principals and staff

Research Methods

- *Methodology* - mixed methods - qualitative and quantitative research, observation, triangulation of results
- *Population*: Four CFSs - two considered successful and two considered unsuccessful, two in urban and two in rural areas.
- *Area of Study*: Three Provinces - Northern, Western and Eastern (no CFSs in Southern)
Four Districts – Gakenke, Rubavu, Rutsiro and Nyagatare

Rwanda - New Province / Regions and New Admin District Boundaries

- Province / Region
- EST (1)
 - NORD (1)
 - OUEST (1)
 - SUD (1)
 - VILLE DE KIGALI (1)

New District Boundaries

 New District Region



Research Methods (cont)

in line with stakeholder theory, a cross-mix of respondents

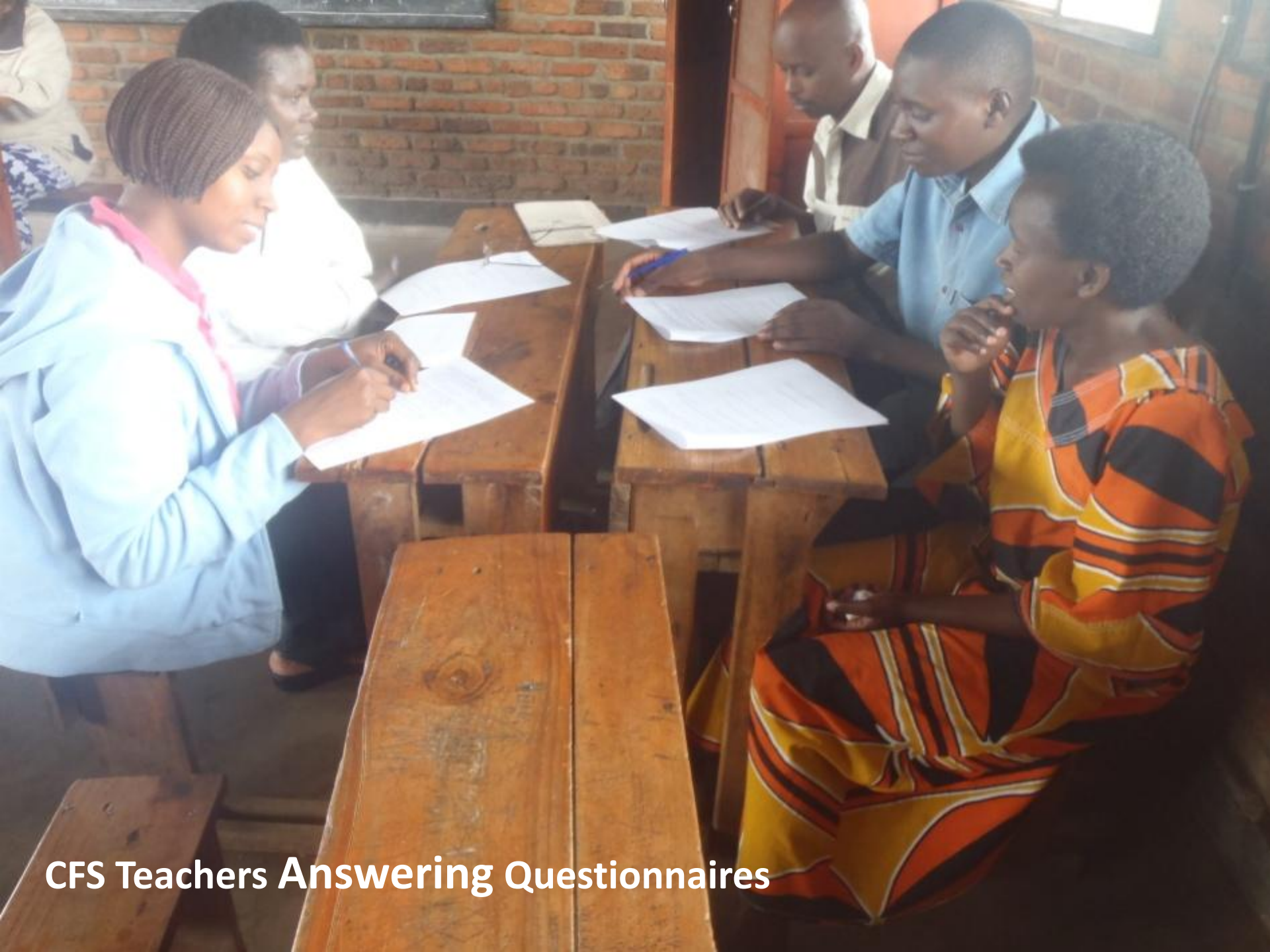
Research Instruments

- *Questionnaires* - students, teachers
- *Interviews* with key informants - district education officers, headteachers and deputies
- *Focus Group Discussions* - parent and teacher committees
- *Documentary Survey* - government reports, policy documents and global CFS reports (MINEDUC, UNICEF, MIGEPROF etc)



FAWE/KIE/CGCD Research Team Interviewing District Education Officer

District	Gakenke		Rubavu		Rutsiro		Nyagatare		Total		
School	School A		School B		School C		School D				
Data Format	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	All
Questionnaires											
Students	39	31	18	23	40	37	40	39	137	130	
Total Students	70		41		77		79				267
Teachers	13	8	7	9	10	10	13	11	43	38	81
Grand Total	52	39	25	32	50	47	53	50	180	168	348
Questionnaires/ Interviews											
DEOs	1		1		1		1		4	0	4
HTs	1			1	1		1		3	1	4
DHTs	1						1		2	0	2
Total Administ rators	3		1	1	2	1	3		9	1	10
Focus Groups											
PTC member	1		1	2	2		2		6	2	8



CFS Teachers Answering Questionnaires

Main Findings

Enrolments

- *Waiving of tuition fees* led to increased enrolment rates in primary schools - from 73.3% in 2001 to over 99% in 2011 with almost every child in school. Each school in the survey had a greater enrolment of girls than boys
- *Mandatory 9-YBE* from 2009 led to automatic transition to secondary – 22% girls 24% boys, - and has reduced girls' dropout rates – Each CFS school in the survey had a greater enrolment of girls than boys in most secondary classes.

Enrolment by sex per CFS, 2011

School	Boys	Girls	Total
A	458	569	1027
B	485	518	1003
C	1010	1027	2037
D	605	661	1266
Grand Total	2558	2775	5333

Stakeholders attributed the higher number of girls to demography - having more girls than boys in the general population.

Main Findings

Enrolments

- *Double-shift classes* have eased overcrowding and improved student -teacher ratios in classrooms. More friendly for students but challenging for teachers.
- *Scaling up classroom construction*, and building separate girls and boys toilets has encouraged children to enrol at both primary and secondary levels
- *Changing cultural attitudes* to early marriage, and reduced preferencing of boys education over girls has led to increased enrolments

Improved classrooms





Separate toilets for girls and boys

Main Findings

Challenges for Girls' Retention

- *Improving the learning school environment* – absenteeism
- *Poverty* – inability to pay for books, pens, uniforms
- *Persisting cultural and patriarchal attitudes* affecting both parents and communities – considerable change but still preference for boys' education if poor, preference for girls in household responsibilities, & some early marriages

Main Findings

Challenges for Girls' Retention

- *Geographical location of schools* – long distances to walk to school – 36% of students took more than 1 hr
- *Health and nutrition* – students going without food and water find learning difficult
- *Menstruation* – improved support, but still some problems with access to sanitary pads
- *Extra-curricula activities* – insufficient clubs to attract students
- *Sexual harassment* in and on way to school

Main Findings

Challenges affecting Girls' Achievement

- *Girls have little time* for homework and revision - domestic and farm activities
- *School organization* – poor administration leads to poor morale and less support for girls
- *Language barrier* – if girls are absent more than boys it is more difficult for them to master English
- *Unqualified teachers* - inadequate preservice and inservice training for teachers –lack of competence

Main Findings

Challenges affecting Girls' Achievement

- *Inadequate pay for teachers* - low morale
- *Lack /inadequate role models* – very low numbers of female teachers at secondary level
- *Insufficient/inadequate caregivers* - disabilities
- *Infrastructure* - Absence of electricity, laboratories, computer technologies, libraries, and limited resource materials overall

Main Findings

School Management & Community Involvement

- *Limited management and asset control training* – for HTs and District Education Officers (DEOs)
- *Limited involvement in management* – PTCs and DHTs assist, but teachers generally were not involved and there were more men than women.
- *Illiteracy* - some members of PTCs are still illiterate



Explaining Questionnaires to Students at a CFS

Policy Recommendations

Increasing Retention of Ordinary Rwandan Girls

- *Sensitisation and awareness programs* for all stakeholders to educate them on the value of girls' attendance and retention (UNICEF, FAWE, NGOs, school leaders)
- *Poverty* – address economic development in rural areas (GoR) - establish *school feeding* programs for poor children and develop school gardens (MINEDUC, UNICEF, FAWE, school leaders)

Policy Recommendations

Increasing Retention of Ordinary Rwandan Girls

- *Terms and conditions of teachers* – increase pay and housing, provide adequate preservice and inservice training (GoR, MINEDUC)
- *School organization* – early abolition of double shifts (MINEDUC)
- *Location of schools* – closer to communities they service (MINEDUC)

Policy Recommendations

Increasing Retention of Ordinary Rwandan Girls

- *Facilities and equipment* - electricity, science and computer laboratories, libraries, and other facilities to all CFSs (MINEDUC)
- *Extra-curricula activities* – including more clubs TUSEME, GBV (FAWE)
- *Handling Menstruation* - counseling, restroom, sanitary pads, separate toilets, clean water (MINEDUC, UNICEF, FAWE)
- *Rewarding outstanding girls* – (Imbuto Foundation and school recognition)

Policy Recommendations (cont)

Maximizing Achievement of Ordinary Rwandan Girls

- *Quality of teachers* – critical factors are limited education and training, inadequate pay and conditions.
- *Gender balance of teachers and school management* – more women trained in science and technology subjects (KIE)
- *School organization* - MINEDUC should hasten the abolition of double shifts, but this depends on increasing the number of teachers in training (KIE)

Policy Recommendations (cont)

Maximizing Achievement of Ordinary Rwandan Girls

- *Infrastructure, facilities and equipment* – provide electricity, science and computer laboratories, libraries, and facilities, separate toilets for boys and girls to all CFSs
- *Materials* (e.g. Text books, sanitary pads and facilities should be provided for girls in all schools)
- *Students with disabilities* should be catered for with learning materials, and teachers should be trained about how to take care of these categories of learners.

Policy Recommendations (cont)

Enhancing School Management and Community Involvement

- *Training* DEOs, HTs, DHTs and PTCs in good governance and school management (MINEDUC, UNICEF, FAWE)
- *Sensitisation and awareness programs* for PTCs, parents and community leaders on the special needs of girls (MINEDUC, UNICEF, FAWE, NGOs)
- *Gender balance* of school managers and PTCs – increasing target from 30% to 50% (MINEDUC, schools)
- *Literacy* programs for parents and community

With only Female Headteacher following interview





Conclusions



- Child friendly schools are an important intervention strategy for improving educational outcomes for girls
- Retention, achievement and transition of girls are still issues that need to be addressed, especially in rural schools
- This research provides evidence for policy recommendations that will improve the lives of ordinary Rwandans, especially girls

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